Augusta Richmond County Public Library System

Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

Headquarters Library

Monday, July 20th, 2026

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 5:29 pm by Board Vice President, Brenda Garman.

II. ROLL CALL

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

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Garman entertained a motion to approve the agenda. Ms. Best moved to approve the agenda as written. Ms. Reeves and Ms. Collins seconded the motion. The motion to approve the agenda as written passed unanimously.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Garman entertained a motion to approve the minutes as written from the June regular meeting. Ms. Best moved to approve the minutes as written. Ms. Reeves seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes as written passed unanimously.

V. TREASURER'S REPORT

- Mr. Mitchell presented the Treasure's Report.
- Mr. Mitchell asked the Board to allow an extension on the Treasure's Report, to be submitted by Wednesday. We received the payroll billing going back to January just before the meeting and the correct numbers need to be added to the report to show the true amount of money that was spent during FY26. The Board granted the extension.
- Based off the initial report, it looked like we ended FY26 in the red by 18K. Looking at the actual numbers from finance, we were overcharged on payroll throughout the 2026 calendar year and we will end FY26 in the black.
- Ms. Rookard asked how this happened. Mr. Mitchell informed her that finance was estimating payroll since they could not get the report they needed from ADP.

VI. REPORTS

- President's Report: No report

- Director's Report:

    a) We received a letter from GPLS accepting and approving our FY25 audit. As a result, the funds for the rest of the year from GPLS will be automatically released.
    b) We are still awaiting final approval from OCR on our website
    c) JLA came out for the staircase repairs. They are working with the original designers of the staircase to develop an installation plan for the repairs on the glass. The glass was not initially installed correctly, so there is a high probability that all of the glass and the railings will need to be dismantled and re-installed correctly.
    d) Mr. Mitchell will be speaking with Ben Carter, the Assistant State Librarian, about the possibility of hosting future Board Meetings fully virtual. The language of the law needs to be reviewed to ensure we are in compliance, but if we are able to go virtual, we will need to find a way to allow the public to make live comments and questions to the Board during the meetings.
    e) The budget request is complete and a total of 108 pages. The goal is to restore the system back to our full hours from the beginning of the year and re-evaluate some positions, shifting full time positions to split part-time positions. This split will save on employee health care costs. Part-time employees do not receive health care through the Library System, and not all full-time positions could be successfully performed as part-time employment.
    f) Another main focus of the Budget Request was outlining how our values and mission align with the County's values and mission.
    g) Ms. Reeves asked about a drop in programming attendance. Mr. Mitchell confirmed that our reduction in hours have led to a reduction in attendance, but the road construction outside the Headquarters branch also plays a significant part in our reduction in attendance.
    h) Ms. Wittenberg-Dudley asked about the upcoming Between the Stacks event. We have 60 people registered for the event, and this will be an ongoing series, not just a one time event.

- Committee Report: No report

- Friends of the Library Report:
    a) Ms. Wittenberg-Dudley reported that the Fall Booksale is scheduled for November 6th and 7th and they are recruiting volunteers to help set up and take down.
    b) FOAL Volunteers are ready to assist with Arts in the Heart in September
    c) Friends helped with the Summer Reading Program Kick-Off

d) The Bookstore continues to be open and staffed with volunteers. At this time, it is open about half the time the library is open. They are recruiting additional volunteers to keep it open longer.
e) Rise Augusta will be donating some children's books for the bookstore.
f) Friends identified a company that buys books and received their first check last week
g) Sign Language classes continue at Wallace Branch

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Incident Reports
  a) On June 13th, a vendor who rented the space suffered from a seizure in the HQ meeting room. The group claimed that it was due to the heat in the room. We pulled the temperature records of the room at the time of the incident, and it was only 70 in the room. As a solution, we refunded 50% of the room reservation and, moving forward, we will no longer work with that vendor.
  b) On June 18th, a patron at Diamond Lakes was found giving themselves a haircut in the restroom. They were asked to leave and were escorted out of the building.
  c) On July 9th, in the middle of the night, the alarm went off at Friedman. It is still unknown what triggered the alarm to go off.

- Website OCR Update
  a) Please see the Director's Report

- Appleby Update
  a) Planning and the Fire Department are working on an evacuation chair in the event of an emergency to assist wheelchair users on the second floor to evacuate the building. Once those permits are pulled everything is ready to move forward.

- Headquarters Staircase Update
  a) Please see the Director's Report.

- Headquarters Roof Update
  a) We have funding for the Roof Project.
  b) We went to procurement to seek and emergency contract since rain water is leaking through to the second floor through the light fixtures. Our roof is 16 years old, but it is listed as a 10 year roof. Our request for an emergency contract was denied, so the request will go back out through the full bidding process.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- Vote to Approve New Library Director Evaluation Form
    a) At the request of the Board, Mr. Mitchell redid a new evaluation form based on the forms on ALA's website
    b) The Board decided to delay the vote to adapt the new evaluation form until next month to allow the Board Members more time to review it.

- Vote to Approve FY27 Budget Request
    a) Ms. Reeves made a motion to approve the budget request. Ms. Rhodes seconded the motion. The motion to approve the budget request passed unanimously

- Vote to Approve Children's Furniture
    a) Ms. Reeves made a motion to approve the purchase of the Quill/Amazon Children's Furniture. Ms. Best and Ms. Collins seconded the motion. The motion to approve the purchase of the Quill/Amazon Children's Furniture passed unanimously.

- Vote to Approve the New Ice Machine
    a) Ms. Rookard made a motion to approve the Ice Machine quoted at $5380. Ms. Reeves seconded the motion. The motion to approve the purchase of the Ice Machine quoted at $5380 passed unanimously.

- Vote to Approve JLA Wallace Fee Agreement
    a) This Fee Agreement would create a set of usable blueprints and renderings for a second floor to the Wallace Branch to present for congressional funding.
    b) Ms. Reeves made a motion to approve the JLA Wallace Fee Agreement. Ms. Collins seconded the motion. The motion to approve the JLA Wallace Fee Agreement passed unanimously.

IX. Public Comments

- No Public Comments

X. ADJOURNMENT

The ARCPLS Board of Trustees regular meeting adjourned at 6:03 pm.