

**HEARTLAND LIBRARY COOPERATIVE  
GOVERNING BOARD**

Lake Placid Public Library – Meeting Room  
1069 US Hwy. 27 N., Lake Placid, FL

**Minutes to the September 18, 2024 Meeting**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order at 10:32 a.m.

Invocation was led by Chair Jeannie Palacios.

Pledge was led by Chair Jeannie Palacios.

**ROLL CALL:**

Governing Board Members Present: Jeannie Palacios Chair Hardee County; Commissioner Judy Schaefer Vice-Chair DeSoto County; Ann Ryals Desoto County; Lauri Benson Desoto County; Terri Moorehouse Glades County; Julie Perry Glades County; Nicole Drake Hardee County; Denise Whitehead Okeechobee County; Robbi Sumner Okeechobee County; Commissioner Brad Goodbread Treasurer Okeechobee County; Sue Rood Highlands County; Vikki Brown Coordinator Heartland.

**Also Present:** Linda Waters Librarian DeSoto County; Kresta King Librarian Okeechobee County; Regina Ussery Librarian Hardee County; Iris Perkins Librarian Glades County.

**Absent:** Judith George Hardee County; Commissioner Arlene Tuck Highlands County; Sonya Chapa Assistant Coordinator Heartland.

**ROUTINE BUSINESS:**

**Notice of Public Meeting:** Notice was properly given.

**Additions to Agenda:** Vikki informed the board that item vi (Approval of State Aid to Libraries Grant Agreement) would need to be removed from the agenda, as the state still has not opened that portal or made any documents available to library staff for the board to review and approve.

**Approval of the Agenda:** Lauri Benson moved to accept the agenda with the removal of item vi, seconded by Denise Whitehead; unanimously passed.

**Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting:** Nicole Drake moved to accept the minutes of the previous meeting, seconded by Vice Chair Judy Schaffer; unanimously passed.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**PRESENTATION: - No Presentations**

## **CONSENT AGENDA:**

Denise Whitehead moved to accept and approve the consent agenda, seconded by Vice Chair Judy Schaffer; unanimously passed.

- i. Approval of Wicks, Brown & Williams Engagement Letter
- ii. Approval of CliftonLarsenAllen Engagement Letter
- iii. Approval of BA-2402
- iv. Approval of FY25 Budget
  1. Decrease to staff salaries due to a long-term staff member retiring.
- v. Approval of Annual Plan of Service FY25
- vi. REMOVED ITEM NOT APPROVED: State Aid to Libraries Grant Agreement
- vii. Approval of Certification of Local Operating Expenditures
- viii. Approval Certification of Hours
- ix. Approval of FY25 Meeting Dates
- x. Approval Pay Increase
  1. Increase pay for the couriers to \$15 (secondary courier) & 15.25 (lead courier) – This is already included in the proposed budget

## **ACTION AGENDA:**

### **I. No items.**

## **INFORMATIONAL:**

### **I. Library Statistics**

Vikki Brown included circulation statistics to show how libraries are trending and was happy to report that all branches are increasing their statistics compared to last year at the same time. Statistics are showing how well the libraries are being used.

### **II. Member Updates**

- Lauri Benson shared that DeSoto library still does not have the children's library manager position filled, and DeSoto library is extremely busy, while being short staffed. Linda Waters, librarian for DeSoto, could not make the meeting due to being short staffed. Vikki Brown commented that hopefully soon the position will be filled and they will be back to full staff. Chair Jeannie Palacios commented that Linda Water is missed from the meetings.
- Iris Perkins shared that everything is going well, even though Glades library is also short staffed and there will be interviews held tomorrow (September 19) for a new staff member.
- Denise Whitehead shared that Bass Master Elite will be in Okeechobee next spring (2025). Comments were shared about how exciting this is and what an opportunity for Okeechobee County.
- Kresta King shared that next Thursday (9/26/24) Okeechobee library would be celebrating the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Okeechobee library building with a 70's theme Boogie Bash. There will be disco lights and balls along with live music and a scavenger hunt.

- Nicole Drake wanted to take the opportunity to brag on Regina Ussery for all she is doing for the Hardee library. The library was taken from “already good to out of this world good.” They are on top of the world that 9,000 people visited the Hardee library over the summer, and Regina did a great job sharing about the Hardee library at a recent meeting with the Commissioners.
- Regina Ussery shared that the Hardee library had a very busy summer hosting programs at the library. Some were made possible through the Florida Humanities Grant, which made possible creative writing classes and Dungeons and Dragons and crafts for teens. 300 teens participated in the programming. Hardee library had 95 programs with over 1,000 people attending those programs. Hardee library had 9,000 visits over June and July. Denise commended Regina for her impressive commissioner presentations and shared about how the Okeechobee library impact report highlighted the library in a very beneficial way. Hardee library is also gaining an additional staff member giving them 4 full time staff members and 2 part-time staff members, as well as extending the library hours to include evening and weekend times. Nicole stated that Regina planned strategically through programs and surveys.
- Vikki shared that the application issue with state aid is affecting all library branches, shared the possibility of Highlands receiving an additional part-time floater staff member, shared about the previous IT staff member and the onboarding of the new IT staff member, and shared about the new company that the Cooperative would be using to host the website to ensure the Cooperative stays compliant and up to date.
- Commissioner Judy Schaffer congratulated Hardee and Regina on a job well done, and share that while DeSoto library is in need of staff, they are doing well.
- Jeannie Palaicios shared comments praising Regina Ussery as well. She stated that Regina has done great things by coming in and going above and beyond. She finds grants and is doing a lot of good for the community.
- Commissioner Brad Goodbread shared about the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration at the Okeechobee library and that there is a Commissioner meeting on the same day. He shared how important it is to pursue grants for the county.

**Adjournment:**

Vice Chair Judy Schaffer moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Brad Goodbread; unanimously passed. Meeting adjourned at 10:47 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Vikki Brown