



**State Library Board
Meeting Minutes**

Date: July 23, 2026
Time: 10:30 a.m.
Location: In-person and via Zoom at 1500 Senate Street

Board Member Attendance:

Ms. Andrea Kelly, Chair	Present
Mr. Mark Herring, Member	Present
Mr. Graham Horsman, Member	Present
Ms. Marlena White, Member	Present
Ms. Bet Hamilton, Member	Absent
Dr. Ruth Hodges, Member	Absent
Ms. Angela Lorenz, Member	Present

Other Attendees: Ms. Leesa Aiken, SCSL; Mr. Carl Coffin, APLA; Ms. Charlotte Dunn, SCSL; Ms. Breanne Smith, SCSL

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m. by Ms. Andrea Kelly, Board Chair.

A. Board Business

1. Ms. Kelly asked for any corrections to the May 28, 2026, board meeting minutes; there were none. Mr. Graham Horsman made a motion to approve; Mr. Mark Herring seconded. All present were in agreement, and the minutes from the May 2026 meeting were approved.
2. Ms. Kelly asked for nominations for the position of Vice Chair. Ms. Marlena White nominated herself; Mr. Herring nominated himself. A vote was taken, with Ms. White receiving three of the five votes. Ms. White will serve in the Vice Chair appointment.

B. Director Report

1. Agency Administration

- a. Ms. Leesa Aiken advised the Board that the legislative budget passed the conference committee the previous evening at approximately 9:15 p.m. The State Library received \$800,000 for the funding of six new positions within the agency. An increase in State Aid funding was also passed to include a minimum to public libraries to \$200,000 from \$150,000. The six new positions for the State Library will be of tremendous help as a small agency with current limited staffing. Funding that was not addressed as part of the meeting included earmarked funds for the town of Santee's library, which Ms. Aiken confirmed is part of the Orangeburg County Library system. Ms. Aiken stated that the earmarked funds will likely be discussed at future legislative meetings.
- b. The State Library hosted a delegation of visitors from Hong Kong, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Georgia, Lebanon, Romania, and Tanzania, who are participating in the State Department's International Visitor Leadership Program. They were particularly interested in the SC250 initiative, as well as the Library's digitization program. This was their first time visiting the United States, and the State Library is thankful to have been included in their tour.
- c. State Library leadership is in the process of completing employee performance reviews. The Library is on a universal review, with each employee receiving a review in July. State employees across all agencies should be receiving 2% increase in the new fiscal year. Ms. Aiken also mentioned some State Library employees will receive merit-based increases.
- d. K-12 Board budget requests were approved for FY27. Funds were approved for Tutor.com (\$168,000), PebbleGo Science Next (\$93,936), and Infobase Science Online and Today's Science (\$104,168)—all totaling to \$366,104. These approved requests will provide additional science resources to residents of South Carolina, especially students. Mr. Horsman asked for an explanation of the K-12 Board. Ms. Aiken explained that the K-12 Board is legislatively mandated and consists of the State Library, South Carolina ETV, the Department of Administration, the Department of Education, and Department of Technology (DTO). The heads of these agencies submit budget requests for specific K-12 resources, which are funded through a small portion of lottery earnings. The largest part of the K-12 funding goes to DTO to support K-12 technology infrastructure.
- e. All State Library staff completed three courses in artificial intelligence (A.I.): "A.I. Prompting Basics," "A.I. Ethics in a Digital World," and "What You Need to Know About A.I. and Libraries." The Library's leadership team has also created guidelines for staff, which is a living document due to the constantly changing nature of technology. Additional training was also provided at an all-staff meeting by the Charleston County Public Library (CCPL). Ms. Kelly inquired about the courses; Ms.

Aiken replied that the courses were created by and for librarians and were evaluated beforehand by qualified staff. Mr. Horsman inquired about possible guidance for public libraries; Ms. Aiken replied that the State Library is working on this, as the guiding agency for public libraries.

- f. The State Library held its second annual mobile mammography event, with several employees participating.
- g. The State Library is wrapping up a camera and security upgrade project, which will be completed by the end of July 2026.
- h. The Talking Book Services (TBS) department within the State Library has received a new phone system, which has more capabilities than the previous system. Ms. Aiken reported that TBS takes about 8,000 phone calls per year and has over 24,000 patron contacts.
- i. Ms. Aiken and the State Library received an invitation from the documentary series *All Access with Andy Garcia*, which seeks to educate audiences on a wide variety of timely and impactful stories. The episode will discuss public libraries in communities and the State Library's role within them. Several public library programs—such as SC Plants the Seed and Check Out SC, the state-park-pass joint program with SC Parks, Recreation, and Tourism (SCPRT)—will be highlighted. Ms. Aiken's overarching goal is to share information about public libraries around South Carolina and the many positive activities happening within them. The working title of the series episode is "Libraries: More than Books." Mr. Herring expressed concern that books would not be emphasized; Ms. Aiken assured him they would be. Ms. Aiken shared that through the SC Plants the Seed program, free books are part of the core program. Ms. Kelly emphasized that in her experience, the majority of items going out of libraries are books.

2. Partnerships

- a. The South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum (SCCRRMM) partnered with the State Library for a SC250 Palmetto Display at the State Library. It is currently in the east end of the Library's lobby.
- b. The State Library partnered with the South Carolina State Museum (SCSM) on the opening of their exhibit, *American Battleground: South Carolina's Revolution*, on June 27, 2026.
- c. The State Library currently has the SCSM's traveling exhibit, *The History and Archaeology of Fort Mott*, on display in the east end of the Library's lobby through the end of August 2026. It features a hands-on component.
- d. The State Library has secured the Freedom250 Truck for the State Fairgrounds, which will be open to the public September 1-2, 2026. The Library will partner with SC250 on the coordination on this visit. Open hours were originally to be 9 a.m.-5

- p.m. but have been shifted to 11 a.m.-7 p.m. to be more accommodating to people's work and school schedules.
- e. The Summer Reading theme this year is "Unearth a Story," and the State Library has partnered with South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) on an Archaeology for Kids program. The Library has shared this information with teachers and librarians across the state.
 - f. The State Library is partnering with SCDNR on a South Carolina Heritage Trust program. Meg Gaillard is a SCDNR archaeologist, and the Library's TBS Department is working for the first time to adapt some of the program's materials into audio and braille formats. Additionally, TBS will be recording Reece Spradley's book, *Fort Frederick*, a book about one of South Carolina's Revolutionary heritage sites, Fort Frederick.
 - g. The State Library is partnering again with the USC School of Law for their annual 1L Day of Service, to be held on August 21, 2026. Incoming first-year law students at USC will be assisting various community partners across the Midlands. Ms. Charlotte Dunn is finalizing projects for their afternoon of service.

3. Projects/ Programs

- a. Today is the go-live date for six public libraries joining SCLENDS. The libraries going live include the following systems: Georgetown, Sumter, Dillon, Darlington, Marlboro, and Marion. After today, there will be thirty-one public library systems across South Carolina participating in SCLENDS. Chapin Memorial Library in Horry County will go live in the next few months.
- b. The *Greenville News* has recently been added to the State Library's online newspaper offerings. This was a separate contract through ProQuest that has been negotiated over the course of several years
- c. TBS's audio recording of the magazine *South Carolina Wildlife* was just approved for national distribution by the National Library Service (NLS). It is a tremendous honor for TBS as there are only five other regional magazines distributed on a national scale. Additionally, the process to qualify for national distribution is quite rigorous. The magazine is available for listening to TBS patrons through regular distribution and the TBS-exclusive app, BARD.

4. Personnel

- a. The Discus Virtual Training Coordinator position at the State Library has been filled.
- b. Opens positions at the State Library include the Federal Documents Librarian, the TBS Outreach Reader Advisor, and the Helpdesk Coordinator. Mr. Horsman inquired about the need for a librarian to work with federal documents. Ms. Aiken explained that the position requires the requesting, cataloging, and maintenance of the physical and digital federal documents. The State Library is a federal documents depository

for South Carolina-related items. Mr. Herring inquired about digital items and the cataloging of state records. Ms. Aiken explained that state documents do not have a MARC record and State Library staff must create original cataloging records for state documents and items. The creation of cataloging records for digital documents which are harvested or collected is also required. Both digital and physical collections require upkeep and changes related to technology shifts, etc.

5. Events

a. Recent:

1. The State Library hosted the Institutional Libraries Exchange on May 29, 2026. In attendance were librarians and other employees from public libraries, USC, correctional facilities, and the Department of Mental Health. Ms. Breanne Smith explained that the State Library is mandated to serve institutional libraries, which include (but are not limited to) correctional facilities, mental health facilities, and other niche-category libraries. Ms. Smith added that Caroline Smith, the State Library's Facilities & Access Consultant, did an excellent job organizing the event, which was a great opportunity for attending organizations to network.
2. The State Library hosted Tom Elmore on June 18, 2026. He presented the "Swamp Fox" in Media as part of the Center for the Book's Speaker at the Center Series.
3. On July 16, 2026, The Speaker at the Center series featured a six-person panel discussion about the American Revolution. The panel included Eric K. Barnes, Dr. Elizabeth Chew, Bill Davies, Virginia Ellison, Dr. Eric Emerson, and Rick Wise—all notable experts in their fields. There was a large turnout with audience engagement.

b. Upcoming:

1. SC250 Idea Exchange (August 12, 2026)
2. Speaker at the Center: The Quilts of Valor Program (July 23, 2026)
3. Speaker at the Center: Author L. Glen Inabinet with *Mekong Memoirs: A GI in Tan Tru, Long An Province, 1969-1970* (August 6, 2026)
4. Speaker at the Center: *Historyman Comics* author, Eric K. Barnes (August 27, 2026)

6. Public Libraries

- a. The South Carolina Election Commission released several reports detailing early voting, which shows the importance of libraries as voting locations. As an example, 52% of early votes in Beaufort County were cast in a library; in Charleston County, 13,000 residents cast early votes in public libraries. Mr. Carl Coffin praised this as an example of libraries' importance in their communities.

- b. The following counties have public-library director vacancies: Chesterfield, Saluda, and Pickens. Pickens currently is working with a temporary director, Bruce Heimberger, and the interview process for a permanent director will begin soon. Mr. Horsman inquired about the number of vacancies, asking if it was a large number. Ms. Aiken said the number of vacancies is normal and that smaller counties often have trouble filling director roles due to smaller budgets and limited staff. The Pickens position should be filled soon.

C. APLA Report

Mr. Coffin reported that SCAPLA has taken a pause with meetings due to public libraries being in the middle of their summer reading programs (i.e., the busiest season for public libraries). The group does plan to meet on August 14, 2026, to decide on their legislative budget requests for FY28. SCAPLA is thrilled with the minimum increase in state aid, which is crucial to small and rural counties. Regarding FY28, Mr. Coffin stated that SCAPLA is looking into raising the State Aid minimum to a per-capita system to benefit larger library systems. He noted that the extended legislative session has left earmarks in an uncertain state.

Mr. Coffin emphasized that the state's public libraries are thankful to the State Library for their joint program with SCPRT, Check Out SC, which includes the state park passes. The program has been incredibly popular statewide, including in Colleton County, where Mr. Coffin is the library director. Additionally, public libraries across the state are continuing with their SC250 programs. Mr. Coffin noted that the State Library's administration of the LSTA Summer Reading grants had been beneficial to several county systems.

Mr. Horsman inquired about earmarks for public libraries. Ms. Aiken explained that most earmarks at state level are for construction. Ms. Smith stated that there are usually only one or two public library earmarks in a given legislative session. Mr. Coffin gave the example of an earmark from two Legislative session ago for the Cottageville branch for Colleton County.

D. Financial Report

Ms. Aiken went over the Budget Report, explaining that all expenses must be justified to the agency director and that the State Library budgets for every purchase to the line. The Library ensures that fiscal responsibility is a top priority.

E. Adjournment

Ms. Kelly asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:43 a.m. Ms. Angela Lorenz made a motion to adjourn, which Mr. Herring seconded; all present were in favor. The next board meeting will be held on Thursday, September 24, 2026.