

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, April 14, 2026 at 6:15pm

Present: B. Bloomenthal; M. Burstein; C. Chanyasulkit; K. Hung; K. Livingston; C. Lohe; J. Margolis; F. Silver; J. Vanderkay; M. Vogt

Absent: J. Goleman; S. Zelkha

Also present: Library Director, J. Mercurio; Assistant Library Director, D. Savin; Executive Assistant to the Library Director, C. Artavia; Friends of the Library representative, Pam Roberts; and Board of Library Trustee candidate Petra Bignami.

- I. Convene: Motion to convene by Burstein; Silver seconds. All present vote yea, 6:16pm.
- II. *Comments from the Chair: the Chair moves this agenda item to later in the agenda.
- III. Comments from the Public (3 minute limit): n/a
- IV. Secretary's Report: n/a
 - A. Minutes - Hung makes a motion to approve the March 2026 meeting minutes; Livingston seconds. The Board unanimously votes to approve the minutes.
 - B. Correspondence: n/a
- V. New Business: n/a
- VI. Treasurer's Report: Lohe reports on the recent Investment Committee meeting and presents the budget for FY27.
 - A. A professional development fund for mid-career librarians will be added to the Trustees' grants along with the yearly Romanow fund (which has been increased to \$2k).
 - B. The Chair, Director, Assistant Director, Treasurer, and K. Casanave (Library IT person) have contingency (discretionary) funds if needed. Burstein asks if there have been any changes to the Flaherty Innovation fund. Mercurio answers this will be revisited with Casanave.
 - C. Lohe moves to approve the FY27 budget; Burstein seconds. The Board unanimously votes to approve the FY27 budget.
- VII. Library Director's Report: Mercurio presents.
 - A. Library operations are back in service after temporary closures due to repairs. The Children's Department is being re-carpeted and some new furniture has been purchased. The Rabbit Hole is being cleaned and new flooring is being installed. YS staff are preparing for re-opening.
 - B. Library Functions (Facilities) has met regarding pest issues. This issue is trending in a better direction.
 - C. Mercurio and Savin met with a consultant who specializes in library space planning, wayfinding, and collection marketing. PLB is looking for recommendations on how to use space more effectively, improve signage, and marketing.
 - D. Mercurio is researching digital newsletter software for libraries.
 - E. Vogt asks about language access in relation to wayfinding and recommends

checking with native speakers. Short discussion.

- F. Burstein suggests that pride flags be raised at library buildings for the duration of any pride programming and not only limited to the month of June.
 - 1. Lohe inquires as to whether the town's flag policy for public buildings has been looked into and whether the Library could be sued for excluding a specific group's flag. Mercurio answers that she did inquire with town council. The Library follows the trustees' policy before town policy, and the pride flag represents pride programming happening at the Library. The Library would not fly a flag that did not represent library programming.
 - a) On a related note, Mercurio is looking into diversity messaging to include a flag or banner which represents the inclusive programming happening at the Library.
 - 2. Livingston asks about professional branding recommendations for the Library. Short discussion about streamlining branding, colors, and website improvements and bundle pricing.
 - 3. Mercurio mentions changing staff development day currently scheduled for April 28th to May 14th (the Town's staff day).

VIII. Trustee Committee Summaries

- A. Nominating Committee: Burstein presides. In the current context where there is more than one person running for a position, the Nominations Committee takes on the role of presenting the candidates: Chair (J. Goleman); Vice Chair (C. Chanyasulkit; F. Silver); Secretary (K. Hung); Treasures (C. Lohe).
- B. Added Notes:
 - 1. At the May board meeting anyone can nominate themselves or someone else for a position
 - 2. In order to be elected to a position, the candidate must have a majority vote, not a plurality vote. The election will continue to be run until a majority is reached.
 - 3. Voting is public; no secret ballots.
 - 4. Candidates will have an opportunity to speak for a minute or two to explain why they are running for the position (in a contested or uncontested election).
 - 5. Anybody who is elected to the board needs to be sworn in by the Town Clerk before they can vote at the next meeting.
- C. Brief information about the Board's voting process is reviewed.
- D. Trustee Development: Vogt reports:
 - 1. Vogt asks the Board to renew their open meeting law and conflict of interest training.
 - 2. TDC is actively working on drafting a miscellany section in the handbook. Vogt asks the Board to continue to add to this section.

3. TDC is preparing to onboard at least two new colleagues after the election.
- E. Library Staff Appreciation: Chanyasulkit briefly discusses Staff Day.
- IX. Old Business: The Edith Pearlman award ceremony is 4/28.
 - X. *II Comments from the Chair: In her last meeting as Chair, Livingston provides her “exit interview” and offers constructive feedback to the board.
 - A. After 25 years of service on the Board, Livingston states that she wishes for the Library to have the strongest board that it can have. Livingston thanks Mercurio for prioritizing the staff; she thanks Mercurio and Savin for getting started on the new strategic plan, and for the building improvements in all 3 libraries.
 - B. Livingston asks the Board to consider whether having 12 trustees invites a lack of accountability and whether a board of this size is actually benefitting the Library.
 - C. Livingston encourages the Board to come together around Mercurio and expresses optimism about the future of PLB.
 - XI. Remarks for the Good of the Order:
 - A. Margolis comments on his 21 years on the Board. He states that the most important job of the Board is to stay out of the way of the Library Director and staff. Margolis recommends keeping a low profile as a trustee and observing how everyone is treated.
 - B. Some discussion ensues regarding the size of the board.
 - C. Hung thanks Livingston and Margolis for their service and states that she hopes the Board makes them proud. Bookplates in honor of Livingston and Margolis will be placed into books in the library’s collection. Hung presents each parting trustee with a book.
 - D. P. Roberts encourages everyone to attend the upcoming meeting of the Friends on June 8th.
 - XII. Adjourn: Burstein makes a motion to adjourn; Silver seconds. The meeting is adjourned at 7:33pm.
 - XIII. If you plan to make a motion or amend the minutes, please give a written copy to the Trustee Secretary.
 - XIV. Please contact Library Administration (brkadmin@minlib.net / 617-730-2360) with questions about this meeting.

Edited by Judith Goleman, Secretary (who was absent) and fact-checked/attested by Kristin Hung.

May 7, 2026

