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, July 14th, 2026 at 6:15pm

Present: P. Bignami; B. Bloomenthal; M. Burstein; C. Chanyasulkit; J. Goleman (Chair); K. Hung; C. Lohe; J. Vanderkay; M. Vogt.

Absent: A. Newell; F. Silver; S. Zelkha

Also present: Library Director, J. Mercurio; Assistant Library Director, D. Savin; Executive Assistant to the Library Director, C. Artavia; Friends representative, E. Franco; library employee, C. Saines; and library patron, A. Conquest.

I. Convene: Motion to convene by Chanyasulkit; Bloomenthal seconds. All present vote yea, 6:16pm.
II. Comments from the Chair
    A. Goleman confirms the meeting dates for the upcoming calendar year:
        1. September 8, 2026 - Board meeting confirmed
        2. September 1, 2026 - Executive Committee meeting confirmed
        3. October 13, 2026 - Board meeting confirmed
        4. No further discussion about meeting dates; all dates are in the BOLT calendar.
III. Comments from the Public (3-minute limit)
    A. Brookline resident of 50 years, Arthur Conquest, speaks to the board about a recent experience at the library when he tried to check out library materials without a library card or ID. Conquest raises concerns about diversity amongst library staff and board, racism in Brookline, and illiteracy in the African American populations.
        1. Chair Goleman responds by saying that as a retired academic, literacy is an area of expertise and assures Conquest that she has the time and interest in speaking with him further about his concerns. Goleman confirms the commitment of everyone around the board table to antiracist approaches to their work.
        2. Trustee Burstein confirms Goleman's sentiments and shares that he was also unable to check out library materials recently because he did not have his library card, making the point that this is a library rule applied to all.
        3. Conquest says he did not know about this rule and emphasizes the importance of spreading library news inclusively to all members of the community.
IV. New Business
    A. Director Mid-Year Review [Vote] Goleman reminds the Board that the mid-year review is occurring 6 months since the Director was hired and that the chief purpose of the review is to encourage and guide the still-new Director. Goleman also thanks Assistant Director, D. Savin, for her generosity and support to Mercurio in the last 6 months.

1. Mercurio's self-evaluation described her considerable accomplishments and activities from the first six months in relation to categories given to her by the Board. Mercurio echoed thanks to Savin and commented that she is looking forward to receiving feedback as she continues to learn about and lead the organization.
2. Comments from members of the board.
    a) Bignami raises parking garage issues: painted lines, trash piling up. Other building issues are addressed including leaks. The Chair thanks Mercurio for handling these things well thus far.
    b) Burstein addresses relations and interactions with library staff and asks the director how the library can recruit more experienced staff. Mercurio says the answer is supporting staff and creating an environment where staff learn and grow. Mercurio references the internal promotion of librarian Kreusch to Head of Circulation as an example of the professional ecosystem at work in the library and explains that PLB is maturing as a staff.
    c) Bloomenthal thanks Mercurio (from her position as a former PLB staff member) for her work in the last 6 months; Bloomenthal has heard nothing but good things about how the last 6 months have gone.
    d) Vogt thanks Mercurio for addressing action items while maintaining a balance and attempting to understand the organization before implementing changes. Vogt comments that she would like to see more from the library staff committees in the coming year.
    e) Chanyasulkit makes a motion to accept Mercurio's 6-month review as it is written; Bloomenthal seconds. All present vote yea, 6:51pm.
        (1) The review process will be completed by Chair Goleman who will write a brief report of the meeting which can be referred to when the annual review in January occurs. Reviews will be annual going forward. This process aims to create a fair review process with transparent expectations and timely feedback.

B. Trustee & Staff Interaction: Best Practices - Trustee Development Committee Chair, Vogt shares document with the board.
    1. Discussion arises about the item: "Route all feedback, questions, or concerns about staff or services through the Director." Expressing a wish to preserve, for the most part, a reporting structure that goes from the

Board Chair to the Director, Goleman tables the discussion for further consideration.

C. ALA/United for Libraries Trainings - Chanyasulkit reports on ALA and the upcoming virtual conference.

V. Secretary's Report

A. Minutes - Lohe makes a motion to approve the June 2026 meeting minutes; Chanyasulkit seconds. The Board unanimously votes to approve the minutes, 7:13pm.

B. Correspondence - n/a

VI. Treasurer's Report - Treasurer Lohe reports on FY26 spending and budget. Lohe thanks the Finance Committee (Bignami and Zelkha) for their careful review of the budget which has been submitted. Lohe thanks the Friends of the Library and the Foundation as partners. Lohe asks for any other questions, comments or reviews. The board expresses gratitude for Lohe's fastidious work.

VII. Library Director's Report - Mercurio reports.

A. Mercurio asks to close all library locations September 6th. Trustee Burstein recalls that the Sunday of Labor Day was an exception to the Summer Sundays that the library is open. Burstein makes a motion that the library as always is closed on the Sunday and Monday of Labor Day. Seconded by Bloomenthal.

1. Discussion is raised by Lohe regarding how to spread the word about the Labor Day closures (in light of Mr. Conquests's concerns). Discussion about library news.
2. Short discussion about heat emergencies and requests from the Town that the library stay open during weather emergencies. Important to note that library services are not being provided on these days; provisions for weather emergency days should be incorporated into the Town budget for the Library. These openings were additional unforeseen expenses.
3. Secretary Hung brings the board back to the motion on the table - see above. Hung runs a roll call vote. The motion passes unanimously at 7:43pm.
4. Chanyasulkit asks Mercurio about the costs of keeping the library open on a Sunday and for weather emergencies as requested by the Town. Short discussion.

B. Short discussion about the leak in the Rabbit Hole potentially caused by a car hitting the outside of the building.

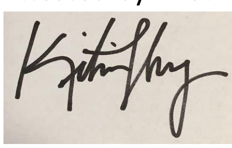
C. Vogt refers to the Head of Circulation, Bryan Kreusch's recent appointment to the Minuteman interest group. Vogt would love to hear more about the Minuteman Network in a future board meeting.

VIII. Trustee Committee Reports

A. Trustee Development Committee: Vogt reports and reminds board members to add a bio and 3 favorite books to a list that will be distributed to staff.
B. Library Functions Committee: Burstein reports that the Functions Committee is looking to revise the library's hate speech policy. Library Functions Committee to meet again in September.
C. Investment Committee - Lohe reviews State Street statement and discusses the volatility of the market.

IX. Old Business - Trustee Vanderkay asks about uploading the COI and Open Meeting Law certificates. Bloomenthal says she can create explanatory documentation and format it for the Trustees' handbook.
X. Remarks for the Good of the Order - none.
XI. Adjourn: Chanyasulkit makes a motion to adjourn; Burstein seconds. The meeting is adjourned at 8:00pm.

Attested by Kristin Hung, Secretary



August 31, 2026

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.