



# Administrative Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Date: April 28, 2025

Location: Winona-Montgomery

Time: 2:00 pm

County Library Meeting Room

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Mid-Mississippi Regional Library System Board of Trustees was held on Monday, April 28, 2025 at the Winona-Montgomery County Public Library. Trustees in attendance were Rhonda Porter, Winston County (teleconference); Lee Branch, Montgomery County; and Martha Ramzy, Leake County. Also in attendance were staff members: Wendy Rushing, Winona-Montgomery County Librarian; Tammy Bell, System Business Manager; and Josh Haidet, System Executive Director.

## CALL TO ORDER...

The meeting was called to order by board chairperson Rhonda Porter.

## SETTING THE AGENDA...

There were no changes to the agenda as written, so the agenda for the meeting was set.

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES...

After review, Lee Branch motioned to approve the minutes from the board's February 12, 2025 meeting. Martha Ramzy seconded, and all were in favor.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS...

There were no public comments.

## REPORTS...

### A. Librarian's Report: Wendy Rushing, Winona-Montgomery County Librarian

(See attached report)

### B. Financial Report - Tammy Bell, MMRLS Business Manager

MMRLS Business Manager Tammy Bell presented the financial report. After review and discussion, Martha Ramzy motioned to accept the report, and Lee Branch seconded. All were in favor.

### C. Director's Report – Josh Haidet, MMRLS Executive Director

(See attached report)

During his report, Director Josh Haidet spoke in memory of Attala County Administrative Board Member Willie Faye Brown, and Holmes County Administrative Board Member Flora Pilgram, who both passed away in April of 2025 due to health-related issues. Ms. Brown was named to the Administrative Board in February and served on the Attala County Advisory Board since 2020. Ms. Pilgram was named to the Administrative Board in 2018 and served on the Holmes County Advisory Board since 2011. The director and board commended both members for their years of service to the library system and offered their sincerest condolences to the Brown and Pilgram families.

## OLD BUSINESS...

### A. Attala County Library Digital Sign

The board first discussed a tabled item from a previous meeting, the malfunctioning digital sign for the Attala County Library. Bids to replace the sign have been very expensive, with the lowest bid around \$25,000.00. Director Josh Haidet asked the board how they would like to proceed, given the high cost of replacing the sign, and the fact that the sign could not be repaired. The board directed Mr. Haidet to pursue cheaper alternatives such as a stationary sign and report back at the next meeting.

## NEW BUSINESS...

### A. Executive Session

Martha Ramzy motioned for the board to enter executive session to discuss personnel matters. Lee Branch seconded, and all were in favor.

Upon returning from executive session, Martha Ramzy motioned to allow Carthage-Leake County Librarian Jennifer Thornton to use all available leave to continue her recovery following a serious automobile accident in March. Lee Branch seconded, and all were in favor.

### B. FY2025 Audit Bids

Next, the board discussed the bids to perform the system audit for the fiscal years of 2025, 2026, and 2027. Director Josh Haidet solicited bids from four CPA firms in Mississippi and received only one response from Wolfe, McDuff & Oppie in Pascagoula, Mississippi. The bid stated that the firm performed audits for several other library systems in the state. The bid terms were as follows:

#### Audit Fees:

FY25: \$8,300

FY26: \$8,300

FY27: \$8,600

#### Form 990 Fees:

FY25: \$1,400

FY26: \$1,450

FY27: \$1,500

After review and discussion, Martha Ramzy motioned to accept the bid, and Lee Branch seconded. All were in favor.

### C. MMRLS Database Maintenance

This item of business was tabled until the next meeting of the board due to time constraints.

### D. Computer and Internet Policy

This item of business was tabled until the next meeting of the board due to time constraints.

### E. Emergency Response Plan

This item of business was tabled until the next meeting of the board due to time constraints.

## ADJOURNMENT...

As there was no further discussion, Martha Ramzy motioned to adjourn the meeting, and Lee Branch seconded. All were in favor.

**NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING:** August 18, 2025 at the Durant Public Library at 2:00 p.m.

# MMRLS Admin Board Meeting

April 28, 2025

- MMRLS Administrative Board Member Willie Faye Brown passed away on April 14, 2025
- Ms. Brown was named to the admin board in February, and served on the Attala County Advisory Board since 2020
- Visitation was Saturday, April 19 at Macedonia MB Church, with the burial following at Parkway Cemetery

- MMRLS Administrative Board Member Flora Pilgram passed away on April 23, 2025
- Ms. Flora was named to the admin board in 2018, and served on the Holmes County Advisory Board since 2011
- Visitation was Friday, April 25, at Hairston-Haiston Funeral Home in Lexington
- Funeral Service was Saturday, April 26, at Rose Hill M.B. Church in Tchula
- Interment: West Shady Grove Church Cemetery in Lexington

- Carthage-Leake County Librarian Jennifer Thornton was involved in a serious auto accident on March 20
- After over twenty hours of surgery at UMMC, she has been moved to Select Specialty Hospital in Jackson to continue her recovery



**Carthage Librarian Jennifer Thornton**



- Youth Services Librarian Alyssa Hays
- Assistant Librarian Amanda Dowdle
- Library Clerk Norma King
- Library Clerk Shirley Wooten
- Librarian Jennifer Thornton
- (Left to Right)

# Building Report



# Attala Parking Lot



# Attala Parking Lot



# Attala Parking Lot

- Building Report emailed and mailed to city officials on February 25
- As of March 14 (requested respond by date), I had not received a response
- Attended city board meeting on April 8
- City officials agreed at that time to contact an engineering firm to assess building issues, focusing on evaluating potential safety hazards

- We have removed the non-fiction shelf at the West Public Library to assist in the assessment of the building
- Assessment work was completed on April 15
- Non-fiction wall was demolished, and a hole was cut in the floor to assess structure
- Estimated time to begin repairs is 2-4 months according to Mayor Sammy Aldridge
- All items must be removed from the library





# West Renovation Update

- Scheduled work on the Kilmichael Library, which will include interior and exterior painting, as well as repair to the city run meeting room, has been delayed
- A new bid was approved after the previous contractor backed out of the project
- Estimated start date for this project is July
- We anticipate that most if not all items will need to be removed from the library

- West
- Kilmichael
- Attala Children/Teen Areas
- Pickens Church Project?

## Other projects:

- Winston Reset
- Carthage Cleanout
- Computer Desk for Winona
- Branch Security Plans

# MLP Mobile App

The MLP - MS Library Partnership app puts the MSU Libraries online catalog into the palm of your hand!

Manage your account from your phone or tablet

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Search the catalog for physical books and DVDs

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Scan ISBN barcodes to locate titles

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Renew and reserve items at MLP member libraries

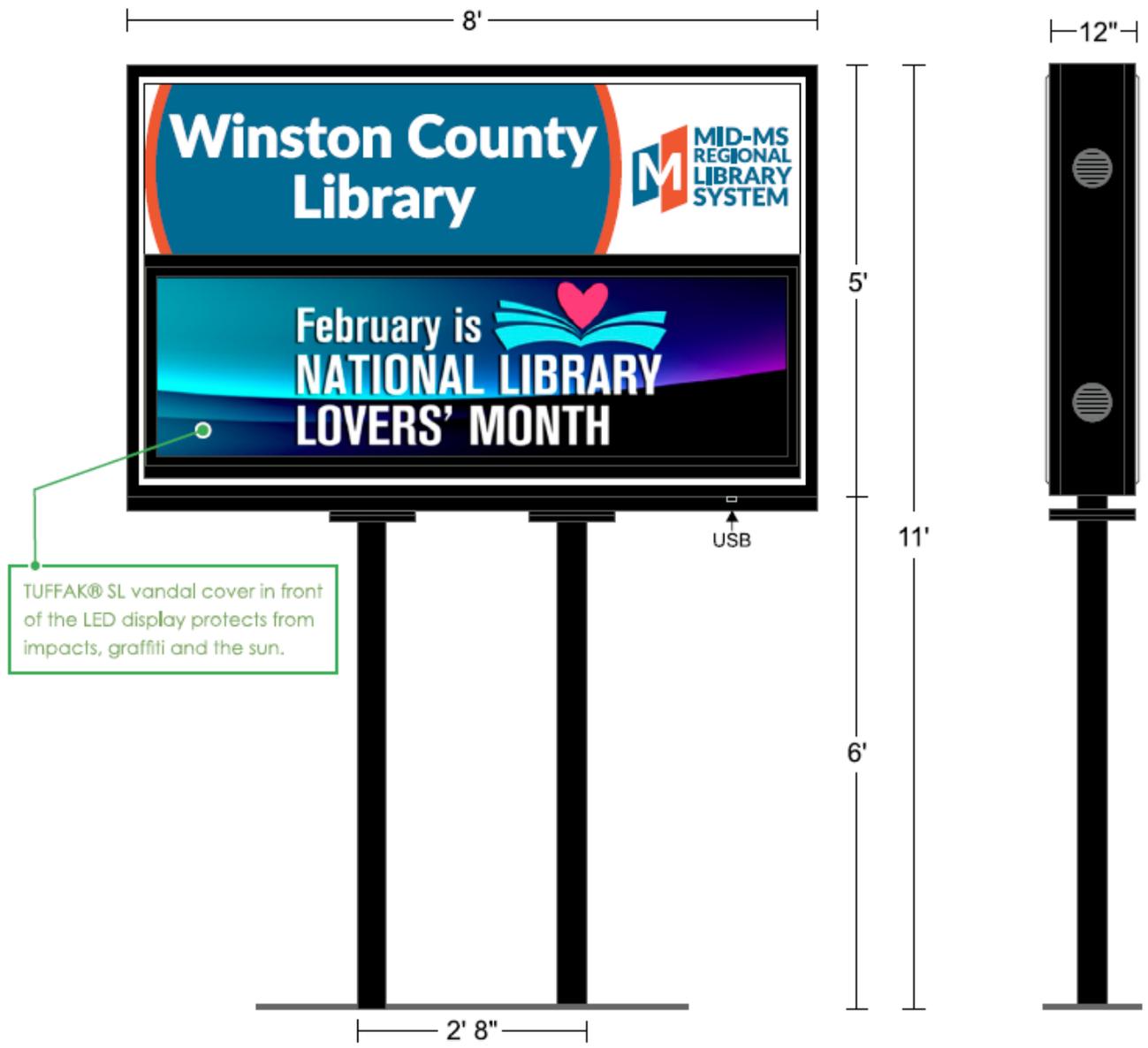
*App currently does not include articles or electronic resources.*

[Click here](#) to view the privacy policy.

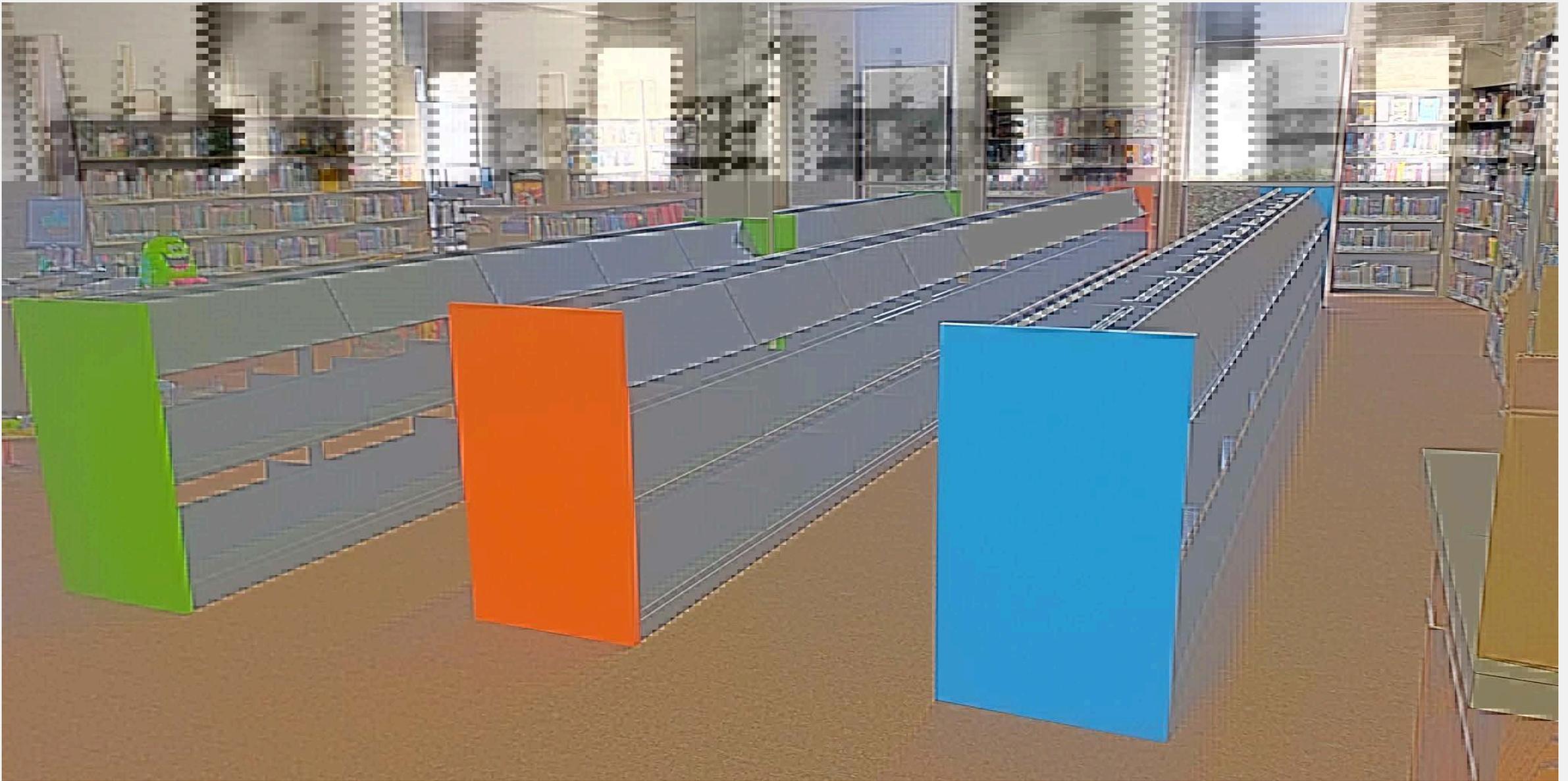


- Current MMRLS App will be discontinued in June
- After a good first few years, an update to the app in 2023 resulted in multiple issues that have never been satisfactorily solved
- Cost of the app was scheduled to be \$2,286.54 for the next year of service
- The MLP app, will be much cheaper, with branding and customization features estimated to cost less than \$1,000.00 per year

- The City of Louisville is moving forward with the purchase of a digital sign for the Winston County Library
- Stewart Signs, Sarasota, Florida
- Cost is \$35,665.00
- Sign is being paid for out of the library maintenance fund maintained by the city



# Winston County Library Digital Sign



MID-MS  
REGIONAL  
LIBRARY  
SYSTEM

# Attala Children's Area Project

- New shelving installed, final cost \$33,793.71
- Next Steps:
  - Quote for wall shelving received, estimated at \$21,781.47
  - Working with board of supervisors on carpet replacement
  - Painting/Murals
  - Book nooks
  - Original project budget of \$75,000.00



## Highlights include:

- Felder Rushing (Carthage, Walnut Grove, Winston)
- Freedom Ranch (Attala)
- Touch-A-Truck (Walnut Grove)
- Author Events
- Crafting Events



**2025 National Library Week**

- Popup Libraries
- MMRLS Board Member Flora Pilgrim
- Duck Hill Librarian Dena Rainey is undergoing radiation treatment for cancer

- On March 14, 2025, President Donald Trump issued an executive order aimed at dismantling several federal agencies, including the Institute of Museum and Library Services
- For FY23, the Mississippi Library Commission received a little over \$2 million dollars from IMLS funding
- Based on information provided by MLC, it appears that much of the funding went to salaries for positions at the commission

- Some funds were also used to provide services to local libraries
- Most IMLS funding has been frozen pending reviews and court challenges
- Immediate impact to MMRLS includes the following:
  - Month supplements to our Hoopla budget for April, May, and June have been cancelled (\$694/month)
  - Current grant funding yet to be reimbursed: \$6,185.46

- Other potential long-term impacts include:
  - OCLC Cataloging Subscription
  - Productivity Software
  - Talking Book Services
  - Interlibrary loan
  - Databases
  - IT Support
  - Consulting Services
  - Other MLC Cuts?

- State Cuts: Proposed budget (not yet approved) includes a \$400,000 cut to MLC
- In FY25, MMRLS received the following state funds:
  - Personnel Incentive Grant Program: \$104,564.68
  - Health/Life Insurance Grant Program: \$154,816.37
  - Health and Life Grant is a statutory requirement

- Carthage Hour/Staffing Change
  - Notice sent to City of Carthage, Leake County, and Leake County Advisory Board
  - No response from any government officials
  - March 13 article in local paper announcing upcoming changes

# Budget cuts hit library

## *Losses predicted for personnel, operations*

Hard times have hit the Carthage-Leake County Library with word of cuts in budgets, hours and personnel recently announced by its parent organization.

According to a letter penned Wednesday, Feb. 19, by Josh Haidet, Executive Director of the Mid-Mississippi Regional Library System, the crunch stems primarily from budget cuts implemented by the city of Carthage.

In the letter he said the MMRLS administrative board “unanimously voted to adjust the hours of operation” for the library in Carthage.

Most of the changes were expected to implemented no later than Oct. 1.

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### Fund raiser delayed

A fund raiser for the Carthage-Leake County Library, Pi(e), slated for Monday, March 17, has been delayed, organizers said.

The pie making competition will likely be moved to a time closer to Mother’s Day and turned into a baking competition.

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Among those changes were hours of operations, to be set as Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. until 5 p.m.

Changes would include, according to the letter:

- The elimination of two staff positions by Oct. 1, 2025;

- A reduction in operating hours to align with available resources, resulting in the loss of nine public service hours per week, including evening and weekend hours;

- A reduction in community programs, including early literacy initiatives, STEAM-based learning opportunities, senior engagement activities and other interactive programs for all ages.

STEAM stands for science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics.

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- See **BUDGET on 10A**

- The article stated that Mayor Laurie Henderson claimed our numbers “seemed misleading,” stating that the only cut we received was \$18,377.00 in FY25.
- She further stated that the city paid for building maintenance on the library, which is of course owned by the City of Carthage.
- She made no comment on the changes voted on by the library board.

- Utility/Supply Costs paid by the library since FY23 (does not include phone):
  - FY23: \$12,353.89
  - FY24: \$14,864.08
  - FY25 (through February): \$6,036.00
- The library was made responsible for these costs while still receiving the same amount from the city for operations
- Estimated total cut to FY25 budget was conservatively estimated to be \$31,000.00, but could easily be thousands more
- Total accumulated amount anticipated to be cut from the library budget since FY23 is nearly \$60,000.00.

- There has been no other mention of renaming the library building in Durant

Branch name:	Year-To-Date FY2024	Year-To-Date FY2025	Difference
Attala County	27,026	35,992	8,966
Carthage-Leake	15,587	17,166	1,579
Duck Hill	1,248	867	(381)
Durant	1,565	2,453	888
Goodman	3,822	3,974	152
Kilmichael	1,789	1,717	(72)
Lexington	2,410	2,488	78
Pickens	983	1,423	440
Tchula	414	835	421
Walnut Grove	6,574	11,383	4,809
West	1,389	1,456	67
Winona-Montgomery	7,663	7,550	(113)
Winston County	19,682	21,667	1,985
Mobile Library	841	1,760	919
cloudLibrary e-books	8,603	8,702	99
Hoopla e-books	9,249	11,965	2,716
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>108,845</b>	<b>131,398</b>	<b>22,553</b>



# Circulation Report – YTD March

LOCATION	Attendance FY24	In Library FY25
Attala	19,615	21,103
Carthage	18,688	20,985
Duck Hill	586	427
Durant	1,352	2,640
Goodman	1,152	900
Kilmichael	985	952
Lexington	10,514	4,935
Pickens	1,021	1,055
Tchula	468	353
Walnut Grove	4,152	4,922
West	653	461
Winona	7,949	7,898
Winston	20,419	17,427
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>87,554</b>	<b>84,058</b>

LOCATION	Public Access Computers	
	Customers	Hours Used
Attala	2,077	1,618
Carthage	1,387	719
Duck Hill	26	18
Durant	631	608
Goodman	74	87
Kilmichael	129	122
Lexington	1,068	834
Pickens	265	212
Tchula	161	165
Walnut Grove	263	160
West	81	85
Winona	1,083	707
Winston	884	517
Mobile Library	0	0
<b>FY25 TOTAL:</b>	<b>8,129</b>	<b>5,852</b>
<b>FY24 TOTAL:</b>	<b>8,016</b>	<b>6,402</b>

<b>System Wireless Uses</b>
<b>FY25: 30,198</b>
<b>FY24: 24,961</b>

<b>Items Notarized</b>
<b>FY25: 468</b>
<b>FY24: 364</b>

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	FY24	FY25
October	878	803
November	870	731
December	608	824
January	693	760
February	895	962
March	6,570*	855

\*Mississippi held a primary election on March 12, 2024



# Lexington Attendance FY24 vs FY25

## IN-HOUSE PROGRAMS

LOCATION	Children 0-5 Years		Children 6-12 Years		Teens		Adults		All Ages	
	Number	Attendance	Number	Attendance	Number	Attendance	Number	Attendance	Number	Attendance
Attala	25	335	15	188	32	262	44	452	13	549
Carthage	25	625	17	196	9	49	35	212	3	101
Duck Hill	2	4	1	4	0	0	9	80	2	4
Durant	4	40	4	13	0	0	10	25	3	22
Goodman	9	97	10	48	4	23	13	85	8	62
Kilmichael	0	0	11	81	0	0	24	110	2	30
Lexington	0	0	1	49	0	0	6	110	6	30
Pickens	11	97	0	0	1	12	2	8	7	82
Tchula	1	16	0	0	0	0	8	60	1	10
Walnut Grove	15	150	19	192	0	0	2	13	18	173
West	0	0	1	9	0	0	15	39	2	13
Winona	4	2	11	49	0	0	27	308	4	80
Winston	24	235	11	121	6	21	38	310	28	530
<b>FY25 TOTAL:</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>1,601</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>1,812</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>1,686</b>
<b>FY24 TOTAL:</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>526</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>1,439</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>720</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>1,746</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>1,006</b>

**FY25 Total Programs: 603    FY25 Total Attendance: 6,416**

**FY24 Total Programs: 445    FY24 Total Attendance: 5,437**



# Circulation Report – In-House Programs

Location:	Fax	Copies	Computer Prints
Attala	\$2,059.50	\$2,041.60	\$5,109.70
Durant	\$900.50	\$193.30	\$1,064.80
Goodman	\$163.00	\$77.40	\$151.40
Lexington	\$1,629.50	\$710.90	\$2,782.30
Pickens	\$422.11	\$71.77	\$487.70
Tchula	\$94.00	\$95.80	\$133.80
West	\$37.00	\$10.40	\$70.40
Carthage	\$2,627.00	\$1,036.40	\$4,045.00
Walnut Grove	\$493.00	\$224.00	\$895.80
Duck Hill	\$27.00	\$69.20	\$3.60
Kilmichael	\$97.00	\$52.20	\$287.80
Winona	\$1,026.00	\$652.20	\$1,613.20
Winston	\$1,559.00	\$3,563.60	\$1,950.50
<b>FY25 TOTALS:</b>	<b>\$11,134.61</b>	<b>\$8,798.77</b>	<b>\$18,596.00</b>
<b>FY24 TOTALS:</b>	<b>\$9,542.00</b>	<b>\$7,064.85</b>	<b>\$17,004.65</b>



# Circulation Report – Print/Copy/Fax Services

- May 8-9: MLC Director's Meeting (Virtual)
- May 26: All MMRLS Branches Closed (Holiday)
- June: Summer Reading Program
- June: Advisory Board Meetings (Budget)
- July 4-5: All MMRLS Branches Closed (Holiday)
- August 8: MMRLS Staff Meeting

- **Remaining 2025 Scheduled Meeting Dates:**
  - August 18, 2025 at the Durant Public Library at 2:00 p.m.
  - October 27, 2025 at the Attala County Library at 2:00 p.m.