

Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
Wallace Branch Library
Monday, February 19, 2024
5:30 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System (ARCPLS) Board of Trustees was called to order at 5:35 pm by Board President, Anna Reeves.

II. ROLL CALL

Member Present: Anna Reeves (President); Morris Porter (Vice President); Brenda Garman (Treasurer); Cher Best; Tonia Gibbons; Christine Rhodes; Anita Rookard; Kigwana Cherry (via phone call). Members absent: Kimberly Brown (excused); Carletta McGruder (unexcused). Ex-officio members present: Commissioner Bobby Williams; Dennis Garman, Friends of the Augusta Library; Emanuel Sinclair Mitchell, Library Director; Tina Monaco, transcriber; Ex-officio members absent: Leon Maben (Friends of the Augusta Library).

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Gibbons moved to amend the agenda to include item **f) Approval of Memorandum of Agreement Regarding the Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System (ARCPLS) and Georgia Cyber Academy (GCA) under NEW BUSINESS.** Ms. Rookard seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Porter moved to approve the minutes with corrections. Ms. Garman seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

V. SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Episcopal Day School (EDS) Trustees Takiyah Douse, and Dennis Trotter were joined by Dr. David Perkinson (Head of School) to discuss the EDS lease agreement between the school and ARCPLS (Appleby Branch Library). EDS requests a 25-year extension of the lease which is up for renewal at the end of the year. Mr. Trotter referred the board to the lease documents included in the board packet. A portion of the EDS playground is located on Appleby Library property, subject to the lease agreement, in exchange EDS allows access to their parking lot during the Appleby Concert Series. A fence line separates the EDS playground from Appleby Library, and Mr. Trotter explained that EDS wishes to make improvements to the fence, based on an updated security protocol for the school. The fence is currently a four (4) ft. chain link fence and EDS wants to build a six (6) ft. brick wall. EDS will incur all costs including upkeep and maintenance. EDS requests permission from ARCPLS to build the wall.

Mrs. Douse explained that the lease expires at the end of the year but she asked the board to vote on extending the lease agreement prior to that, as EDS wants to make the improvements before the new school year begins in August 2024. Ms. Reeves asked for clarification on the time line for construction of the wall. Mr. Trotter stated that it will be built over the summer break, and will take approximately 35 to 40 days, subject to approval by the Richmond County Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). Mr. Mitchell requested the construction be completed after the Appleby Concert Series (June and first two weeks of July). Mr. Trotter said it would be scheduled as soon as the concert series wraps up.

Mrs. Douse stated that the ARCPLS board's decision will also have to go before the Augusta-Richmond County Commission for approval, in addition to HPC. The current lease is between the city of Augusta, ARCPLS, the Appleby Trust, and EDS.

The lease runs for twenty-five years. No changes are being made to the original lease agreement.

VI. TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Mitchell reviewed both the December 2023 and January 2024 treasurer's reports.

ARCPLS is now netting the balance for payroll from the disbursement checks. Line item #31 SALARY (full-time) totaled \$149,108.87, increase due to December 2023 having three pay periods. Line item #43 WAGES (part-time) for December 2023 totaled \$13,047.79, again the increase is due to three pay periods in December. January 2024 falls back in line at \$89,424.52 for full-time salaries and \$7,868.73 for part-time wages. Item line #45 LIBRARY RECEIPTS for fines, lost books, meeting room rentals, etc., in December 2023 was \$3,341.24 and for January 2024, \$6,452.00. Mr. Mitchell stated that the meeting rooms are generating a lot of income, already surpassing the projected amount.

Ms. Garman asked for clarification on Line item #42 VACATION BUYBACK (\$10,229.10). Mr. Mitchell stated that for January 2024 staff who resigned or retired were paid back for accrued vacation time.

VII. REPORTS

A. President's Report: No report

B. Director's Report

- Mr. Mitchell and the board discussed the current financial position of ARCPLS compared with one year ago, based on the \$300,000 increase to the budget. Mr. Mitchell stated that ARCPLS is in a better position and hopes to better engage the Richmond County Commission to support the library, not only financially but through participation in programs and events. Commissioner Williams and Ms. Rookard both made suggestions for improving the relationship between ARCPLS and the Richmond County Commission. Mr. Mitchell discussed the responsibility of the Richmond County Commission per the state of Georgia to maintain its library system, otherwise state funding could be compromised.
- Mr. Mitchell reviewed the ARCPLS FY2024 budget totaling \$3,442,007.33, detailing the state allotted portion of the budget including state paid position reimbursements, Sandra Deal Grant, and Ergate, totaling \$502,067.33. ARCPLS works to be good stewards of both state and county monies. State funding is based by county population numbers.
- The 2024 capital outlay request for Appleby Library renovations was submitted to Richmond County Central Services and Georgia Public Library Service (GPLS). ARCPLS is requesting \$900,000 from the state and \$200,000 from Richmond County. The Knox Foundation will cover any additional costs at \$20,000.
- The board is invited to Library Day at the Georgia Capitol on March 11, 2024. Mr. Mitchell will be driving the library van. This is an opportunity to meet with legislators.
- Mr. Mitchell discussed projects during November 2023-2024 including Christmas decorations, Tech Hub door has been installed, electrical outlets have been fixed, TRANE has replaced lighting in the HQS meeting rooms, glass in the foyer of Diamond Lakes damaged by the break-in has been replaced, Friedman Branch Library's window has been repaired as well, the book mobile awning is repaired, the piano at Wallace Branch Library has been tuned, ready for piano classes; Appleby Library exterior lighting has been installed by TRANE; the plumbing issue at Appleby Library has been resolved; the safety rail at HQs will be repaired; an outside spigot at HQs was repaired due to a water leak; the elevators were inspected by the state and passed.
- The Tech Hub has been painted and policy and procedures are being finalized. Ms. Blocker and Mr. Dudley are working on promotional material for the library web page and social media. The grand opening is tentatively scheduled for late March 2024. Mr. Mitchell has invited the Richmond County Commission to see how the \$500,000 is being spent.
- The rotary club donated \$270 for books; the Appleby Trust donated \$5000 for maintenance and repairs.
- A family estate has donated a personal library of books which is now in probate.
- ARCPLS received an anonymous donation of \$8,374.36. The patron donates annually. Appleby Library also received a donation of \$100.00.

- November 2023 circulation was up from November 2022. A total of 120,278 items circulated in November 2023. December 2023 was also up from last year, totaling 141,926. January 2023 circulation totals were 162,703 and January 2024 were 166,490.
- Assistant director position has been reposted. The outreach position has been filled by Elizabeth Mason. The IT position has also been filled by Jerome Lopez. Other vacant positions have been posted as well.
- ARCPLS will be interviewing at the Richmond County mega hiring event on February 29, 2023 from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm.
- Joanne Courtney retired January 31, 2023 after 36 years of service to ARCPLS. Her position as print shop operator will be changed to graphic artist once HR approves the job description.
- The Second Chance held desk resumed in February 2023. Since its inception they've served over 180 citizens.
- Mr. Mitchell reviewed the MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT REGARDING THE AUGUSTA-RICHMOND COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM (ARCPLS) AND Georgia Cyber Academy (GCA).

C. Committees

- i. Accounts Committee – Mr. Mitchell reported that the names on the Wells Fargo Investment Account will have to change once the new officers fill the executive committee positions.
- ii. Personnel Committee
- iii. Nomination Committee – Mr. Porter named the nominees for the board's executive committee; Ms. Tonia Gibbons, Treasurer; Ms. Brenda Garman, Vice President; Mr. Morris Porter, President. Voting will be held at the March 2024 board meeting. Mr. Cherry made a motion to accept the executive committee nominees. Ms. Best seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

- D. Friends of the Augusta Library Report** – Mr. Garman discussed the FOAL annual meeting. The guest speaker was local writer Brian Panowich. Ms. Reeves encourage the board members to join the FOAL or renew their memberships. The next FOAL book sale is in May 2024.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a) **Incident Reports:** Mr. Mitchell reviewed library incidents for November 2023 – January 2024 including a possible interaction that occurred on November 11, 2023 between a child and an adult male at Appleby Library. The male patron was asked to leave. The parent did not file a complaint, nor did the parent accompany the child to the bathroom where the interaction occurred. On November 21, 2023 another adult male was found hiding in the craft room at Appleby Library. On November 28, 2023 the same adult male broke into Friedman Branch Library and took one DVD. The alarm did not sound because the motion sensors were not pulled back down following renovations. He broke into Diamond Lakes Library as well by breaking a window along the inside corridor. On December 14, 2023 an unknown male exhibited lewd behavior in the lobby of the headquarters library but fled before he could be detained.
- b) **YMLA/Board Meeting 10/18/2021 and 11/15/2021:** Mr. Mitchell reviewed past discussions regarding the handling of the YMLA account, specifically as discussed on the 10/18/2021 and 11/15/2021 regular board meetings. Mr. David Scott, former head of YMLA asked the ARCPLS Board of Trustees to appoint successors to YMLA. A quorum was not present at the 10/18/2021 board meeting so a vote to select a successor to YMLA never happened, neither was a vote held at the 11/15/2021 meeting. Those tentatively appointed at the 10/18/2021 board meeting were Anna Reeves, Beverly Tarver, and Brenda Garman. The library board is responsible for appointing successors, not responsible for YMLA. Ms. Rookard made a motion to accept Mr. Scott's request to appoint successors to YMLA's board. Ms. Rhodes seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried. Moving forward ARCPLS will not receive YMLA bank statement, renewing state licensing, nor using tax ID number or EIN. The YMLA is a separate entity and will be directed by the board members selected by the ARCPLS Board of Trustees. Nominees will be presented at the March 2024 regular board meeting.
- c) **Endowment Policy from 11/15/2021 (review):** See item b

- d) **Quote for Diamond Lakes Branch Library New Security Cameras (vote):** Cameras are being upgraded. Ms. Garman made a motion to accept the quote. Ms. Gibbons seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.
- e) **Quote for Wallace Branch Library New Security Cameras (vote):** Cameras are being upgraded. Ms. Garman made a motion to accept the quote. Ms. Gibbons seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.
- f) **Amended 2024 Library Budget (vote):** Ms. Garman made a motion to accept the amended 2024 budget. Mr. Porter seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried. Commissioner Williams and Ms. Rookard both recommended Mr. Mitchell ask the Richmond County Commission for a return of the 1% taken out of the overall budget.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

- a) **Vote on appointing Fulcher Hagler LLP as the ARCPLS Library Board Attorney:** Ms. Best made a motion to appoint Fulcher Hagler LLP (Steve Sanders) as the ARCPLS attorney. Ms. Garman seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.
- b) **Approval of Bedingfield, McCutcheon & Perry to conduct the library's full audit as stipulated by Georgia Public Library Service (GPLS) for FY2024 (vote):** Ms. Gibbons made a motion to approve Bedingfield, McCutcheon & Perry as library auditors for FY2024. Ms. Rookard seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.
- c) **Quotes for Janitorial Service (vote):** vote tabled until next regular meeting, as Ms. Mitchell waits for the third quote.
- d) **A/V quote for Headquarters Library Large Meeting Room:** Mr. Mitchell referred the board to the quote from LMI Systems Inc. for the replacement of outdated A/V equipment in the large meeting room at Headquarters. The total is \$27,309.00. He explained that the system needs to be replaced because it's not HDMI compatible. Commissioner Williams stated the 1% budget reduction (\$29,000.00) could be requested back to pay for the A/V equipment. Ms. Garman made a motion to approve the quote to update the equipment. Ms. Best seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.
- e) **Landscaping Contract/Third year on contract (update):** Mr. Mitchell provided an update that Richmond County Central Services canceled the contract with the former landscaper and is now cutting the grass for all ARCPLS libraries. Quotes for a new landscape service are incoming and Mr. Mitchell will update the board when they're available.
- f) **Approval of Memorandum of Agreement Regarding the Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System (ARCPLS) and Georgia Cyber Academy (GCA):** Ms. Rookard made a motion to approve the Memorandum of Agreement. Ms. Rhodes seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

X. Public Comment

No comment

XI. Adjournment

Mr. Porter made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Garman seconded. All voted in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:09 pm.