

Augusta Richmond County Public Library System

Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

Maxwell Branch Library

Monday, November 17, 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 5:50 pm by Board President, Morris Porter.

II. ROLL CALL

Members present: Morris Porter (President), Brenda Garman (Vice President), Tonia Gibbons (Treasurer), Cher Best, Leadra Collins, Sheila Siler, Kimberly Brown, Marsha Cole. Members Absent: Anna Reeves (excused), Anita Rookard (excused), Christine Rhodes (excused). Ex-officio members present: Emanuel Mitchell (Library Director), Dennis Garman (Friends of the Library). Ex-officio members absent: Commissioner Francine Scott (excused), Robyn Wittenberg Dudley (Friends of the Library) (excused)

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Porter entertained a motion to approve the agenda. Ms. Garman moved to approve the agenda as written, Ms. Collins seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The motion to approve the agenda as written passed.

IV. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 20 MINUTES

Mr. Porter entertained a motion to approve the minutes as written from the October 20th regular meeting. Ms. Collins moved to approve the minutes as written, Ms. Garman seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The motion to approve the minutes as written passed.

V. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 23 MINUTES

Mr. Porter entertained a motion to approve the minutes as written from the October 23rd emergency meeting. Ms. Collins moved to approve the minutes as written, Ms. Brown seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Ms. Garman abstained. The motion to approve the minutes as written passed.

VI. TREASURER'S REPORT

- Mr. Mitchell pointed out that this time of year always sees an increase in payments on Line 19 due to insurance payments on the building and vehicles, as well as for the Board.
- Mr. Mitchell pulled attention to Line 31 (full time salaries) which is higher than normal as there were three pay periods this month. The total for Line 31 is \$165,838.14
- Line 41 (part time salary) \$14,298.08, which is the same as last month
- Line 43 (interest collection) \$5,577.33 is doing well through the community foundation.
- There were no questions from the board about the treasurer's report.

VII. REPORTS

A. President's Report: No report

B. Director's Report:

- The bid on Appleby has closed. A packet with information on the potential vendor was passed around for the Board to see.
- From here, the bid will go through several departments for approval. Once all necessary parties have approved the bid and the vendor, a start date will be determined.
- The library will only be responsible for moving the books and collection at Appleby, the vendor will move the shelves, as they will be the ones to put them back.
- The piano will be wrapped and moved around the space as needed.
- It was discussed that books and materials may be put into circulation at other branches with an "A" added to spines to allow the materials to be re-collected when Appleby is up and running again.
- Mr. Mitchell talked about The Diamond Lakes agreement and its lack of validity. It is missing key contract items, such as beginning and termination dates. The Board has the ability to dissolve the agreement by notifying the county.
- It is likely the agreement will be dissolved, as it was made with East Central Georgia Regional Library System, which dissolved several years ago.
- After several rounds of interviews for the Fiscal Officer position, a candidate has been selected. Once the candidate finishes the onboard process, Mr. Mitchell will send their information to the Board.
- Mr. Mitchell thanked Ms. Best for her continued advertisement of the Library to the public.
- Mr. Mitchell pointed out that even though door counts have decreased, use of materials, computers, Wi-Fi, circulation, and website hits have increased substantially.

C. Committee Report:

- The members of the nominating committee were absent (excused) from the meeting today.
- The board entered executive session for the Directors Annual Evaluation

D. Friends of the Library Report

- FOAL held there Booksale last weekend to great success. They raised over \$2,000.
- Library staff was very helpful and accommodating in helping with setup and teardown, as well as advertising for the event. The AARP group even stayed after their monthly meeting to help set up for the Booksale.
- Prices were increased on many books to \$2 and there were very few periods of time with no one at the event.
- The next Booksale is planned for the first weekend in May.
- It was suggested to look at planning the Booksale with other public events happening downtown, with the aim of cross-promotional coordination between events.
- The FOAL annual meeting is Feb 2, 2026.

- We have the ability at the HQ branch to print new banners if needed for advertising and promotional needs.

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Closed to Public

Mr. Porter entertained a motion that the Board go into Executive Session. Ms. Gibbons made a motion to go into executive session. Ms. Collins seconded. The Board dismissed the public and went into Executive Session at 6:01 pm. The board welcomed the public and resumed the meeting at 6:20 pm.

- a) Ms. Gibbons moved to approve moving \$200,000.00 from the library's savings account to the library's checking account. Ms. Brown seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The motion to approve moving \$200,000.00 from the library's savings account to the library's checking account passed unanimously.

The board reentered executive session at 6:23 pm. The board welcomed the public and resumed the meeting at 6:33 pm.

- b) Ms. Garman made a motion to approve the director's annual evaluation as written. Ms. Brown seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The motion to approve the director's annual evaluation as written passed unanimously.

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a) Incident Reports
 - a. On October 5th, at Headquarters, a gentleman made one of the young female employees feel uncomfortable at the circulation desk. The man was asked to leave by the Marshall and assaulted the Marshall. The man was eventually arrested and banned permanently from the library.
 - i. Ms. Gibbons asked what safeguards are in place for the women working at the desk. Mr. Mitchell informed her of the policy. If any employee is made uncomfortable, they are to excuse themselves and go to the back room. This will signal to the Marshall that they need to intervene.
 - b. On October 17th, there were patrons caught drinking at Maxwell and Headquarters. Mr. Mitchell informed the Board that this is a common occurrence at libraries across the country and not exclusive to our library system.
 - c. On November 6th, a transformer blew near Wallace and the branch had to close early.
 - d. Maxwell Branch had a patron lean too far back in a computer chair. The chair broke, but the patron was unharmed.
 - e. Mr. Mitchell spoke about the ongoing problem of patrons ripping paper towel and toilet paper dispensers off of the walls, despite the assurance from the manufacturers that that should not be possible. The manufacturer is crediting us

the cost of 6 dispensers and will send someone out to look at them and help us come up with a solution.

- b) Website OCR Update
 - a. There is still no news as we are still awaiting OCR staffing changes to approve our compliance.
- c) Appleby Update
 - a. The bidding process has ended. The final bid needs to be approved by several parties before a start date can be determined.

X. NEW BUSINESS

- a) 2026 Meeting Schedule
 - a. Mr. Porter entertained a motion to approve the proposed meeting schedule for 2026. Ms. Brown made a motion to approve the meeting schedule for 2026 as written. Ms. Collins seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The motion to approve the 2026 meeting schedule as written passed unanimously.
- b) Steve Sanders Esq.
 - a. Mr. Porter entertained a motion to approve the continued service of Steve Sanders Esq. as the Board Attorney for the 2026 Fiscal Year. Ms. Gibbons made a motion to continue using Steve Sanders Esq.'s legal services for the 2026 Fiscal Year. Ms. Brown and Ms. Siler seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The motion to continue using Steve Sanders Esq.'s legal services for the 2026 Fiscal Year passed unanimously.

XI. Public Comments

- a) Ms. Gibbons mentioned that Commissioner Scott has been seen publicly promoting the library, and with concerns of the budget, she encouraged the board members to actively promote the library to the public.
- b) Mr. Garman spoke about an author event scheduled in February of 2026. Clay Cane, Author of The Grift, will be touring his new book, Burn Down Master's House.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

The ARCPLS Board of Trustees regular meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.