



Minutes

Oconee County Public Library Board of Trustees meeting

Tuesday, July 28, 2026, 5:30 p.m.

Council Chambers, County Administration Bldg., 415 S. Pine St., Walhalla, SC

Members present: J. Adams, P. Holcombe, K. Jackson, K. Knapp, N. McKinney, V. Smith

Members absent: M. Ellison, C. Powell, T. Weekes

Staff: Blair Hinson, Library Director

Press: None.

- I. **Call to Order** – meeting called to order at 5:30 PM.
- II. **Invocation** – Pat Ashworth, Newry Baptist Church
- III. **Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America**
- IV. **Approval of minutes** – May 20, 2026 regular meeting – motion to approve by K. Jackson, seconded by V. Smith, motion approved 6-0.
- V. **Public Comment** - Limited to 4 minutes per person, 30 minutes in total – none.
- VI. **Board member comments** – K. Knapp thanked the director and staff for making Board members aware of special events and programs
- VII. **Friends' Report** – Director highlighted sales numbers (in back up) and discussed the various items (in addition to just paperback and hardback books) that the Friends offer for sale
- VIII. **Committee Reports** (if submitted)
 - A. Finance - none
 - B. Policy/Personnel - none
 - C. Building and Grounds – K. Knapp submitted report (attached to back up), highlighting ongoing and some longstanding concerns over neglected maintenance, particularly at the Seneca Branch. She further noted to the Board about meeting with the county administrator and county council chair at the Seneca Branch to help them understand the situation. Director also showed several pictures of the parking lot and front entrance at Seneca taken in 2022. Discussion ensued.
 - D. Community Relations – none.
- IX. **Chair's Report** – Chair recognized 20-year library employee Leah Price.

Library Board-Judith Adams, Mandy Ferguson-Ellison, Paul Holcombe, Kim Jackson, Kay Knapp, Nick McKinney, Clifton Powell, Vicky Smith, Tara Weekes

X. **Director's Report** – Director mentioned turnover in the Youth Services position as well as the Youth Services Assistant, and commended both Emily Johnson and Donna Jo Wharton for their work this past summer (and over the years). Director also mention the repair of the HVAC at the main branch.

XI. **Old Business**

- A. Update building and grounds projects – covered under the Building and Grounds Committee report and discussion.
- B. Update on FY27 budget – Director mentioned that local budget was passed and what changed from last FY. Director also mentioned that the state had not passed their budget at the time of the meeting.

XII. **New Business**

- A. Discuss State Aid and personnel – Director mentioned to Board that it was necessary to use a portion of State Aid to pay for the Library Resource Associate after grant period ended on June 30, 2026. K. Knapp commented that we knew the grant was coming to an end after FY26. She questioned whether we should continue the position if County Council did not approve it in the FY27 budget. She also commented that while good work is being done, it should not come from library budget. She also questioned whether use of library money was legal according to SC Code 4-9-37. K. Knapp also commented about using funds normally used for other things (books, data processing, etc.) in past years, and would that take away from other library needs? K. Knapp made a motion that no library funds be used for the library resource associate position; seconded by V. Smith. Discussion ensued. K. Jackson asked about legality of using State Aid. Director pointed out that State Library Agency Head allowed the use of State Aid based on the fact that it was for professional services, which is legal under legislation. Discussion ensued about what tradeoffs were made from State Aid budget and the role of the Library Resources Associate. K. Jackson asked why not just use DSS and provide office space. Director explained that DSS has institutional and regulatory guard rails that limit what they can provide, as do other agencies. K. Jackson mentioned that pay for other employees is low, and could State Aid be used for them? Director pointed out that State Aid could not be used to pay other positions. N. McKinney pointed out that just because County Council did not permit position in this FY doesn't mean that the position has no validity. He also pointed out that social work and resource help is very much a library function, part of the overall mission to provide information. He mentioned that the library already does more than books. J. Adams mentioned amending motion to having position coming from a grant or other source going forward. K. Knapp did not want to amend. J. Adams did not feel comfortable having vote on position without further research and discussion by Board. Director mentioned that a vote on a formal library program should be an actual agenda item. N. McKinney and J. Adams wanted to place program on a formal agenda and allow public comment. K. Jackson also wanted to hear more specifics from Library Resource Associate. K. Jackson suggested a meeting of the Community Relations Committee to assess

the merit of the position. Motion to table by J. Adams, seconded by K. Jackson. Motion passed 5-1, with K. Knapp against.

- B. Preview fall programming – Director mentioned the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner on October 15, 2026. Children’s programming is on a break in August, 2026. Adult programming includes Adult Winter Reading and Show your Card and Save in September for National Library Card Signup Month.

XIII. **Adjourn** – motion to adjourn by K. Jackson, seconded by N. McKinney. Adjourned at 6:50 PM.