



PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY, JANUARY 08, 2026 AT 5:30 PM

100 S. WATER ST., WATERTOWN, WI 53094 - 2ND FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------|---|------------------|---|--------------|---|--------------|---|
| Jarred Burke | A | Charity Chandler | A | Tom Kohls | P | Andi Merfeld | P |
| Beth Mueller | P | Sarah Oudenhoven | P | Erin O'Neill | P | Bob Wetzel | P |

- **Also present:** Watertown Public Library Staff: Tina Peerenboom, Jaime Hernandez, Cari Gunderson, Lynn Block, WPL Staff, John Katisch, Community Member and Robert Stocks, Mayor

2. REVIEW CORRESPONDENCE

- Carnegie Foundation
- David Hertel
- Tom Levi

3. CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

- Danielle Bailey, WPL Staff

4. APPEARANCES

Oudenhoven made a motion to move item "9. President's Report" to after time "4. Appearances". Mueller seconded. Approved.

Presidents Report

1. Oudenhoven and Stocks will be working through a list of candidates to fill the seat left vacant by Kerry Kneser's resignation. The selected individual will serve as temporary Vice President until annual nominations in July 2026.
 - a. The goal is to partner with the city to make the process fair, transparent and thorough.
 - b. Candidates will initially meet with Oudenhoven and Mayor Stocks to share their interest in serving on the Board. Vetted candidates will come before the Board for interviews.

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. Review and take action: Contract for County Library Services

- Approve funding from Jefferson County (signed)

O'Neill made a motion to approve Contract for County Library services. Seconded by Kohls. Approved through Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call Vote:

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------|---|------------------|---|--------------|---|--------------|---|
| Jarred Burke | A | Charity Chandler | A | Tom Kohls | Y | Andi Merfeld | Y |
| Beth Mueller | Y | Sarah Oudenhoven | Y | Erin O'Neill | Y | Bob Wetzel | Y |

B. Discuss and take possible action: John Katisch volunteer services at library

Checkai noted that Katisch contributes a significant number of volunteer hours at the library and asked whether a part-time custodian should be considered to offset this workload.

- The position would include 16 hrs @ \$19.39 approximately

Topic will be on agenda for library finance meeting and recommendation will be brought to full board.

C. Review and take possible action: Purchase an electric scissor lift for safely working at 12'-16' high ceilings

- New lift costs \$13,500 or $\frac{3}{4}$ of that cost if purchased used.
- The lift has a 5-8 year battery.

Mueller made a motion to approve the purchase of a scissor lift up to \$15,000, to be funded through the LGIP account. Merfeld seconded. Approved through Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call Vote:

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------|---|------------------|---|--------------|---|--------------|---|
| Jarred Burke | A | Charity Chandler | A | Tom Kohls | Y | Andi Merfeld | Y |
| Beth Mueller | Y | Sarah Oudenhoven | Y | Erin O'Neill | Y | Bob Wetzel | Y |

D. Review and take possible action: Libby ebook/audiobook purchases from LGIP for Watertown patrons

- To alleviate hold list wait times, staff could purchase books for patron use.

Oudenhoven made a motion to approve the purchase of Libby Advantage books up to \$10,000 per year from LGIP account. Seconded by Mueller. Approved by Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call Vote:

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------|---|------------------|---|--------------|---|--------------|---|
| Jarred Burke | A | Charity Chandler | A | Tom Kohls | Y | Andi Merfeld | Y |
| Beth Mueller | Y | Sarah Oudenhoven | Y | Erin O'Neill | Y | Bob Wetzel | Y |

E. Review and take possible action: Fund 11-Designated and Undesignated Fund Balance

Kohls made a motion to move discussion to Finance Committee for further discussion. Oudenhouven seconded. Approved.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Review progress of Library website

- On track to meet April completion deadline.

B. Review progress of strategic plan

- Completed all interviewing and WiLS is compiling information

- Planning is on track

C. Discuss and take possible action: Library Endowment Account and LGIP

- Reviewed prepared spreadsheet which indicates a discrepancy between our records and the City's.
- Finance committee will discuss at their next meeting - Checkai and Block will be present. In addition, Finance to review target balance for LGIP and South Central accounts.
- Checkai will email the Board if she can get clarification from Mark Stevens regarding discrepancy.

D. The Library Board of Trustees will convene into Closed Session under exemption 19.85(1)c for the purpose of "considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility (LB Hours)

Wetzel made a motion to convene into closed session. Tom seconded. Approved.

Wetzel made a motion to reconvene into open session. Mueller seconded. Approved.

E. Reconvene into open session: Take action on staff compensation request

- No action taken.

F. Discuss and take possible action: 2026 budget and fund balance

- Reviewed budget and fund balance for 2026.
 - Take \$170,000 out of fund balance to accommodate the 2026 budget. Checkai cautioned this is a one-time only move.
 - Take \$30,000 out of LGIP to use for supplies, materials and programming. Finance Committee to decide where to pull funds from.

7. TRUSTEE'S REPORT - NONE

8. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- A. Director's Report
- B. Review monthly highlights, budget figures and statistics
 - To note, attendance up 11% over last year.
- C. Reviewed unplanned expenses impact for YE 2025

9. PRESIDENT'S REPORT - MOVED

10. PERSONNEL AND POLICY

- A. Resolution #2026-1 Library Assistant

Mueller left the meeting prior to vote.

Motion made to approve Fallon Booth as part-time Children's Library Assistant.

Roll Call Vote

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------|---|------------------|---|--------------|---|--------------|---|
| Jarred Burke | A | Charity Chandler | A | Tom Kohls | Y | Andi Merfeld | Y |
| Beth Mueller | A | Sarah Oudenhoven | Y | Erin O'Neill | Y | Bob Wetzel | Y |

11. REVIEW AND TAKE ACTION ON CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

- A. Public Library minutes from December 11, 2025
- B. January 2026 bills

O'Neill made a motion to approve consent agenda items. Seconded by Kohls. Approved.

Roll Call Vote:

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------|---|------------------|---|--------------|---|--------------|---|
| Jarred Burke | A | Charity Chandler | A | Tom Kohls | Y | Andi Merfeld | Y |
| Beth Mueller | A | Sarah Oudenhoven | Y | Erin O'Neill | Y | Bob Wetzel | Y |

12. ADJOURNMENT

- A. Next Meeting Date: Thursday, February 12, 2026

O'Neill made a motion to adjourn meeting at 7:22pm. Wetzel seconded. Approved.

These meeting minutes are uncorrected and stand as such until approved at the next Board of Trustees Meeting to be held on Thursday, February 5, 2025, 5:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Andi Merfeld, Secretary