



**COLUMBIA HEIGHTS PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
3939 Central Ave NE, Columbia Heights, MN 55421  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES: MEETING MINUTES**  
Wednesday, August 6, 2025

Drafted  
8/7/2025

**ATTENDANCE INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC**

Members of the public who wished to attend could do so in-person, or via Microsoft Teams by entering **Meeting ID 254 921 776 562 0** and **passcode QP35BK9R** at the scheduled meeting time. For questions, please contact Administration at 763-706-3610.

The meeting was called to order in the Library Community Room by Melanie Magidow at 5:31pm.

**Members present:** Melanie Magidow; Chris Polley; Olga Herrera; Theresa Strike; Amina Maameri. **Members remotely present:** Amáda Márquez Simula (City Council Liaison). **Members absent:** N/A. **Others present:** Renee Dougherty (Library Director); Nick Olberding (Board Secretary). **Public present:** N/A.

1. The Agenda was **approved** as is.
2. The **Minutes** from June 4, 2025, Library Board Meeting were **moved and approved**.
3. **Review of 2025 Operating Budget:** 58.08% of the year and 53.16% of the budget expended.

**Community Forum:** Opportunity for public input. **No correspondence and no public in attendance.** The CHPL website now has a contact form to submit questions or concerns: <https://chplmn.org/board>

**Old Business:**

4. **Proposed 2026 Budget Update:** The proposed budget was submitted to city finance and administration with a projected 1.79% increase over 2025; a formal presentation will be made at the October City Council work session.
5. **Parking Lot Update:** The parking lot is complete, with completion of landscaping and native planting scheduled for the fall. Additional required handicapped parking spaces were added next to the building. The new lot has been used on busy days and for well-attended events such as the open house for Central Avenue Redevelopment.

**New Business:**

6. **Staffing Update:** One of our Library Pages has resigned and two more are likely to do so in the fall (one due to moving from high school to college, and another is advancing from college into a medical career). The first step to returning to full staffing will be to reestablish the Library Aide position for a consistent 14 hours per week. This position has been vacant since late 2023. The position will be posted internally to allow current city staff an opportunity for promotion. After an Aide is in place, we will assess how many additional Library Pages should be hired.
7. **Great North Star Read Together:** Melanie brought this event to the Board's attention and asked for their opinions. The two-hour event would take place from 11am-1pm on Saturday, September 20. It is a way for communities to show support and celebrate Minnesota libraries for the vital role they play. A toolkit was provided with aspects to be considered in hosting such an event. Everyone was in favor of participating; Mayor Amáda said she would be willing to say a few words to kick off the event and could read a story for children in attendance. We hope to also recruit the Friends of the Library; more planning and information to come—we have one more Board meeting before the event date.
8. **Policy Review and Revision:**
  - a. **Behavior:** Renee provided the Board with current version of this policy with proposed revisions based on research of similar policy language from Anoka County, Ramsey County, Hennepin County, and Stillwater Public Libraries. The Board asked about and discussed subjects such as patrons sleeping in the library, body odor and strong fragrances, securely covered beverages, privacy screens on public computers, and whether staff could/should search a patron's property under suspicion of theft. It was determined that the paragraph on the right to search patrons' bags should be removed. **A MOTION to approve the revised**

**Behavior Policy with the Board's amendments was made, seconded, and approved.**

- b. Distribution of Free Publications and Community Postings: Renee presented a revised policy that merged two existing related policies. Previous policies were "Bulletin Board Usage & Distribution of Brochures" and "Free Newspapers, and Other Handouts." Some of the language was clarified, and more emphasis on local literature and events should take priority. The Board thought it was more concise to merge the two and clarify the language. **A MOTION to approve the merged/revised Distribution of Free Publications and Community Postings Policy was made, seconded, and approved.**
9. **Uncollectable Debt Write-off Procedure:** Included in the meeting packet was a staff procedure detailing the process of writing off old debt from patron accounts. This was reviewed by the City Finance Department and is included to make the Board aware of current procedure. Under MN Statute 541.053, entities cannot recover debts older than 6 years. Instead of manually removing the uncollectible debt from patron accounts, we are automating the process. This procedure will also allow expired, inactive accounts lingering in the Library's integrated library system software to be deleted which will result in a cleaner and more accurate user and material database.

**Director's Update:**

10. **May/June Board Report:** Provided as an FYI.
  - a. The **DNR Park Pass Program** has been extended for another 3 years and now includes all Anoka County Library branches. Previously, passes were only available at Columbia Heights and Fridley's Mississippi branch. Passes are now holdable, like all other library materials.
  - b. Olga asked if we could do a **Library tour** during our next meeting to explain to Board members more about the inner workings of the library and get a glimpse of some of the day-to-day processes.
  - c. Melanie asked about **volunteer opportunities**; specifically, what she should tell community members if they ask about volunteering. Adults can be referred to Adult Services Librarian Elizabeth Ripley, who oversees adult volunteers. Teens who would like to volunteer should be referred to Youth Services Librarian Eliza Pope. "Volunteens" are usually only active during the summer when school is out of session. Volunteers perform tasks such as pulling requests, shelving, straightening, assisting with program preparations and other projects, and cleaning.
11. **Board Books:**
  - a. Chris: **Fort** Cynthia C. DeFelice; **Elliott Smith** Autumn de Wilde
  - b. Olga: **The Man Who Could Move Clouds** Ingrid Rojas Contreras
  - c. Amina: **A Whale of the Wild** Roseanne Parry; **The Whole-Brain Child: 12 Revolutionary Strategies to Nurture Your Child's Developing Mind** Daniel J. Siegel, M.D./Tina Payne Bryson, PhD.
  - d. Theresa: **Night's Master** Tanith Lee
  - e. Melanie: **The Rushworth Family Plot** Claudia Gray; **Café at the Edge of the Woods** Mikey Please
  - f. Renee: **Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation that Starts in Your Yard** Douglas Tallamy
  - g. Nick: **The Ultimate Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy: A Trilogy in Five Parts** Douglas Adams
  - h. Amáda: **They Do It With Mirrors** Agatha Christie

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:43 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Nicholas P. Olberding  
Recording Secretary, CHPL Board of Trustees