

Alabama Virtual Library

Meeting Minutes

July 23, 2025

10:30 a.m.

The January 15, 2025, scheduled meeting of the Alabama Virtual Library Council was called to order at 10:34 a.m. by Council Chair, Susanne Estes.

**Council Members in Attendance (Quorum established)**

Shelia Limerick, ACHE	Kevin Pearcey, APLS
Toni Carter, ACHE	Bill Paine, ASA
Susanne Estes, ALSDE	Sawyer Knowles, ASA
Alicia Johnson, ALSDE	Kerri Butler, ASA
Amy Smith, ACCS	
Nacole Adams, CCS	
Alex Perry, APLS	
Amy Henderson, APLS	

**Guests in Attendance:**

None

- 1. Welcome:** Council Chair Susanne Estes welcomed council members to the meeting.
- 2. Call to Order:** Estes called the meeting to order and confirmed a quorum was established by conducting a roll call of attendance.
- 3. Approval of Meeting Minutes:** Estes asked the Council to review the May 21 minutes of the AVL Council for approval. The minutes were approved, motion made by Alex Perry, seconded by Nacole Adams.
- 4. Approval of Financial Report:** Estes asked the Council for a review and approval of the Financial Report as submitted. The Financial Report was approved, motion made by Kevin Pearcey, seconded by Perry, with Bill Paine abstaining.
- 5. Unfinished Business:** Paine reported on the AVL's status with regards to OCR compliance. He stated the last item – a navigational tool for visually impaired users – was completed earlier in the week. He said AVL was following up with OCR, but staff had not been made aware of any other issues with the AVL website.

**6. Committee Reports**

**A. Budget:** No report.

**B. Database Review:** Perry reported, with respect to usage statistics, there was no way to itemize costs on Gale and Ebsco databases regarding cost per use comparison. He also stated removing individual

databases from what is offered by either company would affect the bundled costs. He said Pronunciator still appears to be the database with the lowest statistical use. Estes said she would like for AVL to continue to offer Pronunciator as it serves a segment of the Alabama population unable to access more expensive language learning software.

**C. Committee:** No report.

**D. Selection & Licensing:** No report, vacant chair.

**E. Bylaws:** Perry reported Bylaws Committee felt the issue regarding minors accessing inappropriate content on the AVL website was a collection development issue which should be addressed at that level. Perry suggested tabling the issue until a collection development committee could be developed, and Estes agreed.

**D. Legislative & Advocacy:** No report.

**E. OER Commons:** No report.

**F. Publicity:** Estes asked Committee Chair Alicia Johnson to share her thoughts on publicity and how the AVL Council can promote the AVL's message. Johnson stated first and foremost how wonderful the AVL resources are, and that they are made available to everyone. She said marketing could include newsletters catered for educators to increase engagement, QR codes linking to AVL to share with schools, families, and clients, as well as social media 'pushes' to users and other community agencies. Estes said she is proponent of all marketing efforts, but realizes council members are busy, and it's difficult to add more tasks to the workday. Shelia Limerick asked if the committee was allowed to post on social media if they were able to commit to the task. Estes said a determination would have to be made how the AVL social media account is accessed. Johnson said she believed the AVL should have an active presence on social media. Perry asked if the posts would directly link to AVL resources, and Estes said the posts currently do not have links to specific resources. Perry said as far as risk, the issue was a difficult one to navigate, especially in the public library sector due to recent issues with minors accessing content intended for adults. Perry said the primary concern is minors accessing sexually explicit material, and current APLS code requires public libraries to put restrictions in place for minors. Chair Estes noted Facebook users, for example, had to be thirteen (13) to create an account. She asked Johnson to communicate with members of the committee and discuss the best ways forward to market AVL resources. Limerick also noted she'd received positive response from teachers in showing them and their students the AVL website and the databases available there. One suggestion, she said, would be to create demonstration videos, and Estes agreed. Toni Carter asked if the AVL offered outreach to universities, and Estes said no. Perry said one of the foundational instructions of his MLIS program was using the AVL, and Limerick agreed.

**G. Training:** No report.

**H. Strategic Planning:** No report, vacant chair.

## **7. New Business**

**A. Funding for FY2026/Renewals:** Estes noted every database offered by the AVL saw a 3 to 3.5 percent increase over last year. Estes said there was an issue with the McGraw Hill science resources, where the AVL did not cancel the contract within the listed contract terms, and the AVL was being billed for the service. She said the issue is being resolved by another department. With regards to renewal, Perry stated he felt it would be best for the AVL to maintain its current database offerings and review prior to next year. He said he realized there was an issue with bundled pricing but felt the vendors should be able to accommodate the AVL to some degree going forward. One area he suggested looking at would be if databases are being duplicated or are not utilized as much because there are not academic resources, such as health databases. All approved renewals for the current AVL databases, motion made by Perry, seconded by Adams, with Paine abstaining.

**8. Announcements/Reminders:**

Estes noted the next meeting of the AVL Council was Sept. 17, 2025, at 10:30 a.m.

**9. Adjournment:**

The meeting adjourned 11:21, motion made by Perry, seconded by Carter, all approved.