



Darlington County Library System

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Locations

Darlington
Hartsville
Lamar
Society Hill

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

September, 2025

Darlington Branch September 17, 2025

OPENING OF MEETING

- A. The meeting was called to order by Vice President, Gail Gandy, at 5:03 p.m.. A quorum was met with the following members present: Ken Hughes, Vernessia Patterson, Gail Gandy, Carol Hill, Barbara Carraway; and, the following member(s) attended remotely: Bobbie Gardner, JoAnn Lee. Member(s) absent: Gene Norwood.
- B. The following visitor(s) attended and were recognized: Tracy Tuplin, Darlington Branch Manager; Lynn Anderson, Society Hill Branch Manager; Kelly Shull, Lamar Branch Manager; Catie Whitt, Darlington Branch Youth Services; Clarence Chapman; and, the following member(s) attended remotely and were recognized: Christy Lamb, Administrative Assistant.
- C. A motion was made by Ken Hughes, seconded by Carol Hill, and carried to approve the agenda.

OPEN FORUM

- A. None.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. A motion was made by Bobbie Gardner, seconded by Ken Hughes, and carried to approve the July minutes.

FINANCIAL REPORT

- A. In Due to the replacement of two HVAC roof units at the Darlington Branch there is an encumbered balance of \$49,875.44 in HVAC REPAIRS/MAINTENANCE (budget Line 43400).

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

- A. Francis Marion University's third annual Freedom to Read rally against book bans will take place on September 22nd. During the event, volunteer readers from the community will share selections from historically banned or challenged books written for children, young adults, and adult readers. The Darlington County Library System was invited. The Director Jimmie Epling will read an excerpt (five minutes) from "Where the Wild Things Are" by Maurice Sendak, a book with a history of being banned/challenged for being too dark, psychologically damaging young children, and witchcraft/supernatural elements.
- B. The "Story Walk Anywhere at Anytime" project is a temporary, mobile outdoor literacy experience that can be easily assembled, disassembled, and transported to multiple locations within a community. The Library was awarded a State Library grant of \$12,400 to purchase of the materials necessary to create two types of story walks.

HOST BRANCH MANAGER'S REPORT – Tracy Tuplin, Darlington Branch Manager

- A.** The second half of the Summer Reading and Learning Program went very well.
- B.** A Reads & Treats box was shown to the Library Board. Marketing Manager, Christine Shaw-Rittmeier, found the name. Rom-Coms (Romantic Comedies) are September's Reads & Treats box theme.
- C.** We are weeding to make room for more Large Print.
- D.** Working to move the adult and manga materials further away from the Juvenile section.
- E.** Catie Whitt, Darlington Youth Services, reported the following:
 - a.** The Darlington Branch had a fantastic Summer Reading and Learning Program. The animal program was our most popular. Our in-house programming, such as Family Craft Day, were also well-attended.
 - b.** The Darlington Branch is collaborating with Darlington High School to host an upcoming Gamers Guild Kickoff Event. The Friends of the Darlington Library have paid for a mobile game unit, with a buffet style gaming set-up, and Gamers Guild members will attend to co-host the event.
 - c.** Upcoming special events are the Halloween Dance Party and Scare on the Square.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A.** No committee reports.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A.** None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT UPDATE

- Darlington Garage – The Finance Department is looking for an architect/engineer to assess remodeling the Darlington Library garage. An architect will handle the build, whereas an engineer ensures the work is structurally sound.
- Van Wrap – Office Depot, through state contract, provided a tentative quote for a van wrap. The Director is working with the Marketing Manager to produce a design.
- Library Truck – The 2024 Ford F150 arrived at the County Garage and will be ready for pick up after County decals are attached. The truck was obtained via a 5-year lease with an option to purchase. The Library hopes to have the truck for more than 10 years. Additional upgrades (bed liner, tailgate ladder, running boards) will be installed in the future.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. MERGING THE PALMETTO LIBRARY CONSORTIUM AND THE SCLENDS CONSORTIUM?** – The Darlington County Library System belongs to the Palmetto Consortium, a group of five county library systems made up of Darlington, Dillon, Georgetown, Marion, Marlboro, and Sumter. The Palmetto Consortium is exploring the potential merger with the SCLENDS consortium following ownership changes in

the current Polaris ILS and SCLENDS' migration to the Symphony ILS. A meeting with the State Library is scheduled for Friday, September 26, to discuss feasibility, costs, and timelines.

PROPOSED AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING

- A.** Update on merging the Palmetto Library Consortium and the SCLENDS Consortium.

REQUESTS/COMMENTS – MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

- A.** Carol Hill inquired about the purpose of a Friends group(s):
 - a.** Library Director Jimmie Epling provided the following metaphor, the Library makes the cake and the Friends adds the icing on the cake. The Friends are a support group for library programming, such as volunteering to help and funding.
 - b.** Ken Hughes added the Friends are a volunteer organization that supports the Library. The Friends are not, however, a part of the Library.
- B.** Carol Hill inquired about how the Library helps the Friends group(s):
 - a.** Library Director Jimmie Epling explained the Library provides rooms/space, assists with moving materials/setup/breakdown for a books sale or fundraising activity, and weeded materials for the book sale.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by JoAnn Lee, seconded by Ken Hughes, and carried to adjourn the meeting at 5:49 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Christy Lamb, Administrative Assistant