



COLUMBIA HEIGHTS PUBLIC LIBRARY

3939 Central Ave NE, Columbia Heights, MN 55421

BOARD OF TRUSTEES: MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, November 5th, 2025

Drafted
11/6/2025

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 5:32pm.

Members present: Melanie Magidow; Olga Herrera; Theresa Strike; Chris Polley; Amina Maameri. **Members remotely present:** N/A. **Members absent:** Amáda Márquez Simula (City Council Liaison). **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 **October 1, 2025**, Library Board Meeting were **moved and approved**.
3. **Review of 2025 Operating Budget:** 83.29% of the year completed and 76.07% of the budget expended.
 - a. Some lines have been **overspent** due to unforeseen mechanical issues with the HVAC boilers and backup power generator, as well as a broken window replacement along the Central side of the building. There will be additional expenses related to the backup generator and emergency lighting backup battery.
 - b. Boiler replacement is planned for next spring, the cost of which will be funded from the City's capital improvement funds, not the general Library budget.
 - c. The city, per Council resolution 95-40, established a target library fund balance equal to 45% of the following year's budget. The fund balance enables operating expenditures prior to the receipt of tax revenue, cushions against budget shortfalls in any given year; and receives any annual surpluses.

Community Forum: Opportunity for public input. **One comment submitted via website; no public in attendance.**

The CHPL website now has a contact form to submit questions or concerns: <https://chplmn.org/board>

4. **Annemarie Lewis Correspondence (10/13/25):** Annemarie asked if the library has considered creating and selling merchandise like t-shirts and tote bags. Members mentioned how much they used tote bags from their previous neighborhood libraries. Renee assured them of our ability to sell merchandise, noting that we already sell printing, flash drives, and earbuds. Youth Librarian, Eliza, previously expressed interest in using merchandise as prizes for the Summer Reading Program, but it could also be helpful at outreach events and as gifts for volunteer appreciation. The Board thought we could host a design contest for artwork to be used on merchandise or could host a screen-printing workshop to produce some items. Would we need to start accepting credit cards if we were to have merch for sale? Do we have a good place to display items for sale? Other potential items being bookmarks, mugs, keychains, and yard signs. Chris said he would check into who supplies the school district with their branded merchandise, and Renee will discuss possibilities with the City Communication Department.

Old Business:

5. **Staffing Update:** 107 applications received, 9 interviewed, 3 offered positions, all 3 accepted. All high school students (Columbia Heights-Fridley-DeLaSalle), two speak Arabic, one speaks Spanish. All have finished onboarding/training and are now working regularly scheduled shifts.
6. **Budget Update:** Renee presented the proposed Library budget to the City Council in early October without objection. As of now it will continue forward with the anticipation of being approved in December.

New Business:

7. **Review and Recommend Revisions to the Collection Development Policy:** Usually the Board is presented with policies that have already been revised and are asked to approve changes, this time they received the existing policy and were asked for their comments and suggestions before revisions are made. The revised policy will need to acknowledge the new laws regarding book bans and should make clear that it only covers physical material, since CHPL does not have any control over the digital collection provided through the State of Minnesota, Metropolitan Library Service Agency (MELSA), and Anoka County Library. Members feel like the "Selection" section lists too many specifics and could be more general. It was mentioned that we need to account for future patrons in addition to current ones (as well as current non-patrons), balance collections based on trends and diversity (not cater to fads), and express that inclusion of a title in the Library collection does not imply an endorsement of the material. Renee will take the Board's suggestions into consideration while revising the policy with the help of our Youth and Adult Services Librarians who also make purchase selections.

Director's Update:

8. **September Board Report:** Provided as an FYI.
 - a. The Board commented on the solid **attendance** for the month's list of programs.
 - b. Multiple mentions of **health-related partnerships** were listed. One (Fulcrum Health) may lead to a program related to chiropractic care and alternative pain management (to avoid opioids); the other (Anoka County Opioid Solutions) relates to opioid harm reduction; other Anoka County Libraries are distribution points for naloxone overdose medication. The Board asked if the city would consider hosting a Health Fair like its annual Art & Info Fair.
 - c. Amina showed a picture of a **Palestinian peoples display** at a branch of the Hennepin County Library in case we wanted inspiration for one of our own.
9. **Board Books:**
 - a. Amina: *Mornings in Jenin* Susan Abulhawa
 - b. Olga: *The South Side: A Portrait of Chicago and American Segregation* Natalie Y. Moore
 - c. Theresa: *Pronoun Trouble: The Story of Us in Seven Little Words* John McWhorter; *Alanna: The First Adventure (Song of the Lioness youth series)* Tamora Pierce
 - d. Chris: *Holler, Child: Stories* LaToya Watkins
 - e. Melanie: *The Inner Work of Racial Justice: Healing Ourselves and Transforming Our Communities Through Mindfulness* Rhonda V. Magee
 - f. Renee: *The Wright Brothers* David McCullough
 - g. Nick: *Network Effect* and *Fugitive Telemetry* and *System Collapse (Murderbot Diaries series)* Martha Wells

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Nick Olberding
Recording Secretary, CHPL Board of Trustees