

Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System  
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting  
Friedman Branch Library  
Monday, April 15, 2024  
5:30 pm

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting of the Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System (ARCPLS) Board of Trustees was called to order at 5:30 pm by Board President, Morris Porter.

**II. ROLL CALL**

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

**III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Ms. Reeves moved to approve the agenda as written. Ms. Garman seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ms. Gibbons moved to approve the minutes as written. Ms. Best seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

**V. TREASURER'S REPORT**

Mr. Mitchell addressed budgetary shortfalls as listed on the local treasurer's report. Line item #15 GMEBS PENSION PLAN was previously miscalculated at \$250.00 but has been corrected at \$407.52. There is enough money in other library accounts to cover the difference. Next year's budget has been adjusted to cover the correction. Line item #20 JANITORIAL SERVICES was over budget by \$5,687.92 but will be offset by meeting room income. Mr. Mitchell stated that the local treasurer's reports are used when calculating ARCPLS annual budgets and he will work to adjust the budgets to offset any potential future financial shortfalls. Line item #31 SALARY (Full-Time) continues to be the highest payout. Line item #43 WAGES (Part-Time) is \$8, 811.42 for March indicating ARCPLS might have an overage in payroll because the library is not fully staffed. Six employees (both full-time and part-time) were recently hired but 24 positions remain vacant.

Ms. Garman commented on the low-interest accruing ARCPLS bank accounts. Mr. Mitchell agreed on the low return and stated that the CSRA Community Foundation has provided the best returns on ARCPLS money.

ARCPLS continues to be debt free with Richmond County government.

## **VI. REPORTS**

**A. President's Report:** No report

**B. Director's Report:** Mr. Mitchell reported the following:

- Capital outlay was submitted and ARCPLS was allocated \$284,000 for various projects, including camera upgrades, roof repairs for Wallace and Friedman, and a new roof for HQs. Commissioner Williams asked about quotes. Mr. Mitchell stated that Wallace and Friedman are under warranty so the bulk of the money will go to replace the roof at HQs. State funding will be available to cover any shortfalls.
- Two library incidents occurred in April, including a fall in the Children's Department at HQs. On April 4<sup>th</sup>, Atlanta Gas damaged the sewer line causing a leak outside HQs. The leak was reported to Richmond County (Augusta Engineering) but the leak was not repaired, causing a backup on the first floor of HQs. The sewer line was replaced on Monday, April 15<sup>th</sup>.
- The Tech Hub is complete and the grand opening will be soon. The policy is in the works and will be presented to the board for approval.
- Ground crew contracts have been signed and central services is scheduling times for ground maintenance at all the ARCPLS libraries.
- Appleby has received two (2) donations, one for \$25.00 and \$250.00.
- The Georgia Director's Meeting is coming up on May 2-3, 2024.
- Six (6) employees have been hired. Three part-time and three full-time. A full-time graphic artist will be hired.
- Upcoming library events: Golden Blocks event at Wallace on May 4<sup>th</sup> from 11:00-3:00; Summer Reading Kickoff with United Way, the Hub and Rise Augusta at Pendleton King Park on June 1, 2024 from 11:00-3:00. Senators Warnock and Ossoff have been invited. Ms. Rookard asked to be sent the Adult Summer Reading information to encourage Richmond County employees to participate.

**C. Committee Reports:** No reports

**D. Friends of the Augusta Library Report:** Mr. Garman informed the board of the upcoming Friends' book sale on May 3-4. The Friends will be helping with the Summer Reading Kickoff. Mr. Garman asked the board to think about potential speakers for the next annual meeting in January 2025. Mr. Mitchell recommended Marcellus Turner at Charlotte Mecklenburg Library. He will reach out. Ms. Garman recommended Deke Copenhaver.

**VII. Executive Session (Director's Salary):** Ms. Gibbons moved to go into executive session to discuss the director's salary. Mr. Rhodes seconded. All voted in favor. The meeting went into executive session at 6:04 p.m. The executive session ended at 6:16 p.m.

Ms. Garman made a motion to call Anna Reeves and Cher Best to reach a quorum for voting purposes. Ms. Gibbons seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

#### **VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- a) **Incident Reports:** See Director's Report
- b) **Tech Hub:** See Director's Report
- c) **Audit Firm for 2024:** Mr. Mitchell referred the board to the fee quote and proposal from Bates, Carter and Company for audit services. The cost is \$3,000.00 more than Bedingfield, McCutcheon & Perry. He is waiting on a quote from an additional audit firm.
- d) **Lawn Service Contract:** See Director's Report.
- e) **Appleby Update:** The state allocated \$900,000 for Appleby Library renovations with an additional \$200,000 from the Knox Foundation. Richmond County will be fully reimbursed by the state and the grant from the Knox Foundation.
- f) **Senate Bill 390:** did not pass.

#### **IX. NEW BUSINESS**

- a) **Wallace Branch vote to approve architectural firm:** Mr. Mitchell requested the board approve the hiring of an architectural firm to assess the feasibility of adding another level to the structure to accommodate an African American research library for Richmond County. Ms. Rookard motioned to approve research into an architectural firm. Ms. Rhodes seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.
- b) **Presentation of Proposed Library Budget for 2025:** Mr. Mitchell presented the proposed budget as information. He does not foresee any changes to the budget but will update the board if changes do occur. The GMEBS Pension Plan was corrected at an increase to the budget for 2025. Janitorial Service was also increased to offset any problems in 2025. GPLS proposed increases for state paid positions (\$52,000.00) and supplemental support positions (\$4000.00). The state is paying the health benefits portion for the employee of the three state reimbursed positions. The materials budget increased to \$144,000; the Systems Services Grant went up from \$4000 to \$5700. The total amount of the state budget is \$547, 027.00 for FY2025. Ms. Garman asked about the health insurance increase. The employer's portion will begin to substantially increase in 2026-27. The board will vote on the budget at the June 2025 regular meeting.
- c) **Director's Salary:** No vote. The board is going generate a report regarding Mr. Mitchell's salary and present it before the Richmond County Commission.

**X. Public Comment:** None

**XI. Adjournment:** Ms. Garman motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Gibbons seconded. All voted in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.