Calhoun County Library Board of Trustees
1st Quarterly Meeting Minutes
October 21, 2025 – 10:00AM

1. Call to Order & Attendance
   Chairman James called the meeting to order at 10:00 am. Those in attendance included:
   Board Chairman Kay James
   Board Member Helen H. Lindsay
   Board Member Karen Montgomery
   Board Member Ann K. Thornton
   Director Boyd Bruce
   Staff Member Melissa M. McLeod was present to record the minutes.

2. Approval of Minutes
   Chairman James asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the July 15, 2025 meeting. There was one correction: Board Member Mary Jo Spiers' name was left off the attendance list, though she was present. **Mrs. Lindsay made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. Ms. Montgomery seconded the motion. Chairman James put the motion to a vote. The motion carried.**

3. Executive Session
   The Board entered and exited executive session. **Mrs. Lindsey made a motion to draft a confidential letter reflecting executive session outcomes to be signed by Chairman James. Ms. Montgomery seconded the motion. Chairman James put the motion to a vote. The motion carried.**

4. Financial Report
   Director Bruce asked the Board to turn to the appropriate tab of their newly-established board binders. He noted that these binders will remain at the Library, but all agendas and board packages will continue to be e-mailed in advance of each meeting. Director Bruce pointed out the column indicating the percentage of budget that had been expended and explained certain lines that were already at or near 100%. For example, State Aid videos are at 99% because the Library pre-paid for them, and the End of Summer Luncheon is at 77.12% because that event has already taken place, and next year's luncheon will come from next year's budget. Another line item Director Bruce noted was Computer Equipment Maintenance which is currently at 111%. He explained the fact that the Library is dealing with replacing old machines with new equipment, and he anticipates compensating for this overage in other areas of the Repair and Maintenance category. Finally, he noted that Holiday Youth Programs is currently 70% expended due to the fact that Youth Services has already started preparing for Halloween and Christmas programs.

   Chairman James inquired about old computers that had been in the Bee Room (formerly the Computer Lab). Director Bruce informed the Board that all 16 computers, which were obsolete and no longer supported by Windows, were sold to benefit the Friends of the Library.

5. 1st Quarter Activities Reports
   a. Youth Services
      Director Bruce indicated the Youth Services and Adult Services reports and reminded the Board that the department has been reorganized, separating adult and youth services. Ms. Montgomery inquired about the Homeschool Hangout Program detailed in the report. Director Bruce responded that it is a new program during the day for homeschoolers to get together that allows for some socialization. The first one saw quite bit of attendance, though student participation will determine whether or not it will continue.

      Director Bruce mentioned the musical Butterflies and Caterpillar sculptures that have been added to the pollinator garden.

   b. Adult Services
      Director Bruce mentioned the two new exercise classes that are extensions of Strong & Limber: Strong & Stable and Half & Half. The Library hosted a number of author events, as well: Richard Rankin and both an adult and teen version of author Tally Johnson telling ghost stories.

      Director Bruce said that it is his hope to add more adult programs in an attempt to rebuild that part of the Library's program offerings. The Library is already doing so well with children's programs; it would be nice to have something more for the parents while their children are doing their activities.

6. Director's Report
   a. New Program Room Upgrades
      New room names (Purple Martin Room, Magnolia Conference Room, Bee Room, and Peanut Room) have been added to the doors of each room to more easily identify them. Director Bruce praised Moriah Reed for learning how to operate the new vinyl cutting machine used to make the door labels.

   b. Strategic Plan Update
      Director Bruce asked that he be able to put the strategic plan on hold for right now for two reasons. First, the State of South Carolina doesn't require a strategic plan in order to receive state aid. Second, the Library has so many capital projects in the works that by the time a strategic plan could be completed, the things that are on it would likely be done. It is Director Bruce's wish to wait and look at a long-term strategic plan. Chairman James asked about the State Library's position on the strategic plan to which Director Bruce replied that the Library has one on file that is technically still in effect, and it is possible to add yearly addendums until a new one is in place, but he feels it would be better to create a new one once the Library's capital projects are in place. Mrs. Lindsay commented that it is mentioned in the handbook for Library Boards.

      Director Bruce laid out his plan for having focus groups in Sandy Run, Ft. Motte, Cameron, and St. Matthews, as well as unincorporated areas. His intent is to first bring some strategic goals to the Board and then go into the community to ask which of the top goals mean the most. This is different than going into these areas and asking the public what they want – in essence giving them a blank slate with results too broad and likely outside the purview of the Library. Chairman James asked how he anticipated getting people together, and Director Bruce said that the best ways to reach citizens and receive feedback include talking to and surveying the most active county groups: Ruritans, Rotary, DAR, and Community Clubs. He also mentioned that it is helpful to serve food at such community feedback meetings.

c. Baker and Taylor Book Vendor
Director Bruce notified the Board that Baker & Taylor, the Library's number one leased books vendor and DVD vendor, ceased operations October 6, 2025. The Library received a letter that on some date in the future, they will cease operations, but for all intents and purposes, they ceased operation that day. Unfortunately, they cashed the Library's $2,000 check for future video purchases on the same day. So now the Library is going to go through the process of trying to get that money back.

7. Unfinished Business
   a. Connected Communities Grant Returned
   Director Bruce was asked by the Board in July to try one more time to get the money to stay in the community. He spoke with Central Carolina Community Development a number of times and attempted to contact the Town of St. Matthews about it, but bottom line, they said to just return the money. Because we could not transfer ownership of the grant, Terri Parker was encouraged to apply for the exact same grant.

   Chairman James encouraged the Board to look into the Food Share program for themselves as it is a great source of inexpensive produce available to anyone.

   b. Capital Projects
      i. Marquee
      Director Bruce directed the Board's attention to printout with various options for the proposed marquee sign. He reminded the Board that the Friends of the Library have committed $10,000 to a marquee sign. The plans have evolved from simple to the more complex signs envisioned in the proposal, but the county has a particular vision of how it wants the sign to look and has agreed to pay the difference. Chairman James observed that the high-tech sign with the promised video capability will surely bring people in, which the Director agreed is the point.

      ii. Café
      Director Bruce noted that County Purchasing and the architect are outlining the plans for the Friends Bookstore Café. They are hopeful that that project will begin sometime near the beginning of 2026. He explained the late start is due to the county's need to see what the tax rolls are bringing in before they can start distributing capital money. Ms. Montgomery asked if the money for the project was already earmarked to which Director Bruce explained it will be coming out of

an account that had been set up by the library years ago with the original intent to build a branch in Sandy Run. The feasibility study determined that this would not be a good return on investment, so this money is still sitting there. The county agreed to let the Library use it.

iii. Vending Machines

Chairman James declared the need for vending machines in Sandy Run. The county purchasing agent is looking into bids for these, and the county is helping to determine locations and specific needs for them such as power and Wi-Fi. The county is in full support of these machines, so it's just a matter of time while the proper purchasing procedures are under way.

iv. Statistical Report

Director Bruce introduced a new style of statistical report for the Board. In this dashboard approach, there is a circulation comparison with month-by-month comparisons for the current and previous fiscal years. It is broken out by Adult and Youth with Libby circulation included in the Adult count. Another section of the dashboard is for equipment, laptops, and Kajeet mobile Wi-Fi circulation with comparisons between current and previous years, as well. Director Bruce pointed out that the Library has seen roughly a 15% increase in circulation over last year. He credited the increase to the Library acquiring more popular books that people want to read even while reducing the overall number of books in the collection. This has made books and authors easier to find and access.

Mrs. Lindsay commented that she enjoys the selection of large print books as well as their shelf placement. Mrs. Thornton agreed that the outward-facing placement of new books is much more eye-catching as they are now. Director Bruce praised the staff for being more vigilant with cycling books from the new shelves to the regular collection so that the new shelves remain "new." Chairman James noted that she has requested several books and appreciates the speed with which they have been acquired.

Director Bruce continued with the statistical report dashboard and pointed to the section quantifying programs and attendance. He noted that the Adult programs include exercise classes that meet several times a week. He went on to explain that even though three quarters of the Library's programs are for Adults, they account for only one quarter of the overall attendance. The majority of attendance comes from the youth programs that include outreach including Mother Goose, Council on Aging, story times in churches and schools, and various community programs in which the Library participates. These account for three quarters of the Library's attendance which shows they are very robust. His goal is to build on the adult program offerings in the future.

Director Boyd called the Board's attention to the door count in the center of the statistics dashboard. At this time, monthly numbers are not available for the previous year as this was only reported quarterly in the past, so the previous year's quarterly numbers have to be divided by three in order to get a monthly comparison until the monthly door count catches up. He emphasized the percent of change from last year to this, showing that the Library's door count has seen a 26% increase.

There was general consensus that the new dashboard style statistical report is easier to follow and is appreciated.

v. Food and Drink Policy

Director Bruce reminded the Board of their directive at the last quarterly meeting that a Food and Drink Policy be drafted for Chairman James to sign. This has been drafted and appears in the Board handouts. Director Bruce reminded the Board that the reason for this policy is because the Library will soon have a café, and there is a hope that people will get their coffee and snack and come sit in the Library. He assured the Board that a carpet/upholstery cleaner has been purchased in anticipation of spills or stains.

Mrs. Lindsay moved that the Food and Drink Policy, dated July 15, 2025, be accepted as presented. Ms. Montgomery seconded the motion. There was some discussion about enforcement of the policy to which Director Bruce assured the Board that the staff will be able to handle it with his leadership. **Chairman James put the motion to a vote. The motion carried.**

There was more discussion about handling issues with homeless in the Library. Director Bruce did say he'd recently handled a situation citing a policy that really needs to be firmed up. There is currently no policy that delineates potential consequences for bad behavior. In summary, the Library needs an overarching policy that will say, if people do not obey the policy of the Library, they'll be asked to leave, or they'll be put on trespass notice.

vi. Materials Loan Policy - Revision

Director Bruce commented that the Library Board just approved a Material Loan Policy last July; however, the Library's current software system cannot work with that policy. So a revision was necessary to make it simpler. To summarize, there is now no Outreach card, Teacher card, or Homebound card; there is now simply an Adult card. There are also no longer different categories of youth cards; there is simply a Juvenile card. All checkouts are for three weeks regardless of age. There is still one renewal possible too, so patrons have up to six weeks to get through their materials.

Director Bruce announced a change in the SCLENDS system that will result in new books becoming available throughout the Consortium after four months. Reducing the number of renewals will allow more patrons to check out new books and materials while they're still classified as new.

Chairman James agreed that it's better this way and simpler than it was before.

To summarize, there are no limitations on what materials that can be checked out or internet access for Adults. Juveniles can only check out things from the youth services area and use filtered internet; however, a parent can sign up a juvenile aged 13-17 to have adult-level access. In those cases, those juveniles will receive an adult card, and the Library will keep the signed permission document on file.

Director Bruce pointed out that teachers will still have the option of holding a regular library card to support their classroom efforts. The card is available to any teacher living in Calhoun County or working in a Calhoun County school. So that gives them a free card, as long as they're working in the county.

Chairman James asked for a motion. Ms. Montgomery made a motion to accept the Revised Materials Loan Policy as it is written on October 21, 2025. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Lindsay. Chairman James put the motion to a vote. The motion carried.

8. New Business
   a. Safe Child Policy
   Director Bruce asked the Board to adopt a new Safe Child Policy to make sure that the library is not culpable for other people's bad behavior. Ms. Montgomery noted that this seems to go hand in glove with the juvenile library card. The rules are: there's no running, standing on furniture, yelling, being disruptive, or physical violence for other patrons or property.

   In the past, the policies were not made official because the Chairman of the Board did not sign them. While they may have been voted on, there is no official record of signing them or their official dates of enactment. There was some discussion among the Board about having an official book of policies available for anyone who might ask, and it was noted that they will likely be posted on the Library's website, as well. All agreed it is best to be prepared and have everything in order.

   Chairman James asked for a motion. Mrs. Thornton made a motion to accept the child safety policy as it is written on October 21, 2025. The motion was seconded by Ms. Montgomery. Chairman James put the motion to a vote. The motion carried.

9. Next Board Meeting
   Chairman James announced that the following Board Meeting schedule for 2026:
   1st Quarter -- Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at 10:00 AM in the Ann Thornton Room
   2nd Quarter -- Tuesday, April 21, 2026, at 10:00 AM in the Ann Thornton Room
   3rd Quarter -- Tuesday, July 21, 2026, at 10:00 AM in the Ann Thornton Room
   4th Quarter -- Tuesday, October 20, 2026, at 10:00 AM in the Ann Thornton Room

   Melissa will be sending out the minutes and agenda directly to the Board each quarter.

10. Adjournment

Chairman James asked if there was a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Lindsay moved we adjourn. Ms. Montgomery seconded the motion. Chairman James called for a vote. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 11:02 am**.**

Melissa M. McLeod

October 21, 2025