

**Amended with Corrections to Roll Call September 16th, 2025**

Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System

Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

Headquarters Branch Library

Monday, June 16, 2025

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; Christine Rhodes; Leadra Collins, Sheila Siler. Members absent: Anita Rookard (excused); Kimberly Brown (excused); Cher Best (excused); Francine Scott (excused). Ex-officio members present: Dennis Garman (Friends of the Library); Emanuel Mitchell (Library Director). Ex-officio members absent: Robyn Wittenberg-Dudley (excused).

**III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ms. Collins moved to approve the May 2025 board meeting minutes. Ms. Reeves seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

**V. TREASURER'S REPORT**

Mr. Mitchell referred the board to the invoice from Augusta Richmond County's charges to the Library for May's payroll. Mr. Mitchell referred the board to line 31 – full time salaries totaled \$164,311.25 and line 41- part time salaries, totaled \$19,298.56 for May. He explained to the Board that May was a little higher because there are five (5) weeks in that month. He directed the Board to Line 44- Library receipts, totaled \$8,457.64. He said that the Library has surpassed the goal of \$50,000.00 by \$6,066.00 for this line item. Mr. Mitchell explained that patrons are really using the meeting rooms more and valuing the collection by returning borrowed books. Mr. Mitchell confirmed that the \$182,000.00 from Wells Fargo was deposited into the Community Foundation account, the regular fund, not the capital fund. He explained that the capital fund can only be used for special projects, whereas the regular fund can be used for anything by submitting a request and the money will be deposited in the Library account. Mr. Mitchell reminded that Board that the Fiscal Year ends on June 30, 2025.

**VI. REPORTS**

A. President's Report: No report

B. Director's Report:

- The calendar *Reservation Room* went live and is doing well.
- We received the audit back from the State and there were no findings. Mr. Mitchell then handed out copies of the audit to each Board member. He explained that the purpose of the audit is to ensure the Library is following the rules of the State and the Library. A copy of the audit goes in the budget request to Finance.
- Website Audit: Office of Civil Rights (OCR) is still at a stalemate. The OCR is still without any attorneys. As soon as this is settled, the Library will be able to close out the claim once the new attorneys review the website and officially declare that it is good.
- Donations: No donations for the month of May.
- New Hires: Mr. Mitchell declared that the libraries are 99% staffed. Diamond Lakes Branch Manager has been hired, the Library Assistant III for Maxwell will begin in July, the Library Assistant PR position was posted and has been closed – there are four candidates that will be interviewed week ending June 27, 2025. Will still need to fill one position at the Friedman Branch. Wallace is the only Branch outside of Headquarters that has two trained two licensed librarians with an MLIS.
- Updates: Summer Reading Kick-Off was a smash with a little over 700 participants. Had many vendors to participate – 20 or 21 vendors were there. The featured author gave away 150 autographed books and donated copies to each library branch, Richmond County Board of Education gave away books as well. Many volunteers helped out – service members from the Base, and members of local fraternities and sororities were there. Board members who attended included Mr. Maben, Mr. and Mrs. Garman, and Ms. Reeves. The only Augusta official who attended was the Fire Chief – missing officials included the Mayor, the Marshall and other city representatives. All were invited, but none showed. The last event involving the library will be the Juneteenth Parade which the bookmobile will attend. Mr. Mitchell announced that he is taking vacation time from June 20<sup>th</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>. He then stated that the Star Wars Reads event will be hosted by the Library next year since the Library collaborated with the HUB for May the Fourth Be With You event this year.

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

D. Friends of the Library Report: The Friends are excited about the new flooring that will be installed in the bookstore. It is prepped and ready to receive the new flooring. They will also receive an updated computer. The Friends have been attending the Summer Concert series at the Appleby Branch – the performers have been very good. The donations have been good as well at the events. They will be raffling off one of the Historic Augusta blankets at the concert series this month. The next Book Sale will be November 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>. Sponsor tents was brought up by Ms. Reeves as something that could be looked into for the Appleby Branch after the renovation is complete.

## VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A) Incident Reports: On June 3, 2025 at the Headquarters location, a patron was stealing one of the small computers from the circulation area. Have never locked them down, but have ordered locks to secure all of the library's PCs. A library assistant was making

the rounds of the library on June 4<sup>th</sup> to check all hardware when the PC was discovered missing. The theft was reported, and the patron returned that day to try to steal another one. The patron was caught, the police were called and the patron was arrested.

B) WEBSITE AUDIT: Mr. Mitchell reemphasized what was spoken about in the Director's report regarding the website audit.

C) APPLEBY UPDATE: We are in procurement, in the bidding process, the cost estimate now has to be in the overall project and that's how much each remodel costs. Since the basement was not in the original bid, they are checking it for asbestos and lead. We received the cost analysis today and now we're waiting for them to do the testing. Once that is completed then everything needed for the bid packet is done and it should roll out to bid. Mr. Mitchell expressed the hope of getting a retractable stage for Appleby, as well once renovations are complete. Also mentioned was the possibility of renting the yard out for weddings/events.

## **IX. NEW BUSINESS**

A) Library audits have been received, so if the Board has any questions please let Mr. Mitchell know and he will go over them. Ms. Hannah has graduated from the UGA government accounting class and has her certification now in government accounting.

B) EMCOR is the HVAC company that was already servicing Headquarters and Friedman Branch and due to problems at the Maxwell Branch, that location has been added to the contract. These are maintenance agreements. The cost breakdown for the Maxwell Branch will be \$6,120.00 which will be paid in installments of \$1,530.00 per quarter for the year beginning in July. The first payment is due August 1, 2025, and the following payments will be finished by July 2026. The motion was made by Ms. Gibbons and seconded by Ms. Siler to accept this maintenance proposal with EMCOR. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

C) Library Finance Policy was never written down, but the State requires it to be written down. This policy includes the internal controls, like what is done for the Fund balance. These were implied but never written down. A motion to approve the Library Finance Policy as written was made by Ms. Gibbons and seconded by Ms. Garman. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

D) Director's Salary

## **X. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Closed to Public Mrs. Garman moved that the Board go into Executive Session. Ms. Reeves seconded. The Board dismissed the public and went into Executive Session at 6:37 pm. The board welcomed the public and resumed the meeting at 6:47 pm.

A) Ms. Reeves moved to approve a 14.99% salary increase for Mr. Emmanuel Mitchell (Headquarters Library Director). Ms. Collins seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

## **XI. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- Ms. Reeves stated that everyone needs to complete the Budget Priority Survey that was previously circulated. It is an online survey that many of the commissioners have been pushing out.
- Ms. Collins announced that the Utilities Department will be doing water maintenance on Sunday, June 22, 2025 from 7am to 7pm where the water will be shut off in the two-block area around the Headquarters Library. A motion was made by Mrs. Garman to close the Headquarters Library on Sunday, June 22, 2025 due to lack of water and sanitation. The motion was seconded by Ms. Siler. All voted in favor. The motion carried. Ms. Collins offered to push a message out about the library closing on the city's web site.
- Mr. Porter announced that he is a new father-in-law as of last Sunday. Also, his son qualified for the Junior Olympics in Track – running the 200-yard dash. Mr. Porter reminded everyone of the Juneteenth Parade on Saturday, June 21, and encouraged everyone to come out.

## **XI. Adjournment**

Ms. Reeves moved for the adjournment of the ARCPLS Board of Trustees monthly meeting. Ms. Siler seconded. The ARCPLS Board of Trustees regular meeting adjourned at 6:57 pm.