

Beaufort County Library
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Minutes – January 14, 2026– 4:00 p.m.
Beaufort Branch Library
311 Scott Street
Beaufort, SC 29902

The first scheduled meeting for 2026 was held in-person at the Beaufort Branch Library.

Trustees: Lynne Miller, Chair; Janet Porter, Vice-Chair; Joseph Bogacz, Jannine Mutterer, Tracey Robinson, Kathy Cooper and Brenda Ladson-Powell, Shawna Kulpa, Terry Thomas

Absentees: Rosalie Richman, Bernie Kole

County Council: Councilman Passiment (District 5)

County Staff: Audra Antonacci-Ogden (Assistant County Administrator for Community Services), Traci Cox (Library Administration), Darlene Simmons (Library Administration), Theresa Furbish (Library Administration), Leigh Ramey (Library Administration) and Ileana Herrick (Library Administration)

Hosts: Amanda Dickman, Library Director

I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 4:02pm. A quorum was established.

II. Pledge of Allegiance: Mr. Bogacz led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Public Comment: None.

IV. Introduction of Guests. None.

V. Minutes from meeting held November 12, 2025:

- Ms. Miller noted the minutes from November 12, 2025 meeting had been distributed to all members. Mr. Bogacz provided a motion to approve with a second provided by Mrs. Cooper. There was a unanimous vote to approve without correction.

VI. Correspondence/Memberships: Ms. Dickman read aloud a letter addressed to each Board member recognizing the Board's collective contributions to the Library's success over the past year.

VII. Library Director's Report: Amanda Dickman, Library Director presented her report:

- A. Personnel Update:** The *Library Organizational Chart* is provided for reference. Ms. Dickman noted that since the last board meeting applicants for Sr. Librarian (Youth Services) and Library Assistant (Part-Time) at HHI have been selected. There are currently three vacant positions: Library Specialist at Lobeco, Library Assistant (Full Time) at HHI and Library Operations Manager. The Library has also been approved for two Spring internships: Graphic Design Assistant in Marketing and Preservation Associate in the BDC.

B. Projects Update: Ms. Dickman reported on library operations framed within the priorities of the Library’s Strategic Plan.

- **Strategic Plan Goal: Communication** Ms. Dickman announced the Library’s redesigned website and new meeting room reservation and event calendar system will launch on Wednesday, January 28th.
- **Strategic Plan Goal: User Experience** Ms. Dickman encouraged everyone to participate in Beaufort County Library’s Winter Reading program. To participate, anyone that reads six hours by February 20 and submits their Winter Reading log will be entered in to a grand prize drawing for a gift certificate to a local bookstore (one winner per location).

Ms. Dickman shared several upcoming programs taking place across the Library system:

- “Courage, Resilience, and Artistry” presented by Dr. Susan Eischeid on January 24th at Beaufort Branch (10am) and St. Helena Branch (1pm) and on January 27th at Port Royal Branch (2pm)
 - “Birding Hotspots of the Lowcountry” presented by Hilton Head Audubon on Thursday, February 26th at 11:00 a.m., Hilton Head Branch Library
 - Beaufort District Collection field trip to Beaufort National Cemetery with historian Bonnie Wade-Mucia on Saturday, February 7th at 1pm.
- **Strategic Plan Goal: Space:** Ms. Dickman provided updates on facilities enhancements throughout the system. The first two mobile study booths are expected to arrive on Monday, January 26th for installation at the Beaufort and Bluffton locations. This project is made possible through an Impact Grant award from the South Carolina State Library funded through federal LSTA funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

Ms. Dickman continues to work with Beaufort County Facilities department to enhance the Early Literacy Playroom and other Youth Services spaces using funds from a recent private donation. In addition, she is collaborating with the Public Library Foundation of Beaufort County to improve furniture and fixtures in the Teen Room at the St. Helena Branch.

- **Strategic Plan Goal: Collections** Ms. Dickman reported that the SCLENDS consortium has reduced hold protection from six months to four months. This change allows items to circulate outside their home county after four months instead of six, balancing initial demand for new titles while sharing materials sooner to reduce overall wait times across the consortium.

She noted that total circulation from July–December 2025 increased by **21,618 items** compared to circulation from July–December 2024.

Ms. Dickman concluded with an overview of the estimated cost savings patrons receive through library use. In 2025, patrons saved a total of **\$7,470,062** by borrowing library materials instead of purchasing them. With nearly \$1 million spent on Library Materials annually, every dollar invested in library materials yields and estimated \$7.82 in value.

Estimated savings by format included: eAudiobooks (\$2,244,645), adult print books (\$1,909,244), eBooks (\$1,188,925), youth print books (\$1,114,960), physical video/DVDs (\$648,155), physical audiobooks (\$259,582), streaming movies and television (\$85,422), and eComics (\$19,149).

IX. Committee Reports

A. Finance Committee: Mr. Bogacz communicated the following financial documents in detail and stated that the Beaufort County Library is in good financial standing.

- **Beaufort County Library System - Budget Update – FY 2026:** (see attachment)
 - Mr. Bogacz noted that for FY2026, Beaufort County Library received its second and final State Aid payment of \$257,608 and spent \$12,387 to date. The total State Aid allocation for Beaufort County for FY26 is \$515,216 an increase of \$46,488 from the previous year.
 - Mr. Bogacz explained the documents in detail noting that at 6 months or 50% of the year, the Library has spent 45% of the annual budget for FY26.
- **FY 2026 Special Funds Report:** (see attachment)
Mr. Bogacz explained the attached report noting the receipts and expenditures from special fund sources.
- **FY 2026 Library Materials Expenditure year-to-date:** (for more details, see attachment)
Mr. Bogacz explained the document in detail noting that in the first six months of the fiscal year, the Library has spent \$315,646 on library materials.

Mr. Bogacz concluded his report by expressing appreciation to the Finance Committee, the Library Board, and the Library Director for their support during his tenure. He stated that he believes the Library is in a strong position with solid leadership and indicated that this represents a meaningful legacy of his service.

Ms. Miller noted that Mr. Bogacz joined the Board in 2014 during a period of significant challenges. She recognized his role in strengthening the relationship between the Library Board and the County and in improving the Library's financial standing, adding that he will be missed.

C. Policies and Procedures Committee: Ms. Miller reported that the Boards and Commissions Office requested clarification from the Library Board regarding the number of terms a board member is eligible to serve. Article III of the Library Board of Trustees bylaws currently specifies a limit of three four-year terms.

Motion: Ms. Robinson moved to retain the current term limit of three four-year terms as stated in the Library Board of Trustees bylaws. Mr. Bogacz seconded the motion.

Discussion:

- Ms. Cooper expressed that she did not support eliminating term limits.
- Dr. Porter referenced board governance best practices, noting that term limits are generally recommended.
- Mr. Bogacz commented on the value of turnover in bringing fresh perspectives and preventing burnout.

- Ms. Powell observed that turnover creates opportunities for additional residents to serve and contribute their ideas.
- Ms. Miller asked whether the Board favored retaining the current structure of three four-year terms or reducing the limit to two four-year terms.
 - Ms. Cooper stated that three terms felt appropriate, citing the time required for new members to become familiar with Board operations.
 - Ms. Powell indicated that three terms did not seem excessive.
 - Ms. Robinson noted it took her approximately two years to fully understand Board procedures and responsibilities.
 - Dr. Porter expressed support for retaining three four-year terms.

Action: The motion passed unanimously.

D. Strategic Planning Committee: Ms. Cooper reported that the Strategic Planning Committee met in early December to finalize questions for the Community Survey. Ms. Cooper also shared the project timeline and discussed upcoming steps. The Strategic Planning Committee will reconvene within the next week to continue work on the timeline.

E. Request for Reconsideration Committee: None.

F. Library Facilities Committee: None.

G. Nominating Committee: Ms. Miller explained the process for selecting officers for the next 2-year term. As the bylaws provide that the president be elected by secret ballot, trustee members cast their vote by secret ballot during meeting to ensure their confidential vote.

With no additional nominations from the floor, Ms. Robinson presented the slate of officers for vote: Chair: Dr. Janet Porter, Vice-Chair: Brenda Ladson Powell, Finance Chair: Jannine Mutterer.

Ms. Miller tallied the ballots for chair and announced unanimous vote to elect Dr. Janet Porter as chair for 2026.

Ms. Robinson announced unanimous vote to elect Brenda Ladson Powell as vice-chair and Janine Mutterer as Finance Committee chair for 2026.

H. Liaisons

Friends of the Library (FOL):

- **Friends of Beaufort Library:** Ms. Dickman noted the Friends of Beaufort held their first meeting of 2026 on Thursday, January 8th. They have announced the presenters for their annual Books Sandwiched In series of lectures held on Mondays at Noon at USC-Beaufort Center for the Arts auditorium. The full list of dates and presenters is available on the Friends of the Beaufort Library's website.
- **Friends of Bluffton Library:** Ms. Dickman shared that the next board meeting will be held on Thursday, February 5th at the Bluffton Branch Library.
- **Friends of Hilton Head Library:** Ms. Miller noted that the Friends of Hilton Head Library will next meet on Tuesday, January 20th.

Public Library Foundation: Ms. Miller reported that the Foundation will next meet on Wednesday, January 21st at the Beaufort Branch Library.

X. Old Business: None.

XI. New Business: Ms. Miller explained an update to the process County Council has implemented to streamline appointments to boards and commissions. Under the new process, citizens submit applications for board vacancies to the Boards and Commissions Office, which forwards the applications to County Council for review. The Library Board will not have the opportunity to review submitted applications or interview candidates. The Board will be notified once appointments have been approved by County Council.

- Ms. Cooper requested clarification that the Library Board would no longer have the opportunity to interview potential applicants prior to appointment by County Council and would not be informed of appointments until after County Council has made its decision.
- Mr. Bogacz commented that the revised process appears to remove the Board's ability to assess applicants' specific skills and experience relative to the Board's needs and noted that County Council may not have the same insight into the Board's desired qualifications.
- Ms. Miller noted expressing these concerns to their council liaison.

XII. Executive Session: Ms. Miller called the board into executive session at 5:05 pm.

Matters arising out of Executive Session: Ms. Miller concluded the executive session at 5:22 pm and announced no matters arising out of executive session.

XIII. Announcements:

- The next public meeting of the Library Board of Trustees is scheduled for March 11, 2026 at 4pm at the Bluffton Branch Library.
- Dr. Porter recognized the length of service of Mr. Joe Bogacz and Ms. Lynne Miller, noting that both have served 12 years on the Library Board of Trustees. She acknowledged Mr. Bogacz's leadership and focus on financial oversight, as well as his contributions to strengthening the Library's financial position for the benefit of Beaufort County residents. She also noted that Ms. Miller's involvement with the Friends of the Hilton Head Island Library preceded her Board service, reflecting her long-standing commitment to supporting the Library. Dr. Porter stated that both individuals have been instrumental in supporting the Library's mission and expressed the Board's gratitude for their dedication and service.

With no other business to discuss, Ms. Miller adjourned the Library Board of Trustees meeting at 5pm on a motion from Ms. Cooper and a second from Mr. Bogacz.

Respectfully submitted,


Amanda Dickman
Library Director

