

Augusta Richmond County Public Library System

Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

Headquarters Library

Monday, August 24th, 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 5:34 pm by Board President, Morris Porter.

II. ROLL CALL

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

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Porter entertained a motion to approve the agenda. Ms. Gibbons moved to approve the agenda as written. Ms. Rhodes seconded the motion. The motion to approve the agenda as written passed unanimously.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Porter entertained a motion to approve the minutes as written from the July regular meeting. Ms. Garman moved to approve the minutes as written. Ms. Gibbons seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes as written passed unanimously.

V. TREASURER'S REPORT

- Ms. Hinkle presented the Treasure's Report.
- FY26 has closed. Ms. Hinkle cleaned up the errors in the report from last month and submitted the updated version to the board.
- We have been charged for the marshals and we received the check from the county on the first week of this month
- We are still painting in the children's department and circulation department which accounts for the charges in repairs and maintenance to the building (line 29).
- Ms. Hinkle began uploading documents for the audit. She is planning to have everything together by the end of the week.
- Ms. Garman asked about the positive balances on FY26. They will roll over in accordance with the County's fiscal year vs. the State's.

VI. REPORTS

- President's Report: No report
- Director's Report:
 - a) In July 2026 we are doing well.
 - b) The Appleby renovation has all permits in place. Demo starts today or tomorrow.
 - i. There were challenges with EDS. There was a group coming to prune the trees for free, but they were unable to do so since EDS opened up the middle gate and used it as auxiliary parking for their open house.
 - c) OCR closed out the complaint on our website. We are now in compliance.
 - d) Summer Reading Program went very well. Dave and Busters has offered us an extended partnership for the next 7 years to host our Summer Reading Kick-Off.
 - i. SkillZilla was also a strong partner for our Summer Reading Program.
 - e) Between the Shelves went well last month. The next one is scheduled for Thursday August 27th from 6:00 – 7:00 pm. Board members and Elected Officials do not need to register to attend.
 - i. We've added a \$2.00 registration/confirmation fee to secure seats for Between the Shelves, as 62 people registered and only 35 showed up last month. Since we are providing food, this fee will help insure we are not purchasing food unnecessarily.
 - ii. This month's featured artist is TreSounds
 - f) Last Thursday, Mr. Mitchell and Ms. Hinkle had their budget presentation with the Administrator and her team.
 - i. Health Care continues to be our largest budget line. We are looking at taking a couple vacant positions and splitting them into part time positions to save on those costs.
 - ii. The County is in a deficit this year and they are talking about cuts. The library cannot be cut at a higher percentage than other departments.
 - iii. Our state budget has been submitted, approved, and funded
 - iv. We are in the process of completing the state audit. Ms. Hinkle has assisted in making it a very smooth process this year.
 - v. We may move towards a different law agency for the library's legal representation that specializes in representing libraries.
 - g) The upcoming directors meeting is in September. Mr. Mitchell will attend the meeting while Ms. Hinkle attends a pay-roll "boot camp"
 - h) We have an intern from the accounting program at Augusta University. He is doing well so far and Mr. Mitchell is open to interviewing him at the end of his internship.
 - i) Mr. John Hutcherson has received his MLS and is now a licensed librarian in the State of Georgia.

- j) The Headquarters Staircase has been turned over to central services. They are working with JLA on new staircases. The fire marshal has deemed this an emergency procurement project so it will not go through the standard bidding process
- k) JLA is working on preliminary designs for Wallace to add an African American History Research Library on a newly added second floor, as well as remaining a standard library on the first floor.
- l) We've had two contractors come in to see the roof. Hickson's bid was \$110,00.00 cheaper than our lowest bid so far. This price difference is based on a technique they have to replace the roof. It will also come with a 20-year warranty from the manufacturer.
 - i. We have the money to fund the project, but it's been bottlenecked in procurement.
 - ii. Mr. Porter asked how many quotes we have for the roof as well as for more information on the technique that would save money. We currently have two bids, and do not need a third to move forward, as this is emergency procurement. To cut costs, the contractor would cover the roof with new material instead of pulling up all of the old roof to fully replace it. The contractor's think the leak is coming from the flashing not the roof itself. We will learn more about the leaks once the project gets underway.
- m) We have no donations for July, however the Young Man's Library Association has indicated that they plan on donating to the library before the end of the year. The association is moving towards dissolution, and we would be the receiver of their funds.
- n) The library is advertising job postings for a Library Assistant I for tech services, a Circulation Manager, a Library Assistant III for Maxwell, and an Outreach Manager. These positions will remain full time

- Committee Report: No report

- Friends of the Library Report:

- a) Ms. Wittenberg-Dudley had to leave early, so Mr. Garman gave the report.
- b) Mr. Garman reported that the Fall Booksale is scheduled for November 6th and 7th and they are recruiting volunteers to help set up and take down.
- c) FOAL Volunteers are ready to assist with Arts in the Heart in September
- d) Friends have made progress with sorting the upstairs Bookroom. The whole section by the front door has been cleaned, and they will schedule more volunteers to assist with cleaning.
- e) The Bookstore continues to be open and staffed with volunteers. At this time, it is open about half the time the library is open.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Incident Reports
 - a) A gentleman was found sitting in the auditorium when the library was closed on a Sunday. Police were notified via the alarm and the gentleman was removed from the premises. We are working on having the door replaced to prevent this from happening in the future.
- Website OCR Update
 - a) Please see the Director's Report
- Appleby Update
 - a) Please see the Director's Report
- Headquarters Staircase Update
 - a) Please see the Director's Report.
- Headquarters Roof Update
 - a) Please see the Director's Report

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- SkillZilla Presentation
 - a) Daniel from SkillZilla presented a proposal for a partnership with the library. They are an organization focused on career readiness skills for youth within the community
 - b) They focus on taking skills teens already have and adapting them towards career goals
 - c) The career readiness fair is aimed to connect teens with hiring companies and active open positions.
 - d) SkillZilla is seeking a partnership with the Library, including funding for their classes in the amount of \$1500.00, which would cover 6 classes, as well as space. This would be a continuous six week course; one course at each branch.
 - e) Ms. Gibbons asked if they have talked with the RCBOE board for partnership. Daniel pointed out that while the youth is the primary goal, anyone who needs help can apply
 - f) Ms. Garman asked if they have sought funding elsewhere. They have reached out for grants. She also brought up other funding plans, like treating the fees as a deposit. Or individual classes instead of the whole course.
 - g) Mr. Porter asked about other channels mentioned in the presentation that the library would have access to if they partnered. These channels are social media, advertising, and outreach, as well as physical handouts.
 - h) Ms. Siler asked about reaching out to Ft. Gordan
 - i) Ms. Siler asked about Daniel's credentials. He is a former teacher

j) It was discussed that while this is a good service for the community, its nature is outside of the scope of the library and would be a costly partnership for the library to fund. Ms. Gibbons made a motion to not enter into an agreement with SkillZilla. Ms. Garman and Ms. Best seconded. The motion to not enter into an agreement with SkillZilla passed unanimously.

- Jefferson Maxwell Presentation

- a) Alessandra Powell could not make the meeting to make her presentation, so Mr. Mitchell spoke on her behalf. Ms. Powell's grandmother raised the initial funds to open Maxwell, and she did it through collecting milk cartons.
- b) Ms. Powell is asking for a placard posted inside of Maxwell Library honoring the work her grandmother did for Maxwell library
- c) Ms. Gibbons made a motion to approve funding to make a placard to honor Ms. Powell's grandmother. Ms. Siler seconded the motion. The motion to approve funding to make a placard to honor Ms. Powell's grandmother passed unanimously.
- d) Mr. Mitchell will go through the engineering department to make the placard and there will be a press release when it is unveiled.

- Vote to Approve RCBOE MOU

- a) Ms. Best made a motion to add a Vote to Approve the MOU between ARCPLS and RCBOE to the agenda. Ms. Garman seconded the motion. The motion to add a Vote to Approve the MOU between ARCPLS and RCBOE to the agenda passed unanimously.
- b) The MOU lists the Headquarters Library as one of two designated locations the staff can use as evacuation points in the event of an emergency. Half of the staff would evacuate to the library; the other half would evacuate to their second location. This would amount to 200 people.
- c) Ms. Gibbons made a motion to approve the MOU. Ms. Best seconded the motion. The motion to approve the MOU passed unanimously.

- Vote to Approve New Library Director Evaluation Form

- a) Ms. Garman asked how the board would be able to judge the "fairness" of the Director's staff evaluations, as listed in Section 5, if they do not see the evaluations or speak to the staff directly. To clarify Section 5, the suggestion was made to change the language of the Section to indicate the Board was evaluating the consistency of staff evaluations, not the quality of the evaluations.
- b) Ms. Garman made a motion to approve the new Director's Evaluation Form, with the change to the language in Section 5 from, "conducts evaluations fairly" to "conducts evaluations consistently". Ms. Gibbons seconded the motion. The

motion to approve the new Director's Evaluation Form, with the change to the language in Section 5 from, "conducts evaluations fairly" to "conducts evaluations constantly" passed unanimously.

IX. Public Comments

- Mr. Mitchell reminded the Board of the upcoming board retreat on October 3rd.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The ARCPLS Board of Trustees regular meeting adjourned at 6:42 pm.