COLUMBIA HEIGHTS PUBLIC LIBRARY

3939 Central Ave NE, Columbia Heights, MN 55421

BOARD OF TRUSTEES: MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, September 2nd, 2026

Approved
10/7/2026

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 245 476 655 774 13** and **passcode bY2b8Mf7** 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 Theresa Strike at 5:31pm.

Members present: Theresa Strike; Beth Al-Qudah; Olga Herrera; Chris Polley; Laurel Deneen (City Council Liaison). **Members absent:** Amina Maameri. **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 **August 5, 2026,** Library Board Meeting were **moved and approved.**
3. **Review of 2026 Operating Budget**: 66.6% of the year completed and 59.9% of the budget expended.
    a. Other Equipment (45180): 50% down payment on reupholstering several chairs/ottomans from the young adult area; the remainder should appear next month.
    b. Yet to receive cost-sharing bills from ACL for the Integrated Library System, delivery/cataloging services, print management, Libby e-book usage or Kanopy video streaming.

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

Old Business:

4. **MN Libraries Read Together Event Planning:** Most of the Board will be in attendance in various capacities as needed; networking with staff/patrons, answering questions, advocating for library services, helping with activities, or simply reading along with everyone else. They were shown a list of anticipated activities, including book spine poetry, button-making, cosplay, parallel reading, sidewalk chalk, read dogs (if Kansas from CHPD joins us), scavenger hunts, library story sharing, and refreshments.

New Business:

5. **Library Board at Outreach Events Debrief & Discussion:** The Board was asked whether it's been worth it for them to attend community events on behalf of the Library, and what they have experienced while volunteering.
    a. They said it's been worth their time, and each event has been an overwhelmingly positive experience, with visitors reminiscing about past events including the Konmari Clean-up method, puzzle challenges, and Storytimes. Also expressing how much they love the library.
    b. Most recently, the Art & Info Fair seemed very well attended and diverse, with 150+ visitors stopping by the Library booth; the Board asked if we could supply more varied giveaways for events (after noticing kids getting excited for swag at other tables), and Library Board nametags to wear at events.
6. **Preliminary Report of Summer Adventures 2026**: The Board received an overview of Summer Reading Program participation totals for the past 5 years (see attached).
    a. The first participation chart shows a decrease in 2025/2026, but tracking changed in 2025—rather than counting people just for signing up (like in 2022-2024), they were not counted until they fulfilled the 2nd checkpoint of reading 10 hours (or 10 books) and filling out their first prize drawing slip (at 5 hours they get a free book); this ensures actual reading, not just intention.
    b. Volunteers and volunteer hours have been increasing, with difficulty in keeping them busy with projects at times. It was mentioned that we may have volunteers host a craft station in the future to ensure they have enough to do while they're here. We intend to have stricter application deadlines and schedules next

year to help with volunteer overstaffing and managing task assignments.

   c. While the number of programs has slightly decreased, attendance per program has increased.

7. **Fall Staffing Update**: Our three most recent Page staff members are entering college, but all intend to continue working at the Library as they move forward; we are thankful for their service and dedication to assisting the community. Saturday staffing will be slightly changing up (rather than 3 Pages, 2 will work the full day and 1 will work a half-day) for more flexibility and task sharing.

Director's Update:

8. **July Board Report:** Provided for informational purposes.
   a. Crooked Lake and Mississippi ACL branches will be **closed for renovations** this fall starting September 13.
      a. The **Expungement Clinics** scheduled at Mississippi Library this fall will be moved to the Columbia Heights Public Library for September 15, October 20, and November 17 (see attached)
   b. The City implemented a new **Zoom phone system** department by department; we can now schedule our open/closed messages rather than switching it manually.
9. **Board Books** (what we're reading, watching, playing, listening to, or simply recommend)**:**
   a. Chris: ***White Riot: Punk Rock and the Politics of Race*** Maxwell Tremblay & Stephen Duncombe; ***The Holy Mountain (La Montaña Sagrada)*** Alejandro Jodorowsky (streaming on Kanopy)
   b. Olga: ***Murderland: Crime and Bloodlust in the Time of Serial Killers*** Caroline Fraser; ***James*** Percival Everett
   c. Theresa: ***A Trade of Blood* (*Ana & Din Mystery* series)** Robert Jackson Bennett; ***The Glass Castle*** Jeannette Walls
   d. Beth: ***Dreaming of Antigone*** Robin Bridges; ***The Anatomy of Anxiety: Understanding and Overcoming the Body's Fear Response*** Ellen Vora
   e. Renee: ***Harlem Shuffle*** Colson Whitehead
   f. Laurel: ***White Riot: Punk Rock and the Politics of Race*** Maxwell Tremblay & Stephen Duncombe; ***The Haunted Mansion: Imagineering a Disney Classic*** Jason Surrell
   g. Nick: ***A Trade of Blood* (*Ana and Din Mystery* series)** Robert Jackson Bennett; ***Three Bags Full* (*Sheep Detectives* series)** Leonie Swann; ***The Sheep Detectives*** Kyla Balda (available on DVD at CHPL)
   h. Amina: ***A Long Walk to Water: A Powerful Adventure of Survival, Perseverance, and Hope in Sudan*** Linda Sue Park

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:22pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nick Olberding
Recording Secretary, CHPL Board of Trustees