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## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES**

May, 2025

Hartsville Branch May 21, 2025

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### **OPENING OF MEETING**

- A.** The meeting was called to order by Vice President, Gail Gandy, at 5:04 p.m. A quorum was met with the following members present: Gene Norwood, Vernessia Patterson, Ken Hughes, Carol Hill, Bobbie Gardner (remote), Gail Gandy, Barbara Carraway (remote).
- B.** Member(s) absent: JoAnn Lee.
- C.** The following visitor(s) attended and were recognized: Antoinette Fernandez, IT Manager; Martha Brown, Hartsville Branch Manager; Tracy Tuplin, Darlington Branch Manager; Kelly Shull, Lamar, Branch Manager; Jane Proell, Friends of the Darlington Library President; Michelle Wallace, Friends of the Darlington Library Vice President; and the following members attended remotely and were recognized: Lynn Anderson, Society Hill Branch Manager; Christy Lamb, Administrative Assistant.
- D.** A motion was made by Ken Hughes, seconded by Barbara Carraway, and carried to approve the agenda.

### **OPEN FORUM**

- A.** Jane Proell, President of the Friends of the Darlington Library (FODL):
  - a.** Ms. Proell reported that, through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request, she obtained documentation showing the most recent strategic goals for the Library covering the period 2018–2021. She expressed concern about the lack of updated goals and asked how Friends groups can effectively support the Library without current guidance. She extended an invitation for the Library Board to meet with the FODL Executive Board to discuss roles, responsibilities, and the relationship between FODL and the Darlington Branch Library.
  - b.** Ms. Proell noted she was present at the Darlington Library during January–March and attended the Book Sale but received no engagement from staff on library goals or collaboration opportunities. She reiterated an invitation for Darlington Branch management to meet with FODL.
  - c.** Ms. Proell requested full administrative rights for the FODL Facebook page, asserting that the organization is independent with its own By-Laws and Tax ID. She reported a county employee not affiliated with FODL undid recent changes she made to the page. She submitted a FOIA request for the January meeting audio recording, citing discrepancies between her recollection and the minutes regarding the status of this request.
  - d.** Ms. Proell requested an update on coordination with the Darlington County Historical Commission regarding the South Carolina Room renovation and noted items have remained blocked off for two months.

- e. FODL was granted access to use a county computer. Ms. Proell acknowledged and thanked Councilwoman Angie Godbold and County Administrator Charles Stewart for their assistance and stated that a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Library System and FODL will be reviewed.
- B. Board and Staff Comments:
  - a. Facebook Page Discussion. Ken Hughes inquired whether the Facebook page in question is the Friends' page. Gail Gandy asked if the Library has its own Facebook page. Library Director Jimmie Epling clarified that the Facebook page Ms. Proell referred to is one of the former Branch Library created Facebook pages, which was turned over to each Friends group and the Library maintains administrative rights to ensure continuity during Friends group officer transitions. Granting full control for Friends would require shutting down the page due to its system association. Ms. Proell responded that former FODL officer Darius McPhail, not Library staff, originally created the Friends page.
  - b. Meeting Request Discussion. Barbara Carraway noted that Ms. Proell had expressed a desire to meet with the Board. Ken Hughes stated that Friends support the Library but do not dictate operations, and that FODL should engage directly with the Branch Manager and Director. Ms. Proell requested that Mr. Hughes and the Board take time to consider the information presented and the appropriate role of the Library Board.
  - c. Friends Funding of Programs. Ms. Gandy observed that Society Hill's Friends provide the branch with \$100 per month for programming expenditures. Ms. Proell responded "I am not an ATM" indicating the Darlington Friends needed more oversight of funds given.
- C. The Board received the information presented. No formal action was taken at the time of this report.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. A motion was made by Gene Norwood, seconded by Carol Hill, and carried to approve the March minutes.

## **FINANCIAL REPORT**

- A. The current financial statement includes an unusual encumbrance for State Aid Materials (Budget Line 64100) of \$82,000. The Library, as part of its process of tracking materials expenditures, encumbers a fixed amount every quarter for purchases from materials providers (books, DVDs, etc.), such as Ingram, Amazon, and others. The Finance Department had not cleared all purchases related to the State Aid Materials budget line at the time the trial balance report was created.

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

- A. Registration and "Kickoff" events at Hartsville, Lamar, and Society Hill (Darlington's event will be held May 31<sup>st</sup>) for the Summer Reading and Learning Program have already begun and participants that register before June 13<sup>th</sup> will automatically be entered into a drawing for four (4) season passes to Neptune Island Waterpark.

- B. In addition to the grand prize drawing for each age group at each branch, those who reach each reading level goals will receive a jibbitz charm for their bracelet. The Library will provide the bracelets to track the reading goals.
- C. The Library collaborated with the Hartsville Rotary again this year to purchase 300 copies of the book The Littles to be distributed to 3<sup>rd</sup> graders attending public schools in the Hartsville area. Gail Gandy inquired about the unit price. Director Jimmie Epling explained the books were \$2.84 each and the total cost split with the Hartsville Rotary Club.
- D. First Steps asked if the Library could host a social worker. There are no more details available at the time of this report, as it is in the preliminary stage of planning.

## **HOST BRANCH MANAGER'S REPORT - HARTSVILLE**

- A. As Friends of the Hartsville Library made \$2,100 with their Spring Book Sale. The Fall Book Sale is scheduled to be held October 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- B. The Library attended the Career Exploration Fair & Hiring Event hosted at Coker College. Ms. Brown stated when she was younger she dressed professionally for Career Day. The group that visited did not. Several mentioned when told the most important skill for working at the Library was being able to read that they did not enjoy reading. Given that reading comprehension is key to library work, those students did not leave with a strong prospect for their future endeavors.
- C. Youth Services Librarian Jennifer Woods during the Library's in-service/staff development day led the staff in a "tie" in activity to our SRLP, tie-dying t-shirts. Bags were also tie-dyed for the Library's SRLP kickoff event. Color Our World is the theme for the SRLP.
- D. The Hartsville branch participated in Earth Day at Kalmia Gardens. Youth Services Librarian Jennifer Woods and Reference Assistant Rachel Riner took supplies for covering giant paint tubes with strips of paper and the colorful result of their project aligned well with the Library's SRLP theme, Color Our World.
- E. Members of the Board were invited to join the Library for its exciting upcoming events.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

None

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **A. FISCAL YEAR 2026 BUDGET**

- a. The County's FY 2026 budget was brought before Council at its May 5<sup>th</sup> meeting for its required "Second Reading" and vote. It was passed. The proposed FY 2026 budget now moves on to its "Third Reading" and vote at the Council's June 2nd meeting.
- b. The proposed South Carolina FY2026 budget includes State Aid for public libraries set at \$2.75 per capita, with a minimum grant of State Aid set at \$150,000. For FY 2025, the per capita amount received was \$157,000. Based on the 2020

Darlington County population of 62,905, the per capita amount will increase to \$173,000.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- A. BOARD OFFICERS NOMINATIONS AND ELECTION REMINDER –** According to Board bylaws, the Board must elect new officers in July. The Board voted at its March meeting to select officers at its July meeting.

**PROPOSED AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING**

- A. ELECTION OF BOARD OFFICERS –** The Library Board will select officers at its July meeting.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None

**REQUESTS/COMMENTS – MEMBERS OF THE BOARD**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Ken Hughes, seconded by Gene Norwood, and carried to adjourn the meeting at 5:52 p.m.

**Respectfully Submitted**

Christy Lamb, Administrative Assistant