

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, March 18, 2026 at 6:15pm

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

Absent: J. Vanderkay

Also present: Library Director, J. Mercurio; Assistant Library Director, D. Savin; Executive Assistant to the Library Director, C. Artavia; Friends of the Library member, E. Franco; Petra Bignami; Amy Newell; Community Health Manager, Darlene Johnson; and Substance Use Prevention Coordinator, Laila McGeorge.

- I. Convene: Motion to convene by Livingston; Goleman seconds. All present vote yea, 6:16 p.m.
- II. Comments from the Chair:
 - A. The next Select Board meeting is March 24, 2026.
 - B. Livingston describes the Nomination Committee process for producing a slate of candidates for the election of the 2026-27 Board of Library Trustees officers. At the April meeting, Livingston, who is retiring, will step down as Chair and the most senior member, M. Burstein, will run the election for the new Chair. The new Chair will then lead the Board through the voting process for the remaining officers: vice chair, treasurer, and secretary.
 - C. The 2026 Edith Perelman book award: Livingston reminds the board that the name of the winning recipient cannot be released until after the award ceremony. Lohe to write a press release.
- III. Comments from the Public: n/a
- IV. Secretary's Report:
 - A. Minutes - Goleman makes a motion to approve the February 2026 meeting minutes; Burstein seconds. The Board unanimously votes to approve the minutes.
 - B. Correspondence - n/a
- V. New Business:
 - A. B-WELL health stations: D. Johnson and L. McGeorge present the B-Well pilot station project history and give a summary of how the vending machines work. The Board asks questions re: safety, product selection, product instructions, age verification, timeline for the machines, location, environmental conditions, and what type of internet and power connection they require.
 - a) Johnson says she can reach out to Somerville to provide a breakdown of data usage.
 - b) Livingston makes a motion to allow Brookline Public Health to install B-Well pilot vending machines at Brookline Village and

Coolidge Corner libraries places determined by the Director.
Chanyasulkit seconds. The motion passes unanimously.

- B. Budget Communication: Vogt presents a detailed slideshow explaining the Town's budget and reasons for supporting a property tax override.
1. Chanyasulkit asks about advocacy on behalf of the library. Mercurio says that cuts to Town funding could reduce PLB's ability to provide services or, worst case scenario, threaten certification. The library would not be able to receive interlibrary loans or borrow from other libraries without certification. PLB would also no longer be eligible for \$140k/year in state aid funding if it did not meet the Municipal Appropriation Requirement (MAR).
 2. The Board discusses how to support an override that fully funds the library.
 - a) Burstein reminds the Board that trustees can sign their names to petitions and endorsements and identify themselves as a library trustee, but they cannot speak for all of the trustees unless a vote has been taken on this.
 - b) Livingston calls for an emergency place holder Board meeting for Thursday, March 26, from 6:00 - 6:15pm. If the Select Board has made a decision regarding the question of override on the ballot the Trustees can vote to support or not.

VI. Treasurer's Report:

- A. A confab of the treasurers (Foundation Treasurer, Dennis Mendoza; Friends Treasurer, Carol Caro; BOLT Treasurer, C. Lohe) met on February 6, 2026. Lohe reminds the Board of the significant financial roles played by the Brookline Library Foundation and the Friends of the Brookline Public Library.
- B. Lohe reviews the revised guidelines for the Romanow funds and asks the Board if it wants to increase the library school scholarship amount from \$1,500 to \$2,000 per recipient in FY27. The increase would not require a vote because it would be voted on when the FY27 budget is voted on. Short discussion follows re: the number of applicants, staff retention, and internal promotions. Lohe ends by saying she will increase the scholarship amount to \$2,000 in her budget draft.

VII. Library Director's Report:

- A. The Transportation Board is expanding the Blue Bikes program to South Brookline and would like a docking station in front of Putterham Library. Discussion about the bikes and the possible purchase of bicycle helmets. Goleman makes a motion to accept a Blue Bike installation of 11 bikes at the Putterham

Library to be maintained by Blue Bikes; Chanyasulkit seconds. The motion passes unanimously.

- B. Construction/ repair activity at the library. A leak affecting the Rabbit Hole is being addressed. Further work to follow in the Children's Department.
- C. Staff Development Day: Tuesday, April 28, 2026. All libraries will be closed. Focus will be on emergency planning. MIRA (Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition) will present (virtually) on bystander training.
- D. Ryan Brennan accepted a position at the Watertown Free Public Library; April 8th is his last day [updated: last day is 4/10/26]. Discussion follows about salary comparisons and the Watertown Library salary study. The Board expresses great appreciation for his service at PLB.

VIII. Trustee Committee Summaries

- A. Trustee Development: The next meetings will be held April 15 and May 14. Exit interviews are approaching for some committee members. Vogt describes a plan for a running miscellany section in the Trustee Handbook that will include important traditions and institutional knowledge in order to assure that these bits and pieces are not lost with the completion of tenures.
- B. Library Staff Appreciation: The committee has received great feedback. Save the Staff Day date (4/28), 2pm -5pm.

IX. Old Business - n/a

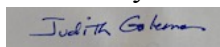
X. Remarks for the Good of the Order - n/a

XI. Motion to adjourn - Burstein makes a motion to adjourn; Goleman seconds. The meeting is adjourned at 8:20pm.

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 by



Judith Goleman, Secretary
April 8, 2026