

Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System

Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

Diamond Lakes Library

Monday, October 21, 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 5:40 pm by Board President, Morris Porter.

II. ROLL CALL

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

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Reeves moved to approve the September 2024 board meeting minutes with the exception that the spelling of her name is corrected under the "Guns in the Library" Policy. Ms. Best seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

V. TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Mitchell referred the board to page 19, which is an invoice with an itemized breakdown of Augusta Richmond County's charges to the Library each month for payroll. Pay #18 (Payroll End Date: 8/30/24 & Payroll Posting Date: 9/6/24) totaled to \$62,818.28. Pay #19 (Payroll End Date: 9/13/24 and Payroll Posting Date: 9/20/24) totaled \$62,435.39, bringing Total Payroll to \$125,253.67. Mr. Mitchell also pointed out miscellaneous billing expenses which totaled \$1,739.43. This in addition to the total payroll is a netted deduction of \$126,993.10. Subtracting this from the Monthly funding of \$240,578.33 brings the Net Monthly funding amount to \$113,585.23. Mr. Mitchell informed the Board that these funds are verified to check for errors. Mr. Mitchell referred the board to line 31- Full-time salaries, totaling \$125,253.67. Line 41- part-time salaries, totaled \$7,884.16 for September. Line 44- Library receipts, totaled \$6,832.51. He also said there has been an increase in the number of Patrons that pay their fees.

VI. REPORTS

A. President's Report: No report- Mr. Porter let the board know that he and Mr. Mitchell have regular meetings in which most/ all concerns are acknowledged and fulfilled.

B. Director's Report:

- Appleby Library blueprint & scopes: The Library's blueprints and scopes are underway as of October 21, 2024. At 2 pm on October 21, 2024, Studio 3's staff visited the Appleby Branch to map the basement (the last part needed for the blueprint). Mr. Mitchell emphasized that he did receive an apology from Studio 3 for the delay that Hurricane Helene contributed to. Once the blueprint is complete and received, Mr. Mitchell will send them to the state, which will then go to Central Services. Following that, the project will go out to bid;
- The Flooring project (HQ- Children's Department) has dropped on the priority scale since Helene. The delay is a byproduct of the county's priority to submit damage quotes to FEMA by the 90-day deadline. Mr. Mitchell let the board know that he met briefly with the Interim Board Director in which he voiced concerns about the flooring project and possible change orders.
- Website Audit: Office of Civil Rights (OCR) approved audit findings. Benjamin Dudley and Jerome Lopez (APL-HQ staff members) are actively working on revisions needed for the Augusta Richmond County Public Library System's website based on findings. Once it is done, OCR will conduct their audit, if there are no findings, it will be approved and the claim will be dismissed. If something is found, the issues will be addressed, and an audit will be conducted again until it is approved.
- Appleby Repairs: Due to the significant damage that occurred from Hurricane Helene, Central Services submitted a list of repairs for the Apple Library branch. The total repair cost is a little over \$21,000 and will be covered by FEMA. The library will not be back-charged for these repairs.
- Custodial: Jani King is working well with the library. Starting the week of October 28, 2024, Jani King Employee will work from 6:30 to 8:30 am to ensure the cleanliness of the stairs. Mr. Mitchell spoke on the improved cleanliness and appearance of the restrooms thanks to custodian, Mr. Willie Williams' work ethic.
- Donations: The library did not get the grant from the KNOX foundation. However, Mr. and Mrs. Knox donated \$5,000 to contribute to the Appleby renovation. This leaves the Library \$195,000 short of the total needed to complete renovations. Mr. Mitchell informed the board that he has been working strongly on behalf of the library to receive the remainder of the funds needed to complete the project and emphasizes the Library's need for the Commission's support. He also predicts that the project will possibly be under \$900,000, he is simultaneously calculating for change orders to ensure that the library has more than enough funds.
- Advertisement (job positions): Interviews will be conducted during the weeks of October 21, 2024, and October 28, 2024, for the PR in marketing job position. Scheduled interviews were postponed due to Hurricane Helene. The promotion of Anna Wendorf (Circulation Manager) was mentioned, in addition, her previous job position (Library Assistant 1) has been posted. Next week Mr. Mitchell will begin reviewing candidates for this position.
- Updates: Star Wars Read- postponed to December 7, 2024. Marketing has begun, and press releases are ready but will be sent out towards the end of November. Kappa League will host a reading event at the Maxwell Branch to increase the engagement of the youth at this particular location. The event is scheduled to take place on Saturday, October 26, 2024, from 10 am-12 pm.

C. There are no committees at this time. The meeting was handed over to Mr. Garman.

D. Friends of the Library Report:

Friends' bookshop will continue. The next book sale will be next year, further details will be discussed amongst the Friends in their meeting scheduled for October 28, 2024.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A) Incident Reports

Headquarters: Patron loitered and bothered a library student assistant. Mr. Mitchell mentioned that the purpose of staff day was to train employees on how to deal with situations such as this. Mr. Mitchell assured the Board that he would continue to work with management and staff to prevent similar situations from reoccurring. He also plans to update security again so that the police are contacted if this were to happen again. In addition to this, an important concern is the fact that minors are employed at the Library. Mr. Mitchell conveyed that the protection of staff is a priority, if an arrest is necessary, it will happen. September 25, 2024- Patron came into the facility, speaking irrationally. He eventually apologized and was asked to leave, which he did. October 16, 2024- Patron failed to comply with the rules of the library, which led to a conversation between Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Liner about adding more signage through the building using Glow Forge. Maxwell Branch: October 15, 2024- A patron was locked in the building for over 30 minutes. Patron was contacted by Mr. Mitchell. After reviewing the security footage, it appears that the employee overlooked the patron in the meeting room. The board asked if there are procedures in place for staff members who are closing. Mr. Mitchell informed them that there are procedures in place that direct the employees to check each meeting room. Board member Cher Best recommended having a checklist that displays the closing procedures and requires the signature of the employee.

B) WEBSITE AUDIT

Mr. Mitchell reemphasized what was spoken about in the Director's report regarding the website audit.

C) BOARD RETREAT

The Augusta Richmond County Public Library System's Board Retreat will be held on November 16, 2024. The location will remain the same as last year's board retreat, The Brookstone Clubhouse. It was discussed between Mr. Mitchell and the state that Dustin Landrum will conduct a partnership update. Mr. Mitchell added that he will cover the budget and break down how the state calculates our budget. There will also be a PowerPoint shown to the board to reflect this. There will be a session that presents the opportunity to learn and discuss the cognitive processes and effects of "Perception and Unconscious Bias".

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION- Closed to Public

Mr. Cherry moved that the Board go into Executive Session. Ms. Rhodes seconded. The Board dismissed the public and went into Executive Session at 6:25 pm. The board welcomed the public and resumed the meeting at 6:38 pm.

A) Ms. Reeves moved to approve a 3% salary increase for Russell Liner (Headquarters Library staff member). Mrs. Garman seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A) Board Meeting Schedule for 2025

Anna Reeves made a motion to approve the Board Meeting Schedule for 2025. Tonia Gibbons seconded. All voted in favor, and the motion carried.

B) Holiday Schedule

Ms. Gibbons made a motion to approve the holiday schedule with corrections to the date for the “New Year’s Day Celebration”, changing it from January 1, 2024, to January 1, 2026. Mr. Cherry seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

C) Budget Policy (Vote)

Mr. Mitchell informed the board that the Budget Policy is about The Library’s AUP with the state. It also explains how the Library is mandated to have at least 6 months of operating expenses in case something happens. This is something that was requested by the new auditor. Mr. Cherry moved to approve the budget policy as written. Ms. Best seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

D) Wallace Operating Hours

The Wallace Branch Library will align its operation hours with other library branches by opening at 9:00 am on Fridays. This change will begin on November 1, 2024. Ms. Gibbons made a motion to approve these changes. Mr. Cherry seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

X. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Mr. Porter commented on his positive overview of Staff Day. He explained that this day was a gateway for great conversations. Staff members also expressed their desire to see the Board Members as more frequent visitors to the library branches. Mr. Mitchell added that this should remain limited to keep Board decisions fair. Mrs. Garman also added the staff’s suggestions for Employee recognition moments. Mr. Garman stated that he would discuss Employee recognition with the Friends of the Library in their next meeting to possibly secure donations.
- Ms. Best shared her ideas to advertise meeting spaces on social media and even suggested holiday specials for rooms.
- Ms. Gibbons inquired about the Headquarters’ Board Room furniture renovations. Mr. Mitchell addressed her concern and stated that he would need to receive quotes before proceeding with the process.

XI. Adjournment

The ARCPLS Board of Trustees regular meeting adjourned at 6:53 pm.