



Administrative Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Date: February 4, 2026
(Rescheduled)
Time: 2:00 pm

Location: Carthage-Leake County
Library Meeting Room

A rescheduled meeting of the Mid-Mississippi Regional Library System Board of Trustees was held on Wednesday, February 4, 2026. Trustees in attendance were Chairperson Saddle Stallworth, Holmes County; Tim Deason, Attala County; and Martha Ramzy, Leake County.

Also in attendance were staff members: Amanda Dowdle, Carthage-Leake County Assistant Librarian; Tammy Bell, System Business Manager; and Josh Haidet, System Executive Director.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Saddle Stallworth.

SETTING THE AGENDA

There was one correction to the agenda. The representative from Wolfe, McDuff & Oppie, P.A. was unable to attend to present the audit report. The report will be rescheduled for the April board meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Board reviewed minutes from the October 30, 2025, and December 17, 2025, board meetings. Motion by Martha Ramzy to approve minutes from both meetings. Seconded by Tim Deason. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no requests for public comment.

REPORTS

A. Librarian's Report – Amanda Dowdle, Carthage-Leake County Assistant Librarian

B. Financial Report – Tammy Bell, System Business Manager

The financial report was presented. Motion by Tim Deason to approve the financial report; seconded by Martha Ramzy. Motion carried unanimously.

The Board next reviewed system certificates of deposit up for renewal. Motion by Martha Ramzy to keep system CD funds with Renasant Bank at the rate and time frame deemed most advantageous in March when they come up for renewal. Seconded by Tim Deason. Motion carried unanimously.

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

(See attached report.)

OLD BUSINESS

A. Durant Public Library Building

The Board reviewed the January 2026 structural assessment for the Durant Public Library conducted by Smithers Engineers + Consultants. The report identified significant structural roof damage at the south end of the first addition, requiring closure of the meeting room until repairs are completed.

The report also noted a localized area of missing roof deck above the main library requiring repair and restricted roof access until corrected. Additional findings included water intrusion and exterior deterioration issues, which are currently cosmetic but could contribute to future structural deterioration if not addressed.

Following the meeting, Director Haidet indicated he would share the report with the City of Durant for review.

B. Tchula Public Library Temporary Closure

Director Haidet reported no updates regarding progress toward completion of work needed to reopen the Tchula Public Library.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Executive Session

Motion by Martha Ramzy to enter executive session to discuss personnel matters; seconded by Tim Deason. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Saddle Stallworth to return to open session; seconded by Martha Ramzy. Motion carried unanimously.

No action was taken following return to open session.

B. Patron Computer Purchase

The majority of patron computers across the system were purchased in 2019 or 2021 and are nearing end of life. The library system maintains a computer and equipment replacement fund to ensure timely replacement of aging equipment.

Director Haidet recommended replacing all patron computers during Fiscal Year 2026 (approximately 60 computers) and requested the Board establish a budget for this project.

Motion by Martha Ramzy to set a budget of \$120,000.00 for the purchase, based on an estimated cost of approximately \$2,000.00 per computer, and to authorize Director Josh Haidet and Board Treasurer Tim Deason to complete the required purchasing procedures and bid process for this amount. Seconded by Tim Deason. Motion carried unanimously.

C. MMRLS Hiring Policy

The Board reviewed a draft of a new hiring policy for the library system. Motion by Martha Ramzy to approve the new policy, adding language relevant to Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification. Seconded by Tim Deason. Motion carried unanimously.

D. Carthage-Leake County Library Ramzy Fund Disbursement

According to the original fund agreement signed in 1995, the MMRLS Administrative Board is responsible for approving any disbursement of interest earned from the principal of the Ramzy Endowment Fund (\$60,000).

Per the fund agreement, any approved disbursement is to supplement the salaries of staff at the Carthage-Leake County Library. This year's total interest earned is \$2,519.58.

Motion by Tim Deason to disburse the funds. Seconded by Saddle Stallworth. Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Tim Deason to adjourn; seconded by Saddle Stallworth. Motion carried unanimously.

NEXT MEETING

April 27, 2026, at 2:00 p.m.
Winston County Library

Director's Report

MMRLS Administrative Board Meeting

February 2026 (Rescheduled)



In Memoriam

- We first note with sadness the passing of Ms. Norma King, Carthage–Leake County Library Clerk. Ms. Norma joined MMRLS in 2019 and was beloved by patrons and colleagues alike for her kindness, positivity, and dedication to service.
- I will never forget the way that Ms. Norma, and Carthage Clerk Shirley Wooten, handled a very difficult period in the history of the Carthage-Leake County Library. Her contributions to our library system will be remembered and deeply missed.

Hiring

- The library system currently has two open positions: Attala Youth Services and Headquarters Access Coordinator.
- The application process is underway, with a deadline of Sunday, February 1.

Mississippi Library Partnership (MLP) – Integrated Library System (ILS)

- As discussed in previous meetings, the Mississippi Library Partnership (MLP), administered by Mississippi State University, was reviewing vendors for a new integrated library system (ILS).
- They have decided to remain with our current vendor, SirsiDynix
- This decision will save us significant time and money. We have indicated to MLP our intention to remain a member of the partnership.

Durant

- A structural inspection of the Durant Public Library has been completed by Smithers Engineers.
- I was onsite during the inspection, and based on the inspectors' preliminary verbal findings, I closed the library's meeting room until further notice as a precautionary measure.
- While we are still awaiting the written report, inspectors indicated that no other visible structural issues were observed that would pose an immediate safety concern for the building.
- The next step will be a mold screening using the same testing kit previously purchased for the Tchula Public Library.

Tchula

- There have been no updates on repairs to the Tchula Public Library.
- I have visited the building twice to monitor conditions and prepare the facility for upcoming winter weather.

Pickens

- As a result of winter weather and temperatures, a pipe burst at the future location of the Pickens Public Library. Damage is being assessed by the Friends of the Library and Town of Pickens to determine next steps.
- Construction of the circulation desk for the new Pickens Public Library location is underway. While there have been some challenges, the finished structure is shaping up well and should serve the library effectively for many years.

- Additional furniture—including shelving, tables, and chairs—is in the process of being ordered. Shelving and tables will be purchased from one vendor, and we are exploring lower-cost options from different vendors for chairs.

Winter Weather

- A winter storm covered much of our area in late January.
- All MMRLS locations were closed Saturday January 24, 2026 (Attala, Walnut Grove, Winston)
- We had multiple closings the week of January 26, mostly at our Holmes and Montgomery Locations.
- Many MMRLS staff members remain without power at their homes.

Important Upcoming Dates

- February: MMRLS Advisory Board Meetings, conducted by Assistant Director Brandon Cain
- February 16: All MMRLS Locations closed in observance of President’s Day
- February 26-27: MLC Director’s Meeting, Jackson, MS (and virtual)
- March 27: MMRLS Staff Meeting, Kosciusko, MS
- April 20-24: National Library Week

Statistical Report: December Year-to-Date

Circulation Statistics

Branch name:	Year-To-Date FY2025	Year-To-Date FY2026	Difference
Attala County	18,254	20,135	1,881
Carthage-Leake	8,335	8,734	399
Duck Hill	412	426	14
Durant	1,236	1,033	(203)
Goodman	2,360	1,848	(512)
Kilmichael	888	936	48
Lexington	1,198	1,535	337
Pickens	712	530	(182)
Tchula	376	0	(376)
Walnut Grove	5,367	5,986	619
West	744	495	(249)
Winona-Montg	3,713	3,165	(548)
Winston County	10,983	10,069	(914)
Mobile Library	731	1,422	691
cloudLibrary e-books	4,259	4,501	242
Hoopla e-books	5,778	7,007	1,229
TOTAL:	65,346	67,822	2,476

System Attendance December YTD: FY25: 41,920 FY26: 37,288