

ST. HELENS PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MEETING

Monday, September 8, 2025, at 7:15 PM
Virtually over Zoom

APPROVED MINUTES

Members Present

Chair Fatima Salas
Vice Chair Aaron Martin
Member Rob Dunn
Member Ellen Jacobson
Member Jana Mann
Member Lynne Pettit
Member Erin Wheeldon

Members Absent

Member Jay Echternach

Council Liaison in Attendance

N/A

Visitors

None

Staff Present

Library Director Suzanne Bishop
Library Board Secretary Dan Dieter

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Chair Salas.

VISITOR COMMENTS *Limited to three (3) minutes per speaker.*

No visitor comments.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Minutes from the regular board meeting, June 9, 2025, were reviewed.

Motion: Upon Member Dunn's motion and Member Jacobson's second, the Library Board unanimously approved the regular board meeting minutes dated June 9, 2025. [Yeas: Chair Salas, Vice Chair Martin, Member Dunn, Member Jacobson, Member Mann, Member Pettit, Member Wheeldon; Nays: none]

2. Minutes from the special board meeting, June 9, 2025, were reviewed.

Motion: Upon Member Dunn's motion and Member Jacobson's second, the Library Board unanimously approved the special board meeting minutes dated June 9, 2025. [Yeas: Chair Salas, Vice Chair Martin, Member Dunn, Member Jacobson, Member Mann, Member Pettit, Member Wheeldon; Nays: none]

3. Minutes from the special board meeting, August 8, 2025, were reviewed.

Motion: Upon Member Dunn's motion and Member Jacobson's second, the Library Board unanimously approved the special board meeting minutes dated August 27, 2025. [Yeas: Chair Salas, Vice Chair Martin, Member Dunn, Member Jacobson, Member Mann, Member Pettit, Member Wheeldon; Nays: none]

OLD BUSINESS

4. MOTION TO RECOMMEND BOARD CANDIDATE: The motion from the August 27, 2025, during the special meeting did not have a second, so is being voted on again.

Motion: Upon Member Pettit's motion and Member Dunn's second, the Library Board unanimously approved the recommendation of Kelsey Knutson to City Council for board appointment. [Yeas: Chair Salas, Vice Chair Martin, Member Dunn, Member Mann, Member Pettit, Member Wheeldon; Nays: none; Abstentions: Member Jacobson]

5. STRATEGIC PLAN SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT: Vice Chair Martin stated that the subcommittee has not met recently and will provide a report at the next meeting.

6. MAKERSPACE FUNDRAISING SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT: Member Echternach was not available for a report.

NEW BUSINESS

7. APPROVE BOARD TERMS: Member Dunn and Member Mann agreed to stay on the library board for an additional term.

Motion: Upon Member Pettit's motion and Vice Chair Martin's second, the Library Board unanimously approved the recommendation of Member Dunn and Member Mann to City Council for appointment of an additional term. [Yeas: Chair Salas, Vice Chair Martin, Member Dunn, Member Jacobson, Member Mann, Member Pettit, Member Wheeldon; Nays: none]

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Library Director Bishop thanked Member Dunn and Member Mann for agreeing to serve for another term. The \$21 million in Federal funding that is budgeted through the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) has been awarded for the fiscal year beginning July 2026. Going forward, the State Library may not receive their full funding so there may be shortages for some staff and service funding for some things like Libby, the Teen Internship or Summer Library programs. Thanks to those of you who were able to attend the special meeting and then the joint meeting. Thanks Vice Chair Martin for giving the reports. The City Council apologizes for not meeting their quorum for the joint meeting. The Summer Library Challenge this year saw about 20 percent more minutes read by adults with about the same number of participants. We had about a 15 percent increase in teens registered, but about a 20 percent decrease in minutes read. We had about a 20 percent increase across the board for children including the number of participants and minutes read. We received great feedback on the eight weeks of children and adult programming and the lawn games at the end of the children's program were super popular. Our teen intern, Phoenix Lince, has been a delight to work with. The two things that they accomplished were to help with the Summer Library Challenge and to establish the Teen Advisory

Board (TAB). The plan for TAB is to create a community where everyone involved will have the opportunity to organize events or projects. They are planning to reach out to teens and faculty at the high school and to have the first meeting in early October. Adult Services Librarian Herren-Kenaga is still waiting for a response from the Grand Ronde to make sure there are no problems with naming the Local History Room the Loowit Room. She is also getting ready for the genealogy conference which will be held on Saturday September 20. Some of the swag from the conference are being made in the Makerspace. Speaking of the Makerspace, Youth and Makerspace Librarian Wiersma will be changing some of the Makerspace programming. She has spent more than the 40% of her time on Makerspace stuff. Going forward, some of the programs will make use of volunteers, as we have several that have wonderful skills. All of this will allow us to realign our programming and give more time for planning and program preparation. We were open as the Cooling Center between August 22 and 25. We had about 60 people through the door. We had help from volunteers from the Oregon Department of Health and Human Services, several of the Friends of the St. Helens Public Library and several staff members of the City. Library Assistant Vargas-DeLara is continuing with our translations into Spanish. Thanks also to Chair Salas for helping with that. We have a few activities coming up with our community partners. The State and the St. Helens Police Department are doing a drug take-back program in early October. We'll be participating in the Trunk or Treat activity around Halloween again this year. We'll also be participating in the Kiwanis Children's Fair again this year. And we will be partnering with the Elks for their "Warm Welcome to the Library" program. This is a national program where they give coats, mittens and hats to local Head Start kiddos. Tom Meyers, a local birder who just published a book, will be speaking here at the library, and we are trying to talk him into doing a program with kids. We have lots of people asking for Covid tests as numbers are rising. We have had a couple of incidents with young women who are struggling and needed help. We were able to get them connected to the Columbia County Mental Health crisis team and the Police Department. I will be out of town between October 4 to 6.

COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT

N/A

OTHER BUSINESS

No other business.

SUMMARIZE ACTION ITEMS

Chair Salas described the action items. The Strategic Plan Subcommittee and the Makerspace Fundraising Subcommittee will continue to meet and report back to the board.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Salas adjourned the meeting at 8:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,
Dan Dieter
Library Board Secretary