Calhoun County Library
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 15, 2025

1. Call to Order & Attendance

   Chairman James called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. Those in attendance included:
   Board Member Shawn Briggman
   Board Member Betty B. James
   Board Chairman Kay James
   Board Member Helen H. Lindsay
   Board Member Karen Montgomery
   Board Member Mary Jo Spiers
   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 January 14, 2025 meeting. **Mrs. Spiers made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Mrs. Montgomery seconded the motion. Chairman James put the motion to a vote. The motion carried.**

3. Financial Report

   Director Bruce clarified that the financial report does not reflect recent purchases made for the upcoming Purple Martin Festival, Bee Field Trips, and Summer Reading programs. Additionally, we've just had the carpets cleaned which is a bi-annual expense. He went on to explain that at this time of year the county typically cuts off spending, so we've been trying to get ahead of that. He mentioned that looking ahead, some regular expenses are going up like the license fees from Microsoft and Google.

   Mrs. Spiers asked about the status of Calhoun Connects to which Director Bruce responded that Calhoun Connects doesn't belong to the library anymore. It belongs to Community Development. The Calhoun Connects line item in our budget was originally budgeted for web hosting, but since that line falls under programs and communities we'll probably end up folding that into community programs, if we can.

   Chairman James mentioned that she attended the County Council meeting on April 14, and that all Library Board Members have been officially reappointed for five years.

   Chairman James asked Director Bruce for an update on grants. He responded that the Rural Health grant has not been renewed. It is currently in the last year of a three-year grant. It is a step down grant, meaning it is funded at a lower rate each year, and since neither the Library nor the County have the funds to supplement it, it will expire June 30, 2025.

Mrs. Lindsay asked about the St. Matthews Farmer's Market and how it would be affected. Director Bruce responded that he's talked with the Deputy Calhoun County Administrator, Richard Hall, and they are going to try and find a way to keep supporting this program. He hopes the $10,000 Central Carolina Community Foundation grant can be used in some way for that as it is required to be used in support of food initiatives.

4. 1st Quarter Activities Reports

Director Bruce shared a SC State Library statistics sheet for the Calhoun County Library. It provides a snapshot of the Calhoun County Library and what we do. He mentioned he's still working on the statistical analysis where the current year is compared with the previous year(s).

Mrs. Spiers asked about staffing after Karen Brophy's retirement in June. Director Bruce responded that he and Richard Hall are working on a plan to share the technical services of Kyle Childress with the Library covering 70% and the county covering 30%. He will work to help us with things like our website, electronic programming, running reports, and technical needs of the patrons and staff. He won't be sitting at the desk, and he won't be doing the statistics, so we will have to figure that out on our own.

Director Bruce emphasized that we have a lot going on here at the Library with many positives. He wants to build on the positives. The service population of the Library is 14,000, and we circulated twice that number which is pretty good.

Director Bruce reported that Wendy is doing a great job with the Bookmobile. She is checking out a lot of books, and she is in weekly contact with people of all ages. For Youth Programs, he reported that weekly Story times are popular in the K-8 schools, Calhoun Academy, and Christian schools, and the staff are working hard in all areas.

For Adult Services, Director Bruce spoke about the passport information center Shelia put together. We are working on signage for the self-help station for passport paperwork. Additionally, Skyler is applying to be a notary and will train to do passport paperwork, as well. We've purchased a new vinyl cutter that will enable us to reuse old banners for special events and programs. He drew the Board's attention to the new bookshelves where books are now labeled with a "New" sticker to indicate they're new which is much clearer than the green dot previously used.

Chairman James remarked on the success of the Grow with Me program. Director Bruce said that the positivity of this program is one of the things we're going to try to build on. Mrs. Spiers asked if the teen program is going pretty well to which Director Bruce confirmed that twice a month the teens attending experience something new and interesting to them. Mrs. Lindsay remarked that she would like to come to some of them.

Director Bruce drew the Board's attention to the STEM-focused Bee Creative program held on April 8 where adults and children worked together to make sundials.

5. Director’s Report

   Director Bruce began his report by drawing the Board’s attention to an Executive Order by President Trump to eliminate federal funding for grants administered by the Institute for Museum and Library Services. This will affect the LSTA grants we receive in the future, such as the Summer Reading grants we’ve received this year and in the past, but it will not affect our State Aid.

   Chairman James pointed to potential government cutbacks in South Carolina that will likely affect a lot of government agencies. Director Bruce echoed her concern and emphasized his goal for Fiscal Year 27 is to build on programs and circulation so we have more robust numbers.

   Continuing with his director's report, he reiterated that the Rural Health grant is being zeroed out July 1. He still has the Central Carolina Community Foundation grant that he hopes will enable a continuation of the Farmer’s Market and startup of Food Share in Calhoun County, but he has to work with County Administration to make this work. He emphasized that the Library is not in that business; we are in the library business, so he intends to put the Library first.

   Director Bruce announced that before the Purple Martin Festival on April 25-26, we will have our new website up and functioning. Mrs. Briggman inquired as to who has been working on the website. Director Bruce responded that Kyle Childress and Skyler have worked closely on this project since the start of the year.

   Director Bruce announced that for the Purple Martin Festival the Friends of the Library are having a massive book sale. We have coordinated for the Center for the Birds of Prey to do two programs during the festival. The Library is going to be operating its regular hours that day, and we will have staff and interns on hand. Look for everyone in their purple t-shirts.

6. Unfinished Business

   Director Bruce announced that he is not quite ready to present the consolidated Loan Policy to the Board. This is where we're trying to make it easy to know what books can be checked out by whom. We’re still working out a few issues such as children who have juvenile cards through the bookmobile really need to have “bookmobile juvenile cards.” We need to determine where we need additional categories so that children can be considered safe from inappropriate adult books and their cards can only check out the books that are within their assigned category. Director Bruce intends to ask the Board to vote on this new Consolidated Loan Policy at the July 15 meeting.

   Director Bruce introduced the Workplace Expectation Letter. He has a copy signed by each staff member. The expectations are: come to work, stay at work, do your job, let people know when you leave, and clock in and out.

Mrs. Lindsay asked the Director if titles have been changed. Director Bruce pointed to an updated list of employees included in the Board packet. He confirmed that Skyler has moved to her new role as the Adult Services Librarian, Beth is the Youth Services Librarian, and Melissa's title has changed from Bookkeeper to Acquisitions & Administrative Assistant.

Director Bruce explained that as far as Library Programs go, the things that are adult programs will move under Adult Services which will give the staff an opportunity to do programs. In the past, we had a total of three people, that's two part-timers and two full-timers, doing 100% of all the programming in and out of the building.

7. New Business

Director Bruce made the point that the +rmc room is no longer a viable name as MUSC now owns the hospital. He asked if anyone had a suggestion to which **Chairman James made a motion that the Library's conference room be renamed the "Ann Kissam Thornton Board Room"** in recognition of her 46 years of service to our Board and Library. "She's been a wonderful leader, and she's just a wonderful person." **Mrs. Lindsay seconded the motion. Director Bruce called for a vote. The motion carried.**

Director Bruce asked that the Board consider changing the Library's hours of operation to Monday through Thursday, 10:00 am to 7:00 pm, Friday, 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, and Saturday, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. It will come to the same number of total operating hours. Mrs. Lindsay asked what the staff's thoughts were to which Director Bruce replied that they will like not having to stay until 8:00. That coupled with the fact that there are very few patrons between 7:00 and 8:00 on Tuesdays and Thursdays makes the change more sensible. He did note that if we're having a special event like the Friends of the Library's annual meeting then staff will need to be here for that, but we don't have to have the library open. Director Bruce reassured the Board that teen and BINGO programs are over before 7:00 pm, so a change of hours will not have an impact on those programs. He remarked that it's more uniform and simpler to tell people when the Library is open. If approved by the Board, this change would take place July 1.

Mrs. Spiers moved that the hours be changed to those proposed by the Director. Mrs. Montgomery seconded the motion. Chairman James called for a vote. The motion carried.

Director Bruce went on to discuss a proposed capital improvement timeline. These capital improvements were put forward to the county last month. The first is an electronic marquee sign that we want to have out in the front of the Library to advertise events and programs. The Friends of the Library have already voted to pay for that. The second capital improvement includes the two remote book vending machines in Sandy Run and Cameron and a book drop locker in Fort Motte. Director Bruce commented that the county administration has agreed with no comments or concerns.

Funding for the Sandy Run machine is proposed to come from a Local Government Improvement Plan (LGIP) where monies were set aside for a Sandy Run branch. There's not enough for a branch, but there is enough for the book vending machine and accompanying expenses. Once we receive permission to use these funds, we will ask for your approval and begin plans for the Request for Proposals (RFP). Goals for next winter/spring are hopefully realistic. In addition to the initial expenses of the machines themselves, site prep, electricity needs, WiFi needs, and books to replenish, we have to consider the $5,000 a year maintenance service contract with the company that built it. Director Bruce has some alternative plans including using the Bookmobile as a more permanent remote location. No motions were made at this time.

Director Bruce announced that the Library van has been replaced with a Chevy Trailblazer. This was made possible by the County and no Library funds were expended.

Director Bruce raised the point of the Strategic Plan timeline. He hopes to have a proposal for a new strategic plan on which work will begin in August. He aims to go out and meet people wherever they are in the county and have community input based on those roles and goals chosen by the people. This plan includes an iPad-based survey with minimal discussion. He wants to give library users from around the county options and let them vote on those options so that they can choose what means more and what's more relevant to them in their community. From those results, we will formulate the strategic plan the Board can mull over, discuss with friends, and get additional input. Once that additional input is received, it can be incorporated into a final draft that the Board approves, and finally we publish the plan. Director Bruce states he traditionally puts together a five-year strategic plan and then creates an annual plan of service to accomplish the strategic plan's goals.

Mrs. Lindsay noted that according to *Robert's Rule of Order,* we should use the more proper "Unfinished Business" term going forward instead of "Old Business." She also noted that "Respectfully submitted" is no longer used. All agreed.

8. Next Board Meeting

Chairman James made a correction that the fall Board Meeting will be on Tuesday, October 21 which is the third Tuesday and the traditional day for the board's quarterly meeting. It was originally scheduled for the week prior in error.

Mrs. Lindsay made a motion to commit to the third Tuesday of each quarter in January, April, July, and October for regular Board Meetings. The dates for the rest of this year are: July 15 and October 21. Mrs. Briggman seconded the motion. Chairman James called for a vote. The motion carried.

9. Adjournment

Chairman James asked if there was a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Lindsay moved we adjourn. Mrs. Montgomery seconded the motion. Chairman James called for a vote. The motion carried.

Melissa M. McLeod

April 29, 2025