



PCLS BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
6:00 PM September 11th 2025
Village Library

PRESIDING: Ms. Lori Osborn, Chair – At Large

Dr. Alfred Wheeler – District 1 (Clemson)
Ms. Nancy Miller – District 2 (Six
Mile/Central)
Mr. Danny Parton – District 3 (Pickens)

Ms. Alesa Pinkerton – District 4 (Liberty)
Dr. Henry Wilson – District 5 (Easley)
Ms. Susan Childers – District 6 (Dacusville)

1. Moment of Silence and Pledge of Allegiance

Meeting called to order at 6:01 pm.

2. **Public Comment**

Comments are limited to three (3) minutes per participant and 30 minutes total.

Ms. Osborn read aloud the Public Comment Policy.

1. **Lou Kaye** – Founder and leader of Students Against Book Banning at Daniel High School. She spoke about her disapproval of the Library Board member that made the decision to remove the list of 10 books from Senator Rex Rice. She also spoke about the book Flamer by Mike Curato, discussing the message of the book and its merits.
2. **Karen Mims** – She spoke about how some of the Library Board members at the last board meeting violated several guiding principles and policies. She voiced that all library users have a First Amendment right to read, view, and listen to library resources
3. **Johnnelle Raines** – She spoke about books putting ideas into the minds of teenagers and about some of the content in the books on the teen shelves. She voiced that if the Library Board wants to protect minors, then they will change all the policies that hinder that protection.
4. **Kate Byrd** – She spoke about the Library Board members that voted to move the 10 books from Senator Rex Rice list to the adult section was against library policy and exposed the library system, the board, and the county to serious legal risks. She also said that Senator Rex Rice should not have any authority over the Library Board's decisions.
5. **Virginia King** – She expressed that our society should have the goal of raising mature, moral adults. She spoke about an experience of two boys reading books and those books convinced them to commit crimes.
6. **Brittany Fowler** – She spoke about the Library Board members that rushed a decision to vote under political pressure and failed to acknowledge the policies in place to make these decisions. She voiced that this decision undermines the library board's credibility and undermines the trust that the public has placed in the library.
7. **Anne Kaiser** – She spoke about the effect of 9/11 and recent political assassination, she offered a solution for the civil discord in Pickens County; to redirect the time and energy into something constructive and take care of our community.

8. **Juliet Penna** – She spoke about the nonconforming vote on July 24th and that religion, personal beliefs or faith do not support ignoring policies and laws or discriminating against people that you are afraid of or make you uncomfortable.

3. Approval of Minutes

a. Library Board Meeting July 24, 2025

Ms. Childers made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Parton seconded the motion. Mr. Wilson pointed out that the minutes are incredibly detailed and well done. Ms. Osborn mentioned that the board clerk asked if we could talk one at a time to make it easier to be detailed. Unanimous approval of the July Meeting Minutes.

4. Library Director's Report

a. Library Information

The Director invited Margaret Holder to give an update on the Village Library Branch. Ms. Holder stated that the Village Branch continues to strengthen its role as a vital community hub through meaningful partnerships and the dedication of our staff. This year, the team's commitment and collaboration with local organizations have allowed them to expand programming, provide unique learning opportunities, and create spaces where the community can connect, learn, and thrive. Ms. Holder highlighted that partnerships have been the cornerstone of their success this year. By working closely with local businesses, educational institutions, and nonprofit organizations, they've been able to offer programs and resources that meet the diverse needs of our patrons.

Key Partnership Highlights:

- **Foodshare Program** – Grew from just 2 distributions in January 2024 to consistently serving 19–21 families each month.
- **Community Baby Shower** – Welcomed 192 attendees and coordinated with over 20 organizations and vendors, ensuring families received critical resources and support.
- **Storytime Outreach** – Expanded early literacy efforts by providing Storytime sessions at:
 - Pickens Presbyterian Church
 - The Mill Church
 - Holly Springs Community Center
 - Lakeview Christian School
- **YMCA Partnership** – Provided meeting room space for Fit for Life and Senior Yoga programs, supporting community health and wellness.
- **State Election Commission** – Hosted an all-day regional training, emphasizing our role as a civic engagement hub.

Additional Program Highlights

This year's Summer Reading theme was "Color Our World." As part of this creative initiative, they hosted a Paint By Numbers Community Art Event featuring six trash cans generously donated by Home Depot. Each one was uniquely painted—some brought beloved book characters to life, while others featured designs inspired by the location where they would be placed. To build on this creativity and give back to our community, each site location has also been provided with litter pick-up kits courtesy of Palmetto Pride. These kits make it easy for individuals to choose an area—whether their own neighborhood, a park, or another spot in the community—and help keep it clean. The litter pick-up kits contained two trash bags, gloves, a vest, safety instructions, and a listing of the recycling locations. The goal was to inspire both community pride and environmental responsibility.

The Village Branch Library has evolved into more than a place for books—it's a collaborative space where community connections flourish. Through partnerships and the passion of the staff, they continue to deliver programs that educate, entertain, and empower. They look forward to building on the momentum and finding new ways to serve as a trusted partner and resource for the people of Pickens County.

Ms. Childers thanked Margaret Holder and the Village Library staff for all the wonderful things they're doing. The Director continued the library information report.

Recent Grants Received: The Bee a Friend to a Pollinator Habitat Grant for multiple branches, the Fly Through Grant, the Pickens Rotary grant for a permanent Story Walk to be placed in Pickens, and the 2025-2026

United Way Education Impact Grant for our new Active Reading Workshop. The Active Reading Workshop will equip parents with tools to further their child's reading comprehension skills at home. A great education begins with support at home; therefore, this program will provide parents with effective and manageable ways to further their child's reading comprehension skills. The program will equip parents with teaching skills and provide books for families to bring home. The Active Reading Workshop will teach parents how to read with their child versus to their child. The workshop will teach them the ABCs of Active Reading: Ask questions, build vocabulary, and Connect to their world. Using these strategies will strengthen vocabulary and comprehension skills for young readers by teaching parents how to go beyond only reading the words on a page. The objective is to give parents the tools that they need to help their child comprehend text, learn new vocabulary, and build a love for reading. One of our Youth Services staff, Vanessa Beamer who also started our mini maestros program put forth the idea and is excited to organize that project for the Fall.

Buildings and Grounds: The carpet at the Sarlin Library in Liberty has been replaced and looks great. I would like to thank Adam, our Systems and Building Maintenance Manager, for coordinating that project and making sure that everything was handled smoothly.

Other Projects: We have begun a system wide weeding project, with a completion goal of 11/15. This will allow us to resolve shelf crowding issues and remove items that are seldom used and replace those items with new materials. We have started a new video series with our Digital Archives Lab and our Historical Room manager Catherine; you can watch those on our Facebook page. She travels around Pickens County and records videos with information on historic buildings, historical figures, and stories within Pickens County. I will be meeting with the Dean of Libraries at Clemson University tomorrow to discuss several potential collaborative projects between Clemson University Libraries and PCLS. September is Library Card Sign Up Month - in our case it is Labubrary Card Sign up month and we will be sharing videos and information online about the many things you can do with a Pickens County Library card and ways that you can sign up for a card, replace a card, or encourage a friend to sign up for a card during the month of September and be entered to win one of 5 Big Into Energy Labubus.

Staff Vacancies: We currently have 5 vacancies. Including 2 full-time circulation positions at Easley, and 1 full-time circulation position at Central-Clemson. The interview process is complete for our floater position and our Youth Services Manager, and we are in the selection process for those two positions.

Ms. Pinkerton asked if the Director heard anything about the renovation. The Director said they are installing the HVAC, and she plans to meet with project manager at the beginning of October to discuss starting some of the buildouts while they finish the HVAC, because they will need walls put up to know how to finish the HVAC installation. The plan is for the installation to be completed before or by March 2026.

b. Financial Report

The Director explained that the "Data Line" on the financial report was put there by the Finance Director and it is our Wi-Fi Hotspots. State Aid has been processed but we have not received it in our bank account yet, it should be there tomorrow or next week. It comes in two increments, so we will have to certify again.

The email from the County Finance Director regarding the renovation budget and the reserve account explains that the renovation budget is \$425,340.19 and the reserve account is \$2,067,565.32. The Director asked for clarification from the Finance Director about the renovation budget not being included in the reserve account and is waiting to hear back from him.

c. Foundation Report

The Director reported that the Foundation has \$78,801.28 in the account. The credits are from a leaf and three shirts that were sold. The Bee Shirts are selling out, if you want that design, purchase one soon. The Foundation is moving forward with plans to build donor walls at the other three library branches; each branch will have its own theme. They are working on new t-shirt designs, as well.

5. Old Business

a. Bylaws clarification on nomination & election timeline

The Director pointed out that the board voted on the board office terms to start in January, but it is unclear when you will have the nominations. The Director asked if the board would like to have the nominations and elections in January as well. Mr. Parton suggested having a meeting before the scheduled January meeting to get

the officers in place. The Director pointed out that if we want to add that suggestion permanently to the bylaws, we can add it to the November board meeting agenda to vote on it.

- b. Vote to move list of ten books submitted by State Senator Rex Rice from the Young Adult (YA) Collection to the Adult Collection. The list includes:
 - 1. And They Lived by S. Salvatore
 - 2. Breathless by J. Niven
 - 3. Damsel by E. Arnold
 - 4. Empire of Storms by S. Mass
 - 5. Kingdom of Ash by S. Maas
 - 6. This Book is Gay by J. Dawson
 - 7. Perks of Being a Wallflower by S. Chbosky
 - 8. Last Night at the Telegraph Club by M. Lo
 - 9. Zahra's Paradise by Amir
 - 10. Flamer by M. Curato

Ms. Osborn read a letter from the county attorney: "Thank you for your patience as I looked into this matter. In short, to ensure clarity under South Carolina's FOIA requirements, the matter should be placed on the September 11th agenda and voted on at the board meeting. Further, the issues involved may raise broader legal considerations and given that my role is limited to advising the county government in my capacity as county attorney, I would therefore recommend that the board seek independent legal counsel for further guidance. I trust this approach will provide clarity for the board and help ensure that any action taken is procedurally sound and in the best interest of Pickens County."

Ms. Pinkerton asked if we need to rescind the previous vote before we vote on this again.

Dr. Wilson explained that what we are doing, according to the county attorney's advice, is just going through that discussion again. Dr. Wilson made a motion to rescind the last meeting's vote, signatures, and events associated with those actions to be relitigated at this meeting. Ms. Childers seconded the motion. Dr. Wheeler, Ms. Osborn, Ms. Childers and Dr. Wilson voted in favor. Ms. Miller, Ms. Pinkerton and Mr. Parton are opposed. Motion carried. Dr. Wilson expressed that he will not participate in voting to move the list of ten books submitted by State Senator Rex Rice from the Young Adult (YA) Collection to the Adult Collection.

Mr. Parton made a motion to move the list of ten books submitted by State Senator Rex Rice from the Young Adult (YA) Collection to the Adult Collection. Ms. Pinkerton seconded the motion. Dr. Wilson suggested that we first vote to suspend our own rules with the reconsideration policy or we just violate our own policy again.

Mr. Parton retracts prior motion. Mr. Paton made a motion to suspend the reconsideration policy rules to move the ten books submitted by State Senator Rex Rice from the Young Adult (YA) Collection to the Adult Collection. Ms. Pinkerton seconded the motion.

Ms. Childers asked for clarification if the board is going to ignore our own policies, what does that mean for the future? Why did we spend all that time making policies when we're just going to rescind the policies? Dr. Wilson clarified that if you're going to suspend your own rules, there needs to be a reason to, like an emergency situation. That way you're not breaking your rules, you're just suspending the rule.

Ms. Childers asked for clarification on why the entire book is not being considered to determine if the book is prurient and why other neighboring county libraries are not required to move the same books that Pickens County is being asked to move. The books only get moved if the citizens of that county object to them being in the YA section of their county library. In her opinion, if the state is going to have a proviso, it should be across the whole state.

Ms. Pinkerton stated that if there is any prurient material in that book, whether it's two words, three words, one page, two pages, or the whole book.

Dr. Wheeler stated that it is the local board's responsibility to decide what's prurient, the state attorney general has made it clear that he is not going to weigh in on the matter.

Dr. Wilson explained that the legal definition of "prurient" is that it's the intent of the whole book, not just parts or pages.

Dr. Wheeler expressed that what we are dealing with is a very ill-defined process, any citizen can provide a list of books without verifying that they have read them and the legislative delegation can pass them along without having read them. Expecting us to just move them, without having read them or put them through our well-defined process, the reconsideration process. We can evaluate all ten books on the list in due course, using our reconsideration process.

Dr. Wilson stated that the proviso asks if it is prurient and our library professional gave us her opinion, that the books are not prurient. So, we don't have to break our rules or vote to automatically move the ten books, because based on our librarian's review, these books are not prurient. We can sign this document that says we don't have prurient materials in the library.

Ms. Childers asked if we vote to keep with our policies and take these books one at a time for reconsideration, will our state funding still be suspended?

Ms. Osborn clarified that we do not know that the funding will be suspended. The books would have to meet the definition of prurient.

The Director explained that first the delegation would have to vote to write a letter to the state librarian and then the state librarian will go through our certifications, the collection development policy and all the other documents in order. The state librarian will then have to figure out a way to provide her opinion on whether there is any prurient material based on the entire item. So, if this vote fails and the books are not moved, you're not going against the policies.

Ms. Pinkerton stated that Senator Rex Rice said that these ten books are red flags and they will probably go to the delegation committee and have a vote, and we might lose our state funding from that. Last month the board did that vote because we didn't want to lose our Wi-Fi Hotspots and programs, so we moved the ten books to keep our state funding, and our policies still give parents the right to make a choice about what their child can check out.

Mr. Parton expressed that losing the Wi-F Hotspots was a great concern and we didn't want to take the chance of losing that program. The books are not gone from the library, just moved to a different section. Moving them puts us in compliance with Senator Rex Rice concerns about the proviso.

Ms. Osborn clarified that she mentioned the Wi-Fi Hotspots at the last meeting because Senator Rex Rice was not aware of the effect losing the state funding would have, the point was that he was not aware. How can Senator Rex Rice or the delegation say these books are red flags and they have not even read the books?

Ms. Miller said the reason she wanted to sign the document is because of all the complaining about losing the Wi-Fi Hotspots and that maybe if we signed that document, we would still get the funding.

Ms. Osborn clarified that no one could know for sure that we wouldn't have got our funding. If the document was signed by the board chair without the stipulation of the ten books being moved, because there is no prurient material in the library, the document would still have to be processed and go through the delegation's process if they believed we had prurient material in the library. That would take time, and no one can say for sure that what you all did granted our funding.

Ms. Childers asked the Director if we get the state funding and then the delegation thinks we don't deserve the funding, what happens next, how would they get it back from us. The Director said that she is not sure, but they could suspend the second half of it. Pickens County Library System may be the first to go through this process, but other bigger library systems are going to start going through this process too and the delegation will have to figure out what the next steps are.

Ms. Osborn reiterated that Mr. Parton's motion is to temporarily suspend the reconsideration policy rules to move the ten books submitted by State Senator Rex Rice from the Young Adult (YA) Collection to the Adult Collection. Ms. Pinkerton seconded the motion.

The Director asked if we need to combine this motion with the vote that is on the agenda or if we're adding another vote.

Dr. Wilson replied that we are adding a preliminary motion to work towards the vote on the agenda. Dr. Wilson stated that he is abstaining from the vote due to this not being good government, it's not good leadership, it doesn't represent the people that we are here to serve, and it's being done under political coercion. Mr. Parton, Ms. Pinkerton, and Ms. Miller voted in favor of the motion. Ms. Osborn, Dr. Wheeler, and Ms. Childers voted against. Dr. Wilson abstained from voting. The motion failed.

Ms. Osborn clarified that the county attorney said that due to FOIA laws we must inform the public of a final vote by putting it on the agenda. Signing the document was not a voting matter, but a vote was made at the last meeting that involved signing it and it was not on the agenda, this is why we are rescinding and replacing the vote from the last meeting. The only time a vote can be added to the agenda, without prior notice to the public, is if it is an emergency.

Mr. Parton stated that it was an emergency because the library was going to lose state funding if we did not sign off as a board that the library is complying with the proviso.

Ms. Osborn clarified that it was not an emergency because there is no way to know for sure that we would lose state funding.

The Director explained that the Chairman did not need permission from the board to sign the document, only that the Chairman would need to sign it in front of a quorum. That was the item that was on the agenda, then it turned into a vote which makes it illegal.

Ms. Osborn made a motion to move the list of 10 books submitted by Senator Rex Rice from Young Adult (YA) Collection to the Adult Collection. Mr. Parton seconded the motion. Dr. Wilson is abstaining from voting because we just voted not to break our own rule, and this breaks our rule. Mr. Parton, Ms. Pinkerton, and Ms. Miller voted in favor of the motion. Ms. Osborn, Dr. Wheeler, and Ms. Childers voted against. Dr. Wilson abstained from voting. The motion failed. The books will remain in their original location.

Dr. Wilson asked if we were going to vote to say we do not have any prurient material in the library. Ms. Osborn stated that we do not have to vote on that, the Chairman just needs to sign the form in front of a quorum. Mr. Parton made a motion that the board should vote on whether we are in compliance with the proviso. The Director asked if we could do that without it being on the agenda tonight. Dr. Wilson explained that Mr. Parton can table his motion to be added to the agenda for a Special-Called meeting in a few weeks, giving the board accountability with the public for the decisions we are making. We don't want to give the critics the satisfaction of criticizing the board for not taking action in front of the community transparently.

Mr. Parton made a motion to table his motion that the board should vote on whether we are in compliance with the proviso for further discussion at a Special-Called meeting and to sign the state form. Ms. Childers seconded the motion. Unanimous approval.

Ms. Pinkerton asked when we can have old business added to the agenda, like the executive session for the Director's Evaluation. The Director said to let the Chairman know before the meeting to add it to the agenda or address it in the motion period in New Business. Dr. Wilson stated that it doesn't fall to the Chairman to bring it back to the table, the Chairman must make sure the meeting runs timely. The best way to get what you want on the agenda is to have a working relationship with each other. Ms. Osborn stated that we also needed to have the work session before we did her evaluation, so there is not a reason to go to executive session yet. Ms. Pinkerton stated that she is just wondering how to get things on the agenda, because calling the board chair doesn't work. Ms. Osborn replied that she has never received a phone call from Ms. Pinkerton. Ms. Pinkerton stated that she won't call because she wants it in writing. Dr. Wilson stated that we all got a letter that we should be treating each other nicely tonight. Ms. Pinkerton said that she is being nice. Ms. Childers stated that if you want a paper trail, send an email. The Director mentioned that you can copy the board clerk on the email, so when the agenda is typed up, the board clerk can confirm everything is added and then sent to the Chairman for approval.

6. Motion Period and New Business

Matters can be added to the agenda by appropriate motion, second, and majority vote of the Board.

- a. Policy clarification regarding new reconsideration request submitted for Flamer by Mike Caruto

Ms. Osborn explained that this is a moot point now that we have voted to move everything back. Ms. Osborn clarified that the board would have a special-called meeting in the last week of September. The Director mentioned that the board will want to set a date for the workshop as well.

Dr. Wilson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Wheeler seconded. Unanimous approval. Meeting adjourned at 7:49 pm.

Next Meeting: Thursday, November 20th, 2025, 6:00pm at the Central-Clemson Library