

MINUTES
CITY OF LAUREL
10/14 /2025 06:02 PM
Laurel Public Library

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Katie Fjelstad	X Mary Nelson
X Kate Manley – Board Chair	X Paige Farmer
X Nancy Schmidt, Secretary	X Kay Wilcox
X Clair Killebrew – Foundation Liaison	

OTHERS PRESENT: Kelly Strecker – City of Laurel Clerk/Treasurer; Cara Orban – Montana State Library

1. **Public Input**

Citizens may address the committee regarding any item of city business not on the agenda. The duration for an individual speaking under Public Comment is limited to three minutes. While all comments are welcome, the committee will not take action on any item not on the agenda.

- a. Addressing the Board – Kelly Strecker attended the meeting to explain in-depth the library cash account to the trustees. She gave a comprehensive explanation for how the funds accumulated so quickly and how they are being disbursed into the library account for the FY26 budget. Board members asked about the creation of a depreciation reserve account for the library. Cara Orban stated that this is something the trustees can request the Council to create for the library.

2. **General Items**

- a. The library board minutes from September 2025 were presented to the members for approval. Paige motioned to approve the minutes as presented, Mary seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- b. **Circulation Report** – (compared to the same time period as last year) *Traffic*: up 11.34%; *circulation*: all items circulated totaled 5,431 (including 660 eBooks), book circulation was up 9.9%, media circulation was up 81.2%, eBook checkouts for this month was 13.76% of total book circulation, we circulated 1,030 items to partners and 217 items from other libraries; *computers*: internet use was up 38.1%, children’s use was down 77%, wi-fi use was down 41%; *patron cards*: city patrons make up 59.8% of our registered users, county is 28.9%, and state/out of county has 9.9% of our registered patrons. There were 80 tech-assists in September.

3. **Old Business**

- a. Kate and Nancy reported on their attendance at the South Central Federation meeting on Saturday, September 13th in Lewistown. We are pleased that every library in the

Federation has someone in attendance. Cara Orban and Corey Sloan presented training at the meeting. They were strategic and facility planning for libraries.

- b. Nancy reported that she attended the Fall Workshop in Great Falls. Since she forgot her notes at the Coordinator/Commission meeting in Belgrade, she will share them with the Board members at the next meeting or send them via email.
- c. The Arbitration & Labor Relations training in Bozeman was centered on AI and identity fraud as well as at the Fall Retreat in Chico. The Keynote speaker was very intense. His information centered around today's government and how the library could help with the positive aspect of

4. New Business

- a. Board members welcomed a new trustee to the board: Kay Wilcox.
- b. Cara Orban, Montana State Library consultant, presented information to the Board about pursuing a mill levy campaign for the library for the next voting cycle. She passed out a guideline for help campaign decisions such as how much to ask for, who can help with getting information out to the voters, when to ask the City to place the mill levy on the ballot, cost of adding the library levy to the ballot, specific language requirements as per MCA 15-10-425, and fact sheets about the library's benefit to the community.
- c. Under Foundation business, Nancy reported that the foundation received funds from the estate of Virginia Gomer. The Foundation members will pursue moving the funds into a Money Market account for future growth and needs. Clair recommended Ryan Wittman with Carson Wealth. An accountant will also be contracted to do the bookkeeping part of the foundation funds. Board members asked if these funds were to be used for the daily operations of the library. Clair Killebrew, Foundation President, and Nancy Schmidt, Library Director, both stated that Virginia had wanted the funding to be used for materials and programming needs but not for wages and keeping the facility open.
- d. The fall book sale is scheduled for Monday, October 27th through Saturday, November 8th, 2025. Volunteer sign-up sheets will be available at the circulation desk if anyone wants to help with the book sale.

5. Other Items

- a. Board concerns: Kate asked if we are planning to have the elves visit us again this year. Paige suggested that we have the elves but not present a movie again since it is only a few days before Christmas. We will do the "Name the Elf" part of the program.
- b. The holiday schedules were discussed. Paige recommended that we close the library for 4-day weekends at Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's. Kate motioned that we close those weekends, Paige seconded the motion. Motion passed.

6. Announcements

- a. The next regular meeting is December 9th, 2025, at 6:00 pm. November 11th is a holiday and Board members felt that changing the day of the meeting would just be confusing to everyone. It was decided that we just wait until December for the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L Schmidt

Nancy L Schmidt
Library Director
Secretary for the Board

NOTE: This meeting is open to the public. This meeting is for information and discussion of listed agenda items.