

Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System  
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting  
Maxwell Branch Library  
Monday, May 20, 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 Vice President, Brenda Garman.

**II. ROLL CALL**

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

**III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Ms. Reeves moved to add the Coleman Mechanical AC service quote (Maxwell Branch Library) to the Agenda under New Business. Mr. Cherry seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

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

**V. SPECIAL PRESENTATION**

Dr. Daniel Warthen presented on behalf of Kappa Alpha Psi. The fraternity through its Kappa League educational program directs the Guide Right Service initiative. Kappa League proposes a partnership with ARCPLS to mentor young men in literacy by volunteering at the library.

The board discussed volunteering opportunities for the Kappa League at ARCPLS. The board will inform Dr. Warthen of their decision on the mentoring partnership.

Ms. Reeves moved to approve the Kappa League partnership with ARCPLS. Ms. Rookard seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

**VI. TREASURER'S REPORT**

Mr. Mitchell reported the following:

FY2023 closes on May 31, 2024. Line item 31 (Salaries Full-time) on the Local Treasurer's Report for April 2024 totaled \$120,562.09. Line item 43 (Wages Part-time) for April 2024 totaled \$7,868.73. Salaries and wages are the library's biggest expense. Line item 46 (Library Receipts) indicates ARCPLS is well on its way to achieving the goal of \$50,000. As of April 2024, ARCPLS has taken in \$42,418.85 in receipts. Given the amount generated from meeting room rentals, the library will certainly surpass its goal.

## VII. REPORTS

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

### B. Director's Report:

- The 2024 Capital Outlay request was submitted to Central Services and Georgia Public Library Service (GPLS). The request of \$900,000.00 for the renovation of Appleby Library has been officially approved by Gov. Kemp. The money will be received July 1, 2024 (FY2025). The money is administered through a refundable grant. Mr. Mitchell thanked the ARCPLS Board of Trustees, Rep. Gloria Frazier, Rep. Carlton Howard, Rep. Lynn Gladney, Rep. Brian Prince, Sen. Harold Jones, and Sen. Max Burns for their diligent efforts in advocating and securing the funds necessary for the project. Renovations will begin the next calendar year (2025). The goal is to not close the branch completely but construction might necessitate a closure. In that case, the book mobile may be on site to accommodate Appleby Library patrons. An additional \$250,000 grant will be gifted by the Knox Foundation if needed. The contractor will be selected from the state approved list.
- One incident occurred on May 7, 2024 involving an unknown male who made a terroristic threat towards library staff. The police were not called and the male left without being detained. Mr. Mitchell questioned staff and the marshal on duty about the decision not to call Richmond County. He stated that the police should have been called due to the severity of the threat. The unknown male has not returned.
- The Tech Hub is complete and the grand opening will occur sometime after Summer Reading (SRP). The newly drafted Tech Hub policy was provided in the board packet and will be voted on under New Business.
- The bid for replacing the carpet tile in HQs children's department is complete and under review. The bid will go out once approved. Start date is late October, early November. The children's department will be relocated to the DVD area during construction.
- The grounds crew will begin trimming trees at HQs and Friedman Library.
- Maxwell Library's roof continues to leak; Friedman Library's roof is under warranty and will be repaired at no additional cost to ARCPLS.
- The book mobile had its routine maintenance. All is well. Two software updates were uploaded.
- The bid for Headquarters roof replacement is in the works.
- The HDMI ready AV system is being installed in the HQs auditorium.
- Central Services is working with the plumbing company to address issues at HQs. The quote of \$30,000 but once itemized it was reduced.
- The server room and circulation AC units at Maxwell Library have gone down and will need to be replaced. Mr. Mitchell provided the service quote from Coleman Mechanical to the board members. It will be voted on under New Business.
- Appleby Library received a \$250.00 donation.
- Mr. Mitchell attended the library director's meeting in Albany, Georgia. State Health and the rising premiums were discussed. It may be possible for ARCPLS to leave the state health benefits program. According to state librarian Julie Walker, if a public library in Georgia was not incorporated by the state it has the option of leaving the state health benefits program. In the case of ARCPLS, health benefits would be provided by Richmond County. The change to county health would happen during 2024 open enrollment.
- As of June 30, 2024, the Georgia Newspaper Project (University of Georgia) will conclude microfilming and move to digital preservation.
- Zoo Atlanta Library passes are now available.
- Mr. Mitchell referred the board to the PowerPoint presentation from the library directors meeting in Albany, Georgia. Specifically, the section from the Georgia Dept of Human Services (Adult Protective

Services). Engaging with Adult Protective Services offers another resource for assisting the houseless individuals who use ARCPLS.

- ARCPLS will add twenty (20) hotspots to the current number of fifteen (15).
- Posted vacant positions: part-time student assistants at Diamond Lakes and Wallace; Library Assistant I (book mobile); Office Assistant (administration); Library Assistant III at Maxwell.
- ARCPLS has partnered with the United Way, Rise Augusta, and Americorps for the Saturday, June 1<sup>st</sup> 2024 Summer Reading Book Bash.
- The Appleby Concert Series begins Tuesday, June 4<sup>th</sup> through the second Tuesday in July.
- Ms. Best rented the HQs balcony for the fourth of July.
- ARCPLS will participate in the Juneteenth parade.
- Circulation statistics for 2024 are ahead of 2023.
- ARCPLS will undergo a website audit due to a civil rights violation filed by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) division of the Department of Education. The violation concerns the accessibility of the ARCPLS website. The ARCPLS IT department will conduct a self-audit of the website.

**C. Committees:** Mr. Cherry asked Mr. Mitchell for the updated list of ARCPLS Board Members so he can begin asking current members to serve on the nominating committee. Mr. Mitchell will email Mr. Cherry the list.

**D. Friends of the Augusta Library Report:** Mr. Garman reported the income for the May 2024 FOAL book sale (\$1400). FOAL is participating in Operation Paperback, a non-profit volunteer organization that distributes gently used paperback books to U.S. troops. FOAL is preparing for the Appleby Concert Series.

## VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION (Director's Salary)

Mr. Cherry moved to go into closed session to discuss Mr. Mitchell's salary. Ms. Gibbons seconded. All voted in favor. The meeting went into closed session at 6:18 pm. Closed session ended at 6:23 pm.

## XI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a) Incident Reports:** See director's report.
- b) Tech Hub:** the policy is complete and needs to be voted on (New Business) before the Tech Hub can open. Mr. Mitchell reviewed the policy and the technology available in the Tech Hub.
- c) Audit Firm for 2024:** Mr. Mitchell reviewed the quotes for both Bates, Carter and Company, and Mattison Verdery, CPA. Ms. Reeves moved to hire Bates, Carter, and Company to conduct the ARCPLS 2024 audit. Ms. Rookard seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried. The contract is for three years.
- d) 2025 Proposed Budget (Vote):** Mr. Mitchell made a few adjustments to the proposed budget. ARCPLS is requesting \$3,235,000.00 from Richmond County. Ms. Reeves moved to approve the 2025 Library Budget. Ms. Rookard seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

## X. NEW BUSINESS

- a) Presentation of Proposed Library Budget for 2025:** See above.
- b) Director's Salary:** The board voted in closed session to approve Mr. Mitchell's pay increase. Ms. Rookard instructed the board president to send Mr. Mitchell a letter confirming the raise, and for Mr. Mitchell to complete the necessary paper work.
- c) Tech Hub Policy Vote:** Mr. Cherry moved to approve the ARCPLS Tech Hub Policy. Ms. Rookard seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.
- d) ARCPLS Website Audit:** Mr. Mitchell presented the agreement between ARCPLS and the U. S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR), which stipulates the actions ARCPLS will implement to ensure its "programs,

services, and activities communicated or facilitated online are accessible to people with disabilities.” Mr. Mitchell reviewed the changes that will be made to the ARCPLS website in accordance with the agreement. He also detailed the process of the upcoming website audit. Ms. Reeves moved to approve the ARCPLS website audit. Ms. Gibbons seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

- e) **Coleman Mech. Service Quote for Maxwell HVAC:** Ms. Reeves moved to approve the quote from Coleman Mechanical. Ms. Rookard seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

**XI. PUBLIC COMMENT** No comment

**XII. ADJOURNMENT** The meeting was adjourned at 6:47 pm.