Library Board of Trustees

Whitewater Public Library, Meeting Room 2
431 West Center St., Whitewater, WI, 53190
*In Person and Virtual

Monday, October 19, 2026- 6:30 PM

Citizens are welcome (and encouraged) to join our webinar via computer, smart phone, or telephone. Citizen participation is welcome during topic discussion periods.

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/278709995248183?p=HwquvKVhF1toZ5OLMo

Meeting ID: 278 709 995 248 183

Passcode: Cg97Yi9V

Telephone: +1 (929) 229-5663

Please note that although every effort will be made to provide for virtual participation, unforeseen technical difficulties may prevent this, in which case the meeting may still proceed as long as there is a quorum.

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER at 6:30pm

ROLL CALL

***Present*:** Kelly Davis, Elizabeth Miller, Steven Sahyun, Kathy Retzke, Doug Anderson, Tara McKenzie-Peotter, Camden Harlan

***Not Present*:**

***Library Staff Present*:** Diane Jaroch (Director) and Sarah French (Assistant Director)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A Board member can choose to remove an item from the agenda or rearrange its order; however, introducing new items to the agenda is not allowed. Any proposed changes require a motion, a second, and approval from the Board to be implemented. The agenda shall be approved at each meeting even if no changes are being made at that meeting.

Elizabeth Miller motioned to approve, Camden Harlan seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

Items on the Consent Agenda will be approved together unless any Board member requests that an item be removed for individual consideration.

DRAFT

1. Approval of the minutes of the September 21, 2026 meeting
2. Approval of Payment of Invoices for September 2026
3. Acknowledgement of Receipt of September 2026 Statistical report
4. Acknowledgement of Receipt of Financial reports
5. Acknowledgement of Receipt of September 2026 Treasurer's reports

Doug Anderson motioned to approve the consent agenda as presented, Kathy Retzke seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

HEARING OF CITIZEN COMMENTS

No formal Board action will be taken during this meeting although issues raised may become a part of a future agenda. Participants are allotted a three-minute speaking period. Specific items listed on the agenda may not be discussed at this time; however, citizens are invited to speak to those specific issues at the time the Board discusses that particular item.

To make a comment during this period, or any agenda item: On a computer or handheld device, locate the controls on your computer to raise your hand. You may need to move your mouse to see these controls. On a traditional telephone, dial *6 to unmute your phone and dial *9 to raise your hand.

Citizen Richard Helmick asked a question about the minutes, requested more detailed account of discussion about budgetary items.

OLD BUSINESS

6. Library Building general update

There are various needed repairs that continue to be addressed: roof, women's toilet leaking, etc.

NEW BUSINESS

7. Board education training video: Developing the library budget

The bulk of funding for most WI public libraries is provided by the municipality and the county.

Doug Anderson asked if the library has always paid staff out of the Fund Balance. Assistant Director Sarah French explained that the city hasn't raised the appropriation for the library for the last ten years, necessitating dipping into the Fund Balance for the last seven years (since 2019) as cost keep increasing, especially insurance for personnel. With costs (especially insurance) skyrocketing, it has been hard to keep up. The library is reliant on the allocation from the City of Whitewater. The budget goes through the Finance Committee. The request for additional funds for the library went through the Finance Committee. Sarah and Diane met with head of the Finance Department to confirm consistency. In the last 16 years Diane has been here, three different positions have been cut, and hours have changed several times, so unfortunately, constraints on budgets have been nothing new.

8. Approval of closing the library at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 23 for Nancy Stanford's retirement potluck dinner.

Thank you to Nancy Stanford for over 25 years of service with the City of Whitewater split between the library and other City Departments.

Camden Harlan motioned to approve, Steven Sahyun seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

9. Approval of closing the library on Saturday, December 26, 2026 and Saturday, January 2, 2027.

Diane says the majority of Bridges Library's are closed these days. Doug Anderson asked what kind of patron traffic we have over the holidays, and Diane and Sarah confirmed it is typically very low as most people are spending time with family.

Doug Anderson motioned to approve, Elizabeth Miller seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

10 . Review and approval of the Staff Vacation, Sick Leave, and Holidays Policy.

Given the cuts to part-time staff benefits, Diane and Sarah said they wanted to offer part-time staff 40 hours of unpaid vacation time.

Steven Sahyun noted the city very recently changed accumulation of sick leave (carryover). He suggested we wait to approve changes to the policy until there is a chance to double check and cross-reference. We will review it next month.

CONSIDERATIONS / DISCUSSIONS / REPORTS

11. Library Director report and budget update

Diane said the Finance Committee thanked Diane and Sarah for the work they did figuring out how to make changes to work with the budget cuts. The next step in the proposed Library Budget goes to the full City Council for approval. Doug Anderson asked about the current fund balance and what it is projected to be next year. The Fund Balance is supposed to be used for bigger projects, often capital expenses, like a new HVAC, new roof, etc. The Fund Balance isn't intended to be used to cover wages and benefits, daily operational expenses.

Kelly Davis asked how the library staff is responding to the part-time staff benefit cuts.

Morale among Library staff is understandably low given the part-time staff benefit cuts.

All full-time staff understand counter service will remain a priority, so they will need to cover it when there are gaps in coverage. If that means a program needs to be cut, unfortunately that is what will have to happen.

People love the library! The 2026 City of Whitewater Community Survey results show strong community support, and we have data that justifies how and why we've been operating the way we have been operating. Steven Sahyun said the survey results will be presented at the Common Council meeting this week, and the library was among the highest scoring City departments. Notably, over 70% of survey respondents were Very Satisfied or Satisfied with the quality of library programs for youth, teens, and adults. These were also the two areas respondents said they would recommend receive the most emphasis from City leaders over the next two years. Given cuts to hours, it is going to be harder to meet this community need/recommendation.

Kathy Retzke asked how the mailing out of library cards to WUSD students who opted-in during registration has been going. Elizabeth Miller said her daughter received hers in the mail today, so cards are on the move!

12. Staff reports

Patrons are loving the tickets being offered for checkout to shows at the Young Auditorium!

Great attendance (70) at the visit from Hoo's Woods Raptor Center and the Ferradermis event.

13. Board reports

Steven Sahyun attended the Bridges Library Board Appreciation event.

CONFIRMATION OF NEXT MEETING: Monday, November 16 at 6:30pm at Whitewater Public Library, Meeting Room 2.

ADJOURNMENT at 7:27pm

Doug Anderson motioned to approve, Tara McKenzie-Peotter seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Anyone requiring special arrangements is asked to call the library (262-473-0530) at least 72 hours prior.