

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

A hybrid meeting of the Trustees of the Public Library was convened on Wednesday, November 12, 2025 at 6:15pm.

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

Absent: F. Silver

Also present: Interim Library Director, D. Savin; Assistant Interim Director for Administration, R. Brennan; Executive Assistant to the Library Director, C. Artavia; Library Friend Member, E. Franco; Library Assistant, C. Saines.

- I. Motion to convene by Livingston; Goleman seconds. All present vote yea, 6:15 p.m.
- II. Comments from the Chair
 - A. Livingston thanks J. Vanderkay for her service as the Friends liaison. A new Friends and Foundation model of information sharing will be implemented going forward. A representative from the Friends and from the Foundation will attend each Board meeting as a non-voting member. Livingston introduces E. Franco as the attending Friends representative.
 - B. Livingston thanks the Friends and Foundation for hosting and financing the reception on Dec. 8 for the finalists of the Library Director search. Livingston thanks P. Roberts (Friends) and C. Aquiline (Foundation) for their work on the Screening Committee.
 - C. On December 8th and 9th the interviews and reception will take place for the Library Director finalists. Livingston asks the Trustees to be available to help out as needed on December 8th, from 9:30-12:30. M. Vogt, C. Lohe, and J. Margolis volunteer.
 - D. Livingston passes out a draft of the itinerary for December 9th. There will be no regular BOLT meeting for December 9th as the interviews are being conducted that day. Livingston and Goleman lay out the schedule for the day of the interviews, 12/9.
 1. Candidates will get to see the twelve interview questions one hour prior to their interview time.
 2. The search consultants, J. Garcia and S. Feldman, will conduct the reference checks before the finalists are named.
 3. The Town's legal counsel has weighed in on what parts of the interview process may be in executive session and what parts must be in open meeting. The ruling is as follows: initial interviews by the Screening

Committee to identify finalists may be held in executive session while the finalist interviews must be open meeting.

a) Margolis states that he disagrees with the interpretation of the open meeting law. Margolis explains that details about the candidates and interviews can not be discussed without a quorum, but if Trustees wanted to discuss these topics 1:1 or together on their own without the intention of bringing it to a quorum that is acceptable. Livingston questions this. Trustees discuss open meeting law.

(1) The Chair suggests moving the voting meeting up to December 11th.

(2) The voting meeting will be an open meeting in round robin style where people can express positive feelings they might have for a candidate. Discussion follows.

(a) The library staff will have the option to fill out a survey about the candidates, the answers of which will be compiled by a professional service and given to the Trustees to help inform their vote. The results of the survey will be non-discoverable and the Trustees will not be able to discuss the results of the survey.

(b) Short discussion ensues about the previous Director searches in the context of open meeting law.

(c) Short discussion ensues about the "positive comments only" format.

(3) Lohr expresses a concern about the reference checks; Livingston addresses her concern.

(4) Burstein asks how, since the meetings are open, would candidates not discover how they are ranked compared to the others? Short discussion.

(5) The Chair encourages the Trustees to send her their questions. Livingston will discuss them with the search consultants and send their answers to the Trustees in an informational email.

(a) Savin reminds the Trustees and Chair that this will work as long as "reply all" is not used, (in order to

prevent a discussion which breaks open meeting law).

(b) Trustees agree to have the Chair send out an informational email following her meeting with the consultants with the explicit instructions NOT to “reply-all.”

(6) Trustee Vogt refers again to the survey results needing to be made public; Livingston assures they do not.

(7) Before the Library Director is chosen, Livingston will make a motion for her and the search consultant to negotiate terms and salary with the preferred candidate.

III. Comments from the Public (3-minute limit)

A. Friends representative, Franco, states that the open meeting law does not make sense to her, because it prevents the Trustees from talking about the candidates, which, she believes, they should be allowed to do. Franco goes on to say that criticism can be constructive.

B. Vogt reminds the Board about a patron’s comment to the Board about better MLK Day programming. Savin replies that she has been in touch with the patron who would like to see a book display and a few other things that are do-able.

IV. Secretary’s Report

A. Minutes - Goleman makes a motion to approve the October 2025 minutes; Burstein seconds. Vote: Lohe abstains. The Board unanimously votes to approve the minutes.

B. Correspondence - N/A

V. Treasurer’s Report - N/A

VI. Library Director’s Report

A. Savin presents the October Report:

1. Buildings and Grounds - fiber optic cables were installed at BV. The library IT Department is now acquiring new equipment to work with the cables; the wi-fi in the library should improve.

a) There are leaks and mold in the Rabbit Hole in BV. To address this (in several phases), Savin is working with the Buildings Dept. on having the bricks outside the Library removed to seal the front of

the foundation where the leak is occurring, to re-install the bricks, and then to replace the carpet in the Rabbit Hole.

b) There is one more ADA walkthrough for Putterham branch, then S. Kaplan will prepare a report for all three library branches.

2. The Trustee and Stakeholder Tours are now complete

3. Staff are requesting time off for the week of Christmas. If granted, it will be difficult to adequately staff all three branches. Savin proposes some temporary closures and staffing moves to the Board.

a) Burstein makes a motion to close Coolidge Corner Library on Friday December 26th, and Sunday the 28th, and to move these staff to Brookline Village. Burstein asks Savin to let the staff know that the Trustees are sympathetic towards time off requests and he appreciates the Director moving the staff to accommodate them. Vote by roll call. The Board unanimously passes the holiday closure changes.

b) Livingston asks Savin about recent resignations and whether these may be related to issues that drove staff departures under the last Director. Savin replies that resignations have been due to personal life changes. Savin reports more stability with staff and fewer resignations.

c) Livingston asks a question regarding the part-time staff becoming part of the union. Savin replies that it has been voted that part-time staff will join the union, but there is no bargaining contract in place.

VII. Trustee Committee Reports

A. Screening Committee: Goleman gives an overview of the Director search.

1. Recruitment ended Sunday, November 3, 2025. 18 applications were received, each possessing an MLIS or equivalent degree. Screening interviews will begin on November 17th; from the 18 applications, five interviews are scheduled. The same questions will be asked in each interview. The Screening Committee will then determine which candidates they wish to move forward.

2. Livingston thanks Hung, Chanyasulkit, and Goleman for their work on the Screening Committee.

B. Development Committee:

1. Vogt reiterates that Trustee and Stakeholder tours have been completed and thanks Savin, Brennan, Head of Putterham, G. O'Day, and S. McDonald, Head of Coolidge Corner.

2. Vogt presents a Board annual calendar draft to be added to the Trustee Hnadbook when completed.

C. Functions Committee: Burstein presents the changes to the Collection Development Policy as described in the agenda packet.

1. The Chair of the Functions Committee moves to implement these changes. Goleman seconds. The vote is conducted by roll call. The Board unanimously votes to implement the changes and update the policy.

VIII. Old Business - N/A

IX. New Business

A. Collection Development Policy - the updated version of the policy will be posted on the library's website by Brennan.

B. Regarding the date for a meeting to vote on a new Library Director, Livingston recommends December 11th, not Dec. 16.

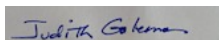
X. Remarks for the Good of the Order - N/A

XI. Livingston makes a motion to adjourn; Burstein seconds. All present vote yay. The meeting is adjourned at 8:10pm

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.

Attested,



Judith Goleman, Secretary

Nov. 22, 2025