PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY, MAY 14, 2026 AT 5:30 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL – Meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m.

Charity Chandler	P	Rita Haase	P	Tom Kohls	P
Chris Koppes	P	Andi Merfeld	A	Emily Lessner	A
Dave Morstad	A	Beth Mueller	P	Sarah Oudenhoven	P

Also present: John Katisch, Danielle Bailey, Robert Stocks, Sarah Stocks

2. CITIZENS TO BE HEARD – N/A

3. NEW BUSINESS

A. Review and take action: Resolution 2026-7 Promotion of Jamie Hernandez to Interim Library Director

Discussion: Beth stated she was surprised. Her understanding was we had accepted Jamie as interim director, but that the 4/9 date would be more training focused and not an official start date until Peg left. She stated we experienced a significant budget cut and now we're paying two directors for 2 ½ months. Tom/Chris said increased pay was to reflect increased responsibility. No action taken as decision was made at last meeting.

B. Review and possible approval: Strategic Plan

Rita mentioned on page 7 that the number 222 seemed low for a response rate for the community survey. WILS shared with us that 222 was a very good response rate and there was confidence with that number of responses. Discussion took place about questions for director interview that involves the strategic plan, as well as it making sense to have Lisa (Watertown City HR) share the strategic plan with the interview candidates. Tom asked how we'd increase the visibility of the finished plan. Sarah asked if there were any concerns/opportunities. Jamie mentioned there's a spot on the website to share it. We need to share with the City Council as well. Does it make sense for Rita to share as our City Council representative? The team shared that there was a meeting of the department heads and Danielle to select 3 – 4 action items for year 1, then 3 – 4 for year 2, etc. There are two staff inservices each year where they can touch base/update regarding the plan and we're looking to have a regular support cadence between the team and the board. Staff leadership has reviewed the plan together.

Motion to approve strategic plan as presented: Koppes, Seconded by Oudenhoven.

Charity Chandler	Y	Rita Haase	Y	Tom Kohls	Y
Chris Koppes	Y	Andi Merfeld	A	Emily Lessner	A
Dave Morstad	A	Beth Mueller	Y	Sarah Oudenhoven	Y

Motion passed.

C. Review: Mayor Stock's request that Library pay back Park & Rec for damage at Brandt-Quirk Park

Jamie reviewed the historical context. Mayor Stocks, Peg, and Tod met. Library is not responsible. Tod and/or Tina will contact Parks Staff when heading out to the Storybook Trail. It is a private vehicle, not a city vehicle, used for changeovers.

D. Discuss and take possible action: Donation from Joan Hinze

Joan donated $40,000 for Children’s Department. Teams have been discussing with Joan to see how to utilize the funds. Discussions included funding transportation for elementary school field trips to the library, summer learning prizes, and help fund bigger name performers outside of summer. Joan wants a plaque in the children’s room. Chris asked if this is a restricted gift for a specific purpose and ensuring we have something from the donor in writing. Beth will write thank yous from the board. Jamie will share Joan’s mailing address.

E. Discuss: Maintenance of grass on boulevard along Water St.

We referenced the map provided in the packet that the area marked with red boundaries Tod mows. The black outlined areas are up for discussion. The previous mayor wanted grass here. Jamie reviewed code and didn’t see who is in charge of terrace. Jamie proposed concrete, as it often becomes muddy due to people walking through it. It is city library, not library property. It was clarified that we are not being charged for snow removal. Chris mentioned being agreeable to the good neighbor approach. Sarah discussed reciprocity. There was a to-do of emailing the city to ask about extra brick availability from Bentzin town square and how that could be a topic for the Building & Grounds committee.

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Review: Progress of Library Director search

Charity shared an update regarding the partnership with Lisa Schwartz (city HR), the timeline for the process (position posting closes May 17, applications will be reviewed and candidate screenings would take place May 18 – 22), as well as next steps for the meeting on May 28 where the subcommittee would review the interview panel composition, the candidates who will be invite for first interviews, the questions for first and second interviews, and a scoring rubric to be used to evaluate candidate responses. Tom asked where it was advertised – the 27 locations available to the city, including the city website, UW Madison and UW Milwaukee alumni boards for MLS programs, as well as the Wisconsin Library Association and WisPubLib.

B. Update: New website

Jamie shared that she updated some of the reported outdated links and got positive feedback that the site is easy to use. She also hasn't received a significant amount of feedback, which she takes as a good sign, as we'd be more likely to hear from our patrons if things weren't working well.

5. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. Review: Monthly highlights, budget figures and statistics

Jamie referenced the Director's report in the packet and added that yesterday they passed fire inspection. Alarm covers were recommended for the fire alarms in the Children's space. Also, today city IT/Elevator/Fire were there to fix the phone in the elevator and it's back to functional. Carrie/Jamie interviewed a couple of page candidates. The summer learning program is forthcoming. First school visit took place yesterday, six tomorrow. Big prizes for summer learning. The summer library challenge was funded by Friends of the Public Library and the Quirk Foundation. The library will send thank yous and Beth will write thank yous on behalf of the board.

6. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A. Review: Contacts and conversations in official capacity

No communications this past month

7. REVIEW AND TAKE ACTION ON CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

A. May 2026 Bills

B. Unplanned Expenses as of May 1, 2026

C. Review and take action: Minutes from April 9, 2026

D. Review and take action: Minutes from April 20, 2026.

Motion to approve consent agenda as presented: Koppes, Seconded by Kohls.

Charity Chandler	Y	Rita Haase	Y	Tom Kohls	Y
Chris Koppes	Y	Andi Merfeld	A	Emily Lessner	A

Dave Morstad	A	Beth Mueller	Y	Sarah Oudenhoven	Y

Motion passed.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn: Haase, Seconded by Mueller. Motion carries by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 6:21 p.m.

Next Meeting Date: Thursday June 11, 2026