



PCLS BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
7:30 PM February 24th, 2025
Hampton Memorial Library

Budget Committee Meeting

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)

Meeting called to order at 7:44 pm.

1. Discussion of FY26 Budget and preparation for Budget proposal to council

Discussion of the current positions in the library, two part-time positions and a full-time position. The budget proposal to the council will reflect full employment, which includes the new part-time position requests and the reclassification of the bookkeeper position. Dr. Wilson mentioned having an explanation for every line item that has a high or lower amount versus last year's budget. Have two versions of the budget, one with a solution for book content complaints and one without. Discussion about securing funding for library renovations, focusing on HVAC system replacement and broader upgrades. Concerns raised regarding budget allocation, particularly regarding the potential for funding cuts and the need for transparent communication with the county council. Dr. Wilson made a proposal to form a construction committee with experienced members to oversee the renovation project and ensure efficient use of funds.

2. Addressing Community Concerns about Library Materials

Debate about the handling of books deemed inappropriate for certain age groups, emphasizing the need for a compromise that respects parental rights and community standards. Mr. Parton admitted to not having read all the books on the reconsideration list but still voted on the placement of the books. Dr. Wilson expressed the need for the Library Board to function as a united group in their decision making. Discussion of the reconsideration process for challenged books, including the possibility of creating a community review committee to assist in placement decisions. Concerns about potential lawsuits and the need to balance community concerns with the protection of individual freedoms and the library's role as

a source of information. Dr. Wilson says to Ms. Pinkerton “as fervently as you want to get rid of every single book that has homosexuality in it, keep in mind that some kid out there may not be gay, and he's trying to answer that question too. So, it works both ways.” Ms. Pinkerton responds, “getting rid of it was not even an option, it was just moving it.” Ms. Pinkerton asked, “I have to walk with my son, I have to supervise him 24 hours the whole entire time over his shoulder, looking around, because he's going to come across books like that. Why shouldn't the people that are looking for those books specifically, which they probably are, have a section where they can get them, instead of me having a conversation with my son that he and I are not ready for? I'm trying to be a parent and you're telling me I can't.” Dr. Wilson responds, “we're telling you that you do have to be the parent... You're not ready to have a discussion, so you want everybody not to be able to have that discussion, and that's a violation of their rights.” The Director responds, “what we would like to do is empower the parents with the library card application. All we're doing is putting it in the section where it goes. We're not making moral judgments or anything, just putting it in the section where it goes. Then we're going to give you all these tools so that you know that you're not pulling these books out by accident. But if you're concerned about that, then you need to be with your child and go through the books to say that book is not for us.” Dr. Wilson says “what I'm asking you guys to do is to compromise. You're not going to get them to move every book in the library, because you don't like the content, that's on you as a parent. The community and the employees need to see clear direction from the 7 of us... When you say very specifically that you don't want to have anything in the children's section with a bare butt in it, is that right?” Ms. Miller replies, “This particular book was a man's butt, and he was in a gay pride parade, and it was on the front of the book.” The Director asked, “So is the problem the gay pride parade or the man's butt? Ms. Miller replies, “I think it's both issues for children. This was in the young children's section.” The Director says, “There are children that we serve that have gay parents. We have to serve everybody.” Ms. Miller replies, “I know, but there are more children who do not have gay parents, who's minds are not ready to absorb that yet. It messes with the child's mind.” Dr. Wilson explains that we need to have this dialogue to get to some sort of solution, so we can move forward, and this issue won't affect the state of the library in the long term.

3. Staffing Needs and Budget Allocation

Dr. Wilson discussed the library's current staffing levels and the need for additional personnel to address community concerns and manage the book review process. Dr. Wilson makes a motion to have another version of the budget that would include new positions. Ms. Childers seconded the motion, unanimous approval.

Meeting adjourned at 9:45 pm