

**HEARTLAND LIBRARY COOPERATIVE  
GOVERNING BOARD**

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

**Minutes to the August 20, 2025 Meeting**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The Meeting was called to order at 10:38 a.m. Invocation and pledge was led by  
Linda Waters.

**ROLL CALL:**

Governing Board Members Present: Commissioner Brad Goodbread Treasurer Okeechobee County; Ann Ryals Desoto County; Lauri Benson Desoto County; Terri Moorehouse Glades County; Garnett Ahern Glades County; Commissioner Kenny Miller Hardee County; Sue Rood Highlands County; Denise Whitehead Okeechobee County; Nancy Griest Okeechobee 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; Regina Ussery Librarian Hardee County; Ann Burford Okeechobee County.

**Absent:** Jeannie Palacios Chair Hardee County; Commissioner Judy Schaefer Vice-Chair DeSoto County; Commissioner Hattie Taylor Glades County; Nicole Drake Hardee County; Commissioner Arlene Tuck Highlands County.

**ROUTINE BUSINESS:**

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

**Additions to Agenda:** Vikki Brown informed the Board that three state aid items would need to be removed from the Consent Agenda as the Cooperative has not received the required information from the State yet. Vikki also added information on the CD research that was requested by the Board as part of the Information Items.

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

**Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting:** Lauri Benson moved to accept the minutes of the previous meeting, seconded by Denise Whitehead; unanimously passed.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

Lauri Benson moved to accept the consent agenda, seconded by Ann Ryals; unanimously passed.

- I. **Approval of Wicks, Brown, & Williams Engagement Letter**
- II. **Approval of CliftonLarsenAllen Engagement Letter**
- III. **Approval of FY26 Budget**
- IV. **Approval of Annual Plan of Service FY25**
- V. **Approval of FY26 Meeting Dates**
- VI. **Approval of purchase of Envisionware's new cloud based program for computer management.**
  1. **This is the current company we utilize and the cloud based program would create a less taxing system on both the computers and staff assisting patrons.**
  2. **The cost is only \$259.05 more than what we have been budgeting for the current system.**

#### **ACTION AGENDA:**

- I. **Chair, Vice-Chair & Treasurer are up for electing/voting.**
  - a) **Vote in Chair**

Denise Whitehead nominated Jeannie Palacios as Chair of the Heartland Governing Board. There were no other nominations. Lauri moved to close the nominations, seconded by Ann Ryals. Jeannie Palacios was voted unanimously as Chair.
  - b) **Vote in Vice-Chair**

Denise Whitehead nominated Commissioner Judy Schaefer as Vice-Chair of the Heartland Governing Board. There were no other nominations. Lauri moved to close the nominations, seconded by Terri Moorehouse. Commissioner Judy Schaefer was voted unanimously as Vice-Chair.
  - c) **Vote in Treasurer**

Denise Whitehead nominated Brad Goodbread as Treasurer of the Heartland Governing Board. There were no other nominations. Denise moved to close nominations, seconded by Lauri Benson. Brad Goodbread was voted unanimously as Treasurer.

#### **INFORMATIONAL:**

- I. **Library Statistics**

Vikki Brown informed the Board that the statistics are provided for the Board's perusal in the meeting packet.
- II. **CD Research Findings**

Vikki Brown informed the Board that the Cooperative's bank does a 5-month or a 12-month CD, with the 5-month at 3.68% and the 12-month at 3.30%. Vikki will continue research to bring back to the Board for further action, also informing the Board that to go outside of the Cooperative's current bank, the process has to be open for bids from outside vendors. Vikki informed the Board that all current Cooperative bank signers must all be present to do a CD.
- III. **Member Updates**

Nancy Griest introduced herself to the Board. Nancy is a member of the Friends of the Okeechobee Library and regularly volunteers with the Library. Nancy will be joining the Heartland Governing Board as a representative of Okeechobee County.

Kresta King informed the Board that the Okeechobee Library is still gathering the Summer Reading statistics but is happy to report that for June and July the door count was over 13,000, which is higher than pre-Covid. Kresta also informed the Board that Okeechobee Library was also the only distribution locations for meals for all seven days of the week, which was greatly appreciated by the community.

Denise Whitehead informed the Board that Okeechobee Commissioner Terri Burroughs is the outgoing president of the Florida Associations of Counties and has been advocating for rural counties, now doing so at the national level as he has taken a position on the Board of Directors for the National Association of Counties. Denise also informed the Board of a big push to educate the community on how taxes are being used with a County-wide campaign and encouraged the Board members to check out the Okeechobee County government website. Denise also informed the Board that Commissioner Burroughs accepted a National Award for Okeechobee County to highlight community partnerships with the County, including a CTE program for the fire academy, dispatch academy, and public safety careers spearheaded by Okeechobee County Fire Rescue and the Education Foundation of Okeechobee.

Linda Waters reported that DeSoto Library has been very busy. Linda also informed the Board that DeSoto was presented with a unique opportunity with a classroom from a local elementary school that donated a lot of resources that were no longer needed and that are now being shared with the community through the Library. Linda also informed the Board that the Library is providing opportunities to the less fortunate to not only enjoy the facilities and services, but also with volunteer opportunities, such as volunteering with the food pantry, providing opportunities for personal pride and joy while connecting with the larger community.

Ann Ryals stated she has been involved with the DeSoto Library for years and right now the Library is doing more to serve the community than it has ever done before and is reaching out to the community in so many ways. Ann is very appreciative of everyone here and what they are able to do for their communities.

Lauri Benson agreed with Ann and says the DeSoto Library is always busy with a full parking lot, saying she was just at the Library and it was full with the community using the resources that were donated along with the food pantry.

Regina Ussery informed the Board that Hardee Library was fortunate enough to receive funding to update the children's and Teen areas of the Library and the patrons are very happy with the new furniture, sensory boards, parent seating, and has seen an increase of Teen patrons, for which they are very grateful.

Kenny Miller introduced himself to the Board as a new Commissioner for Hardee County and is thankful to have a resource like the Hardee Library which is a great resource for Hardee County. Kenny commended the Library as a blessing for the community, especially for all those who do not have access to the internet, books, and other resources.

Garnett Ahern introduced herself to the Board as the new Glades representative, replacing Julie Perry and is very happy to be on the Board. Garnett is looking at this as a learning opportunity as she has a great interest in Glades County history and is involved with the historical resources at the Glades Library.

Iris Perkins informed the Board that the summer was a great success at the Glades Library and is still gathering her statistics. Iris also shared that the Glades Library was the only distribution site for the YMCA meals for the community.

Terri Moorhouse commended Iris for doing a great job with the Glades Library.

Sonya Chapa agreed with the other Librarians that Okeechobee Library is seeing the same success with a great Summer Reading turnout, a continued increase in patron use of the Library with a constantly full parking lot, and an overall increase in program statistics and community partnerships.

Vikki Brown informed the Board that the active program statistics for Highlands is up by 23%, passive programs are up by 101%, adult active programs are up 100%, and passive adult programs are up by 39%. Vikki also shared that the Highlands Libraries have been in the newspaper multiple times with a successful Summer Reading program. Vikki also informed the Board that the Libraries have been seeing an increase in unhoused patrons and is happy the Library is able to provide opportunities and resources for these patrons and be a refuge for the people who need us.

Brad Goodbread informed the Board that Okeechobee County has a new pump track and is happy to report it is the most used park in the County and commended Denise Whitehead on all of her hard work to provide a pump track and splash pad for Okeechobee County, along with other initiatives that all add to the quality of life in Okeechobee County. Brad shared that most people aren't aware of the recreational and other opportunities that can be found in our counties and thanked all of the County staff for everything they do provide opportunities for children and families in Okeechobee County.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Brad Goodbread adjourned the meeting at 11:11 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sonya Chapa