

**HEARTLAND LIBRARY COOPERATIVE
GOVERNING BOARD**

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

Minutes to the September 13, 2023 Meeting

CALL TO ORDER:

The Meeting was called to order at 10:33 a.m. Invocation and pledge was led by Jeannie Palacios.

ROLL CALL:

Governing Board Members Present: Jeannie Palacios Chair Hardee County; Commissioner Brad Goodbread Treasurer Okeechobee County; Commissioner Donna Storter-Long Glades County; Nicole Drake Hardee County; Denise Whitehead Okeechobee County; Robbi Sumner Okeechobee County; Terri Moorehouse Glades County; Vikki Brown Coordinator Heartland; Sonya Chapa Assistant Coordinator Heartland

Also Present: Iris Perkins Librarian Glades County; Linda Waters Librarian DeSoto County; Kresta King Librarian Okeechobee County; June Fischer Glades County Manager; Julie Fowler CliftonLarsenAllen.

Absent: Commissioner Judy Schaefer Vice-Chair DeSoto County; Lauri Benson Desoto County; Ann Ryals Desoto County; Commissioner Arlene Tuck Highlands County; Julie Perry Glades County; Jeanette Peoples Glades County; Commissioner Judith George Hardee County; Sue Rood Highlands County; Margaret Dewey Highlands County.

ROUTINE BUSINESS:

Notice of Public Meeting: Notice was properly given.

Additions to Agenda: None.

Approval of the Agenda: Denise Whitehead moved to accept the agenda with changes, seconded by Donna Storter-Long; unanimously passed.

Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting: Brad Goodbread moved to accept the agenda with changes, seconded by Donna Storter-Long; unanimously passed.

NEW BUSINESS:

CONSENT AGENDA:

Donna Storter-Long moved to accept the consent agenda, seconded by Brad Goodbread; unanimously passed.

I. CliftonLarsenAllen Engagement Letter and Agreement for FY24

- II. **Wicks Brown & Williams Engagement Letter for FY24**
- III. **Budget FY24**
- IV. **State Aid to Libraries Grant Agreement**
- V. **FY24 Meeting Dates**
- VI. **Annual Plan of Service FY24**
- VII. **Budget Amendments for FY23 Budget**

ACTION AGENDA:

No Items.

INFORMATIONAL:

- I. **Grant Updates**
 - A. **IMLS – Mobile Library**

Vikki Brown informed the Board that the ramp for the Mobile Library has been installed onto the van. Vikki also stated that a Library system in Texas reached out to Heartland for information and help on starting a Mobile Library for their system; Heartland is helping Libraries across the United States. Vikki reported that 864 individuals have participated in the Mobile Library with 64 new patrons.
 - B. **LSTA – Help in the Heartland**

Vikki Brown informed the Board that intern acquired through the Help in the Heartland grant did not want to be paid, requesting class credit instead, resulting in extra grant funds available which was used to purchase more technology for the Cooperative.
 - C. **New Grants – PLA**

Vikki Brown informed the Board of two new grants awarded to Heartland by the Public Library Association. These grants are intended to increase digital literacy and were awarded in the amount of \$6,000 and \$1,500. These grant programs will be used to teach digital literacy workshops such as internet and technology basics, along with workshops on information for the Affordable Connectivity Program. The funds are primarily required for incentives for these grants; the Cooperative has purchased gift cards to hand out as incentives.
 - D. **Library Statistics**

Vikki Brown informed the Board that the statistics report were provided for the Board’s perusal.
 - E. **Financial Statement**

Vikki Brown informed the Board that the Financial Statement was provided for the Board’s perusal.

Member Updates

Brad Goodbread asked for an update on the Okeechobee County Public Library. Sonya Chapa informed the Board that the Okeechobee Library is in the process of updating furniture and

interactive areas to modernize the Library; Sonya thanked Okeechobee's Facilities Maintenance department for all of their hardwork on installing and building these components. Sonya also informed the Board that programs are continuing full-steam at the Okeechobee Library and are increasing with more local partnerships including the Soil & Water Conservation Management for a new Seed Library, the Hanley Foundation for a Behavioral Health Resource Fair that provided resources for the community including NARCAN training and suicide prevention, and are increasing STEAM centered programming. Brad asked about the Summer Reading program; Sonya reported the Okeechobee Library had a very successful Summer Reading program this year with an increase in participation and families that have continued to frequent the Library into the school year, including a very successful Storytime participation. Sonya also informed the Board that the Okeechobee Library was awarded a Cultural Arts Programming award for \$15,000 for Diversity programs including music performances, author visits, and cultural presentations for FY24; the Okeechobee Library is applying for this same grant for FY25. Brad suggested that the Library present an update to the Okeechobee Board of County Commissioners to keep the Board informed of all that is being accomplished at the Library.

Linda Waters thanked Brad for suggesting these ideas as Libraries are in need of communities to advocate for them due to continued cuts in State funding; officials like the Commissioners need to be made aware of these issues. Linda informed the Board that Desoto has started the digital literacy workshops and have received a positive response and necessary resources for the community and staff. Linda also informed the Board that Desoto is working with the Patterson Foundation to provide author visits such as Ryan Rydzewski, author of 'When You Wonder, You're Learning: Mister Rodgers' Enduring Lessons for Raising Creative, Curious, Caring Kids'.

Iris Perkins informed the Board that Glades County Public Library had a successful Summer Reading program with great participation from the community. Iris stated that they are now working on Budgets with an emphasis in mind to update the Glades Library facilities including the Children's Area. Iris also informed the Board that Glades will be adding after school Storytimes to expand the successful program and provide more opportunities for the Glades community.

June Fischer introduced herself as the County Manager for Glades County. June stated she was a previous member of this Board and was happy to stop in to visit with the Board.

Kresta King thanked the Board for the opportunity to get together and thanked Brad Goodbread for advocating for the Library.

Denise White applauded Kresta King for her presentation in the decision panel for the General Programming Cultural Arts Grant, after which Okeechobee Library's scores were increased and the grant was awarded. Denise also applauded Kresta for taking the lead role in updating the strategic plan for Okeechobee County as directed by the Okeechobee County Administrator; this is a great opportunity to advocate for the Library and other County departments. Denise informed the Board that the Okeechobee County Parks & Recreation department is starting a half-day program with sports and other activities to keep youth engaged on Early Release days

from schools. Denise also informed the Board of the Floating Pumpkin Patch program in partnership between the Okeechobee Library and the Parks & Recreation department along with the Halloween Extravaganza, a large trick-or-treat event put on by many different local Okeechobee partners including County departments, usually attended by around 4,000 children.

Donna Storter-Long introduced Terri and Austin Moorehouse as Friends of the Glades Library members, and long-standing supporters of the Glades Library. Donna applauded the Heartland for the grant awards and keeping the member Libraries informed of more funding opportunities. Donna informed the Board that Jeanette Peoples has had to step down from the Heartland Governing Board, and thanked the Moorehouse's for stepping in to represent Glades County. Donna stated that the Library is an outreach of social and educational entertainment along with other resources and is happy to see this reported to the Board regularly.

Robbi Sumner introduced herself as the President of the Friends of the Okeechobee Library and is happy to be joining as a member of the Board for Okeechobee County.

Nicole Drake informed the Board that Hardee County has been through a rough year with hurricane storm damage, FEMA stationed at the Hardee County, and other changes; despite these setbacks the Hardee staff have been able to provide great services for the community including a successful Summer Reading program along with new programming and outreach for Hardee County.

Terri Moorehouse thanked the Heartland Governing Board for allowing her to join as a member for Glades County.

Sonya Chapa thanked the Heartland Librarians and staff for all of their hard work during a busy Summer season and a resulting busy Fall season, and also thanked the Board for recognizing these efforts by Heartland staff and for advocating for our Libraries.

Vikki Brown informed the Board that two of the Heartland Cooperative staff, Regina Ussery and Liz Coronado, recently graduated the Sunshine State Library Leadership Institute. Vikki informed the Board that the vending Library has been installed in the Spring Lake community center and is available to all Heartland Library patrons.

Jeannie Palacios stated that the Hardee County Library has been busy with community help due to Hurricane damage and related issues and is very grateful for the work that the Hardee staff continues to do along with these additional duties. Jeannie is happy to see the Libraries continue to be a place for books and literacy while also staying up to date with technology and other resources for information and learning.

Adjournment:

Nicole Drake moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Brad Goodbread; unanimously passed. Meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sonya Chapa