



THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF BROOKLINE

Minutes of the Board of Library Trustees, Public Library of Brookline

A hybrid meeting of the Trustees of the Public Library was convened on Tuesday, September 09, 2025, at 6:15pm.

Present: K. Livingston, M. Burstein, B. Bloomenthal, C. Chanyasulkit, J. Goleman, K. Hung, C. Lohe, M. Vogt, S. Zelkha

Absent: J. Margolis, F. Silver, J. Vanderkay

Also present: Interim Library Director, D. Savin; Executive Assistant to the Library Director, C. Artavia

Motion to convene by Lohe; Burstein seconds. All present vote yea, 6:15pm.

I. Comments from the Chair

- A. Brookline Day (9/14): Savin is working on having another staff member present. Fliers will be available. The Library will bring assorted giveaways.
- B. Back to the Library Night at Putterham (9/8): Livingston shared a button they made for the event. Livingston reported an excellent snack spread and activities. Librarians Ginger O'Day and Carrie Zuttermeister and the rest of the staff all did a fabulous job at this event.
- C. New Director Search update: The search will be launched with a recruitment brochure. The application deadline is 11/2/2025. The Screening Committee will then review applications, choose semi-finalists, interview them, and select finalists for in-person interviews by the Board.
 - 1. Livingston met with the head of the Town Advisory Committee, Dennis Doughty, and Town Administrator, Charles Carey, because there are travel



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and moving expenses involved in successfully recruiting national candidates for the Library Director position that exceed the Trustees' ability to pay. Discussion about the urgency of procuring relocation expenses:

- a) With the recent call for applications for a new police chief having included coverage of reasonable moving expenses, a precedent has been set for the Town to contribute to the Library search. Livingston has also met with The Library Foundation and the Friends of the Library, both of whom have made clear they will not pay for travel expenses.
- b) Board Treasurer, Lohe, reminds the Board that they are operating under a budget, and that the budget should not include spending the principal; any further funds spent that were not part of the budget will need to come out of funds allocated for the Library.
- c) Livingston to follow-up with the Advisory Board about drawing from the Town reserve fund.
- d) The Advocacy Committee to discuss further.
- e) The question is asked: What line of the budget did the search relocation funds for the police chief come from? Zelkha offers to look into this.

II. Comments from the Public (3 minute limit): N/A



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III. Secretary's Report

- A. Minutes: Burstein makes a motion to approve the August 2025 minutes;
seconded by Goleman. The Board votes unanimously to approve the minutes.

- B. Correspondence: N/A

- C. Other items: N/A

IV. Treasurer's Report: Lohe reports that our investments are up \$131k this month.

- A. Other: N/A

V. Library Director's Report:

A. Highlights:

1. A sink and water filter cooler were re-installed in the Circulation sorting room at BV. These were there before the sorting machine and staff is happy to have them back.
2. Summer Reading 2025 was busier than the preceding year.
3. Brookline Day is Sunday, 9/14.
4. The library author event with the Brookline Booksmith is sold out.
5. The Friends Book Sale is 9/26-27.
6. The Library is at the Farmer's Market on 9/25.
7. All Staff Day: Wednesday, October 15th.

- a) Short discussion. Trustees comment that the Library is also closed on 10/13; they ask for ample signage about the closings and predict push back.



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B. Financial: No budget update yet; Business Manager on vacation. There will be a report next month after the current bills are paid.

C. Statistical:

1. Circulation and attendance numbers are off this month because of a failure of the gate counter. The numbers in the report are estimated for July and August, but it's fair to assume the Library has been very busy based on the summer reading data which went up. Print circulation is about the same as last year at this time.

D. Other N/A

VI. Trustee Committee Reports

- A. Trustee Development Committee: Vogt met with Livingston about the Trustee tours. These tours will be an opportunity for staff and trustees to interact and are especially important in light of the workplace consultants' suggestions for better communication between Board and staff. Livingston sent an appreciative letter from the Board to the staff about the tours. The Trustee Orientation tour dates are as follows: 10/17 Brookline Village, 10/22 Coolidge, 11/6 Putterham.

VII. Old Business N/A

VIII. New Business

- A. Trustee Handbook review: Discussion about the Library's strategic plan:

1. The Strategic Plan was chosen for this month's Board review because the Action Plans are on the agenda and annual Action Plans should align with



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the Strategic Plan. Trustees need to be familiar with the Strategic Plan in order to evaluate the Action Plan proposal. Alignment of the proposed Action Plan with the Strategic Plan is not evident. Another concern is expressed about the extent to which the Library's annual action plans have or have not been designed for long-term impact.

2. While considering the gap in the relationship between recent action plans and the strategic plan, some history is provided.
3. Bloomenthal fills the Trustees in on the Pillars of Practice. Previous Director S. Slymon overhauled the action plan process using the Pillars of Practice as a framework instead of the Strategic Plan. These pillars are still evident in the current proposals.

B. FY26 Action Items: Savin presents the 3 Action Items to the Board, followed by a Q+A.

1. New Action Items vs. "Renewed" Action Items: Sometimes longer efforts have more significant results. The Trustees want to encourage staff to dig in deeper to an Action Item instead of strategizing a new plan each year. An example of this could be a two- or three-year plan for the Art Walk. Savin states that with more staff stability and less turnover this kind of project continuity could also evolve.



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2. World Language Collection: Discussion about supporting non-English speaking patrons through the use of transliteration tools for searches.

Savin says this is being worked on.

- a) Livingston asks about consulting the zip code census for language data.
 - b) Discussion about library programming in other languages.
 - c) It is suggested that a multi-year goal could be improving the World Language collection and language access in the library.
 - d) Chanyasulkit is on the steering committee of Brookline Asian American Family Network (BAAFN). Chanyasulkit suggests meeting with Ahmad Hamssa, Brookline's Language Access Coordinator and METCO program coordinators.
3. Art mural: A question is raised about the relationship between this Action Item and the overarching goals of the strategic plan. Savin says the A in STEAM (one of the Library goals) stands for Art. Another Trustee suggests this action item can fulfill the goal of connecting the public to the library, while some Board members question the public's connection to a mural on a wall leading to the Library garage.
 4. Savin says she wants the staff and the Board to work together to make sure we aren't off the mark of the strategic plan and asks for next steps.



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5. The Board appears to be at an impasse on Action Item #3 -- the mural. The discussion has raised larger issues regarding the strategic plan/action plan connection.

(1) Savin suggests that maybe a 2026 Action Plan isn't the purview of an interim director, and that a plan should await the installation of the permanent Director.

(a) The Chair asks what Savin prefers to do. Savin answers that we should hold off on an Action Plan until next year.

(b) Livingston and Savin will confer about reaching out to the MBLC regarding an extension for the 2026 Action Plan.

C. Vogt makes a motion to thank Savin and the staff for their hard work on developing these Action Items, stating that the Trustees look forward to discussing them further when a new Director is in place. Burstein seconds.

Motion passes unanimously. FY26 Action Items are postponed.

IX. Remarks for the Good of the Order: N/A

X. Adjourn: Bloomenthal makes a motion to adjourn the meeting; Livingston seconds.

Meeting adjourned at 9:01pm.

Attested,

Judith Goleman, Secretary



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If you plan to make a motion or amend the minutes, please give a written copy to the Trustee Secretary.

Please contact Library Administration (brkadmin@minlib.net / 617-730-2360) with questions about this meeting.