



AHJ REGIONAL LIBRARY BOARD
Estill Public Library
Tuesday, July 9, 2024
5:00 PM

MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

The quarterly regional board meeting was called to order at approximately 5:08 p.m. by Julie Mikols, vice-chair. Trustees in attendance were Julie Mikols, vice-chair, Sandi Vito, chair, Frances Chavous, Glenice Watts, Charles Carlson, Emerson Wiles, Artheen Fitts, Dawn Winn and Carolyn Fortson, regional director. Visiting from Hampton County was Dr. Allan Kircher, guest of Emerson Wiles.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Trustee Watts made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 9 meeting. Trustee Wiles seconded the motion. All were in favor, and none were opposed. The minutes were approved.

APPROVAL OF THE CALLED MEETING MINUTES

Trustee Watts made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 28 meeting. The minutes were unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Approval of Policies:

Collection Development Policy and the **Reconsideration Policy** - Trustee Fortson gave an update on why the two policies were amended. Both policies were amended and approved unanimously.

Grievance Policy – After some discussion, trustee Vito agreed to draft a revision of the policy based on the comments made as suggestions.

Use of Vehicles Policy – Policy was approved with two amendments: 1-adding current insurance required and 2) policy excluded the Bookmobile. Policy was unanimously approved.

Volunteers Policy – Policy was tabled until later.

NEW BUSINESS:

Bookmobile Purchase Update – Director Fortson stated that she spoke with the state library director, Leesa Aiken about finding funds to purchase a new bookmobile. Director Aiken stated that she would suggest that she and I work with our local legislators to create awareness for the need and that funding probably would not be granted before FY2026. Director Fortson informed Director Aiken that she was applying for the Impact grant. Director Aiken stated that the Impact grant could provide \$50,000 for a smaller outreach van until we secure enough funds to purchase the traditional sized bookmobile.

Trustee Watts mentioned two grants as possible funding sources—the Clementa Pinckney Foundation and Council of Government-Lowcountry. Milton Woods from Jasper County was mentioned as a possible contact person in regard to the two grants. The outreach van could be used to supplement the Bookmobile when it is out of service, and to expand coverage areas within the counties. Having an outreach van and the bookmobile would allow us to stagger services around the county. Another comment made was that elected officials mentioned that they would like to see the bookmobile in more rural parts of the county. Director Fortson will continue working on finding funding sources.

Pratt Renovation Project Update – Trustee Mikols gave a brief update on the project. October is the tentative move-in date to the temporary building. Construction will take approximately 18 months for the renovation to be completed.

Strategic Planning Update - Director Fortson has not been able to move forward with the planning due to other projects/tasks. She did speak with State Library staff (Tiffany Haynes) about using a consultant to help us initiate the survey. Director Fortson called two consultants and never heard from them. She will try again.

PEBA Insurance Update – Trustee Mikols presented an update on the project. Health Care benefits for AHJ employees are currently managed by PEBA of SC (Blue Cross/Blue Shield). We received notification that we cannot remain under the County’s employer ID. The library pays for their benefits by writing a monthly check to Allendale County, who then pays PEBA directly. PEBA has decided that libraries will no longer be considered under the same employer ID as the County employees. We have to decide by September whether we want to remain with PEBA or we can shop around for a new provider.

Director Fortson submitted the *Optional Employer Eligibility Determination Form* by the July deadline and was notified that we are eligible to continue with PEBA. There is a September 3rd date deadline to decide if we want to remain with PEBA, with a four-year membership commitment.

A motion was made by Trustee Fitts and seconded by Trustee Watts for approval to remain with PEBA for employee health insurance. The board members signed the *Optional Employer Participation Resolution for Participation in the State Insurance Benefits Program* form that was required as the next step in the process.

NEW BUSINESS – No new business was discussed.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT

The Finance Committee met last week to receive updates on the status of the State Aid carryover funds and to address questions with the bookkeeper. Director Fortson reviewed the budget for the State Aid remaining funds for FY24.

Appropriations Update/Budget

Copies of the recent budget were distributed. Carolyn and Lainey will be working on the FY25

budget. Managers will receive a budget that details all components for spending, which they have not received in the past.

Summer Reading Brochures

Director Fortson passed around copies of the SR brochures that were distributed during June and July for the Summer Reading Program. The brochures were well received, and managers have stated that they believe the brochures increased attendance at programs, etc.

Announcements – There were no announcements.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting is Tuesday, October 8, 2024, at 5:00 PM at the Estill Public Library.

Respectively submitted,
Carolyn Fortson, Regional Director
August 5, 2024