**Darlington County Library System**
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**Locations**
Darlington
Hartsville
Lamar
Society Hill

# BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

September, 2024

Hartsville Branch September 18, 2024

## OPENING OF MEETING

**A.** The meeting was called to order by President, Bobbie Gardner, at 5:00 p.m. A quorum was met with the following members present: Bobbie Gardner, Ken Hughes, Gene Norwood, Vernessia Patterson, Gail Gandy, JoAnn Lee, and Carol Hill; and, the following member(s) attended remotely: Barbara Carraway.

**B.** The following visitor(s) attended, were recognized, and thanked for all they do for our libraries: Tracy Tuplin, Darlington Branch Manager; Lynn Anderson, Society Hill Branch Manager; Antoinette Fernandez, IT Manager; Martha Brown, Hartsville Branch Manager; and, the following member(s) attended remotely and were recognized: Christy Lamb, Administrative Assistant.

**C.** A motion was made by Gene Norwood, seconded by JoAnn Lee, and carried to approve the agenda.

## OPEN FORUM

**A.** None.

## CONSENT AGENDA

**A.** A motion was made by Gail Gandy, seconded by Ken Hughes, and carried to approve the July minutes.

## FINANCIAL REPORT

**A.** In the "43100 REPAIR/REPLACE COMPUTERS" budget line, there is a $19,101.75 debit and a $32,772.97 encumbrance balance. Over $15,000 was used to upgrade public computers at the Darlington Branch. The "47406 LIBRARY PROJECT" budget line shows a balance of $15,282, which was drawn from our reserve, or "Fund Balance," to pay for the upgrade. The budget line was not debited. It is unclear why the line was not debited and the 43100 budget line shows such a large encumbrance. A request for clarification was sent to the Finance Department.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT –** The Director's report included the following:

**A.** The Library's 2024 Summer Reading and Learning Program (SRLP), "Adventure Begins at Your Library" was a success. The system had 1,281 registered for the SRLP, up from last year's 789 registered. A total of 257 of those completed the program.

**B.** An online survey was conducted during August to determine what was successful and what we might improve upon in next year's SRLP. While we did receive one critical review of performer Professor Whizzpop, the high energy program was well attended/received and worth the investment. Feedback received will be used to improve the upcoming SRLP. The 2025 theme for which is "Color Our World."

**C.** The Society Hill Branch Library was selected to apply for a complimentary Lettuce Grow hydroponic indoor farmstand to help create and enhance nutrition and STEM programs in the community. The Center of Resilience Excellence SC (CORE SC) is providing this free indoor hydroponic garden to public libraries in areas experiencing food insecurity.

**D.** On Friday, September 13th, the Hartsville Branch Friends had a "Mrs. Roper Romp" fundraiser, based on the "Three's Company" sitcom character Mrs. Roper, that evening at Vintage in Hartsville. The Friends had a lot of participants dressed as Mrs. Roper, a wealth of Mrs. Roper swag, a "Stanley Calling" contest, and a parade around the block (which drew the attention from a couple of drivers who posted photos on the Facebook page "Hartsville Happenings" wondering about it). When you "paid your rent" ($10) to get in, you got a ticket for an adult beverage. Even WPDE's meteorologist, Ed Piotrowski, who happened to be in Hartsville, joined in the fun. The Friends raised a little over $800 from their event.

**E.** The Library's booth at the 2024 Power Comicon on Saturday, September 14th at the Florence Center was seen by thousands. The 3D printed bookmarks and badges were a big hit as giveaways! The eye catcher at our booth was a Star Wars landspeeder, a child's ride-on toy. It worked as the perfect display rack. Thanks go to Christine Shaw-Rittmeier, Crystel Byrd, Casey Ludwick, Kami Mitchell, and Richard Fraizer for helping staff the booth during the day and more. The next Power Comicon will be in March 2025. We may take the portable planetarium to it!

**F.** There is no plan to abandon physical audiobooks on CD at the time of this report. Due to the expense, limited availability, and decline in use, the allocation of funds and space used for the physical audiobook collection will be re-assessed. Gail Gandy inquired about the process of increasing the number of popular titles available for electronic audiobooks. The Director explained it ultimately comes down to cost. The bestsellers are not inexpensive and we are essentially renting/leasing copies. Multiples are purchased, with a 5:1 ratio as the goal, however cost efficiency has to be considered and this is not always attainable with viral titles/best sellers.

**HOST BRANCH MANAGER'S REPORT –** Martha Brown, Hartsville Branch Manager

**A.** Jennifer Woods, Youth Services Librarian at the Hartsville Branch, is doing great. She has created new programs for the Library. She personally makes a shirt for each child who completes "1,000 Books Before Kindergarten" reading goals. During the month of August, two additional programs were added for teens: Teen Yoga and Teen Crochet.

**B.** The planetarium was set up in August for the meteor shower.

**C.** There is a lot of programming to look forward to for the remainder of the year. To mention a few: in October there's The Taste of Hartsville and Treats on the Streets, in December there's Gingerbread Dash 5K Walk, the Christmas parade, and Cookies with Santa. These special programs are in addition to our regular programming happening each month.

**D.** The Hartsville Library participated in the annual Back to School Bash organized by Senator Gerald Malloy and his wife Davita. It was held at the Hartsville High gymnasium towards the end of July. Jimmie Epling, Tracy Tuplin, Alyssa Saleeby, and I handed out pencils, 3D printed bookmarks, informational sheets, library card

applications, and DISCUS promotional whatnots to the hundreds of students attending the event.

**E.** Our Friends group has been working hard in preparation for their October book sale. It will be in our Community room October 18th-20th. Those who have a Friends' membership can shop early – Thursday evening, October 17th.

**F.** All four branches use a "Wishlist" card so our patrons can request an item if we do not have it in our collection. This enables us to get a feel for what our community wants to read, listen to, or watch. Feel free to ask for a "Wishlist" card if you do not see what you want!

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

No committee reports.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**A. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT UPDATE**

- Darlington Carpet and Laminate – The Flooring Connection asked to start on September 30th, but a request to postpone to Monday, October 7th has been made. The project is expected to take one week and the Darlington Branch will close for at least two days to allow for work in the public areas. Installation will begin in the office areas and then move to the public areas. Arrangements will be made for a crew from the County's Prison Farm to be present to assist with moving furniture. The crew would be supervised by Prison Farm staff the entire time.
- Darlington Lighting System – The Library is working with a local company to replace the four ceiling can-lights over the circulation desk with suspended globe lighting.
- Society Hill Sump Pump – An issue arose with the sump pump in the basement at the Society Hill Branch. The pump is not working properly and will need to be replaced. It is expected this repair will cost several thousand.
- Society Hill Front Door – Estimates/Quotes to replace the front doors at the Society Hill Branch are being obtained. The parts to repair the door are obsolete, thus the doors will have to be replaced completely.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION POLICY REVISION** – The Darlington County Library System has a collection policy in place to guide purchases for the community. As part of that policy, there exists a "Request for Reconsideration" policy to allow someone to formally question and request the removal of something from the collection. Because of factors cited and addressed during this meeting and the legislature's inclusion of Proviso 27.1 in the FY2025 budget requiring public libraries to "… certify to the State Library that their county libraries do not offer any books or materials that appeal to the prurient interest of children under the age of seventeen in children's, youth, or teen book sections of libraries and are only made available with explicit parental consent." (SC Code § 16-15-305 2023), a revision of our Request for Reconsideration policy is recommended. The policy merges the separate public and staff "Request for Reconsideration" into one policy. To prevent an individual or group from overwhelming the staff and Board with requests, the following changes have been made:

- The Library will accept only a request regarding a specific item or title in the collection, not a genre, category, or an author's body of work.
- The Library will only accept a Request for Reconsideration form from a resident of Darlington County or customer who is eligible for a Darlington County library card.
- No proxy Request for Reconsideration for an individual or group outside of Darlington County will be accepted.
- A County resident or card holder may submit only one Request for Reconsideration per month.
- The item under consideration will remain in circulation during the review process.
- If the County resident or card holder is not satisfied with the Director's decision, the individual may appeal the decision to the Board within fourteen days of the date of the Director's response.
- All existing Board meeting procedures apply, including the Board reserving the right to limit the length of public comments.
- If an item is withdrawn as part of the reconsideration process, the Library reserves the right to dispose of it at its discretion, including giving it to the Friends of the Library for its book sale.
- An item or title will only be reviewed for reconsideration one time in a ten-year period by the Library.

A motion was made by Ken Hughes, seconded by Gail Gandy, and carried to approve the changes in the "Request for Reconsideration" policy to prevent any attempt to manipulate the review process by an individual or group.

**B. SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT ON AGING DEMENTIA CARE SPECIALIST OFFICE AT THE HARTSVILLE BRANCH** – The Department on Aging received in the 2025 state budget $1.1 million to solidify and expand our state's Dementia Care Specialist Role by providing ten Dementia Care Specialists (DCS) throughout the state at a regional level. The Department on Aging is seeking partnerships with county libraries to provide space for their new Dementia Care Specialists to provide services in a neutral community setting.

- The Department on Aging sent a sample of its "Memorandum of Lease Agreement Between Darlington County Library, Hartsville Branch and South Carolina Department on Aging" for a Dementia Care Specialist Office in the Hartsville Branch.
- Concerns addressed during the board meeting were liability risks/responsibility, fixed costs, and behavioral policies.
- Ken Hughes recommended speaking with the County's attorney before proceeding.
- A motion was made by Ken Hughes, seconded by Gail Gandy, and carried to approve pursuing a MOA with the Department on Aging to host a Dementia Care Specialist office for one year.

**PROPOSED AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING**
None.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**
None.

**ADJOURNMENT**
A motion was made by Gene Norwood, seconded by Gail Gandy, and carried to adjourn the meeting at 6:28 p.m.

**Respectfully Submitted**
Christy Lamb, Administrative Assistant