

Alabama Virtual Library

Meeting Minutes

Sept. 17, 2025

10:30 a.m.

The September 17, 2025, scheduled meeting of the Alabama Virtual Library Council was called to order at 10:30 a.m. by Council Chair, Susanne Estes.

Council Members in Attendance (Quorum established)

Shelia Limerick, ACHE	Nacole Adams, ACCS
Toni Carter, ACHE	Alex Perry, APLS
John-Bauer Graham, ACHE	Amy Henderson, APLS
Susanne Estes, ALSDE	Kevin Pearcey, APLS
Alicia Johnson, ALSDE	Bill Paine, ASA
Michelle Wilson, ALSDE	
Amy Smith, ACCS	

1. Welcome: Council Chair Susanne Estes welcomed council members to the meeting. Estes expressed her gratitude for support during her term as Chair and announced the transition to Kevin Pearcey as Chair for 2025-26.

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 July minutes of the AVL Council for approval. The minutes were approved.

4. Approval of Financial Report: Estes asked the Council for a review and approval of the Financial Report as submitted. Budget showed there was \$89,747.41 surplus at year-end. The AVL Council accepted the financial report as presented.

5. Unfinished Business:

OCR compliance: Bill Paine said all OCR requirements had generally been met on the AVL's website, with the lone issue being a magnification of the website for sight-impaired users. He said the issue was being addressed.

Records management: Estes said she had started the process of bringing the AVL Council up to date with regards to archiving records at the Alabama Department of Archives and History. She said this would be an ongoing process.

McGraw-Hill Science: Estes reminded the council there were issues with the timely cancellation of McGraw-Hill Science databases. She said she has turned that information over to state compliance and would forward that information when received.

6. Committee Reports

Estes noted there remained chair vacancies for several of the committees, and asked council members to review the committees to see where they'd like to serve. She said serving on a committee was not a time-consuming process.

A. Budget: No report. Council members discussed requesting a 7% to 10% increase from FY2026 to FY2027 to cover expected increases in database and eBook costs.

B. Database Review: No report.

C. Committee: No report.

D. Selection & Licensing: No report.

E. Bylaws: No report.

D. Legislative & Advocacy: No report.

E. OER Commons: No report.

F. Publicity: Alicia Johnson discussed future marketing efforts and ideas for promoting the AVL, and the best way to share these resources – including promotional materials – with agencies throughout Alabama. Council members also discussed locating the promotional materials, currently housed at the Oxford Public Library, at a state agency. Perry said, previously, materials had been located at the APLS, and said he would check to see if that was an option again. Amy Henderson, who currently coordinates the mailing of promotional items, agreed it would be best for the materials be located in an agency facility. Henderson noted current promotional material supplies had dwindled and the council should consider purchasing more soon. Perry inquired of Henderson on the costs associated with shipping the items, and Henderson said she submits to APLS the weight of the items and the shipping labels are generated there for UPS. Estes noted shipping costs were substantial, and the Council had spent \$1900 on shipping this year.

G. Training: No report.

H. Strategic Planning: No report.

7. New Business

A. AVL Overview: Estes referred to the AVL statistical overview, and said she expected increased usage of the AVL with school in session.

B. Palace Project: Estes asked Toni Carter to talk about the Palace Project. Carter first asked how products were considered for AVL. Estes said she could discuss the financials and said if the budget remained flat in the upcoming fiscal year, the AVL Council would have to consider non-renewal of some products and would not be able to acquire new resources. She said current resources increased 3 to 3.5 percent and the budget remained flat. Perry said resources are selected by the database review committee and are evaluated based on how it would serve the needs of all constituents. From there, he said, a recommendation is made to the council. Purchasing is then forwarded to the selection and licensing committee. Perry said he was familiar with the Palace Project, and Carter said she understood it to be an aggregator app, which would collect and organize eBook and audiobook titles from different vendors. Perry said he also believed the Palace Project

also provided titles free, which were out of copyright. Estes said she believed it would be feasible to review the Palace Project for possible inclusion in the AVL. She said the next step would be for Carter to inquire more information and present it to the database review committee.

C. EBSCO: Estes referred the council to email communication she had Brittany Bryan of EBSCO about scheduling a virtual meeting with the council. Estes said she was unsure how best to move forward as each agency had different needs. Estes said she felt each agency should meet individually with EBSCO and there was no objection from the council. Estes said she would reply to Bryan.

D. Budget Request: Estes she'd received a letter from Jennifer Holman asking for the AVL Council's budget request for FY2027. Estes asked for comments from the council. Sheila Limerick asked what kind of documentation the council needed to show if an increase or the same amount was requested. Estes said she didn't see where any documentation was required, but that an increase was always requested based on an increase in database expenses. Estes said she believed the council should ask for a 7 percent increase. Henderson asked if any of the vendors had provided information for what costs would increase, and Estes said no. John-Bauer Graham suggested asking for a higher amount as average cost of eBooks were 12.9 percent, and subscriptions 4 to 8 percent. He said he would start at 10 percent. Henderson also noted the AVL would need to purchase promotional materials in the near future.

8. Announcements/Reminders:

Estes noted the next meeting of the AVL Council was Nov. 19, 2025, at 10:30 a.m.

Bill Paine also announced his departure from AVL after eight years serving on the project, and Estes recognized him for his service to the AVL, as well as that of Michelle Wilson, who would also be leaving the council.

9. Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned 11:25 p.m.