

MEETING MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY DIRECTORS

MONDAY, APRIL 6, 2026

Bristol Public Library, 5 High Street, Bristol, CT 06010

ATTENDEES: Valina Carpenter, Eric Frenette, Nicholas Jakubowski, Elizabeth Kanachovski, Andrea Kapchensky, Kimberly Ploszaj (via Zoom), Danielle Rivard, Pina Salvatore, Betty Talmadge (via Zoom), and Council Liaison Steve Seymour.

Library Director Deborah Prozzo and Assistant Library Director Scott Stanton.

Absent: None.

Item 1- Call to order

Chairperson Salvatore called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

Item 2- Public Participation

None.

Chairperson Salvatore asked if there was any follow-up to the email that Erik Madsen sent through the library's website regarding document retention. Library Director Prozzo stated that the library is not a clearinghouse for permanently retaining City of Bristol electronic records. That's the purpose of the City Clerk's Office. Public Records are kept at City Hall. Discussion followed. The Library Board will respond to Mr. Madsen.

Item 3- Approval of Minutes

Director Rivard MOVED to approve the minutes of the March 2, 2026 Regular Meeting. Seconded by Director Frenette. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Item 4- Communications

Library Director Prozzo received notification today that Baker & Taylor, the book vendor, has officially entered into Chapter 11 Bankruptcy. No claims will be processed while they go through it. At the LCI Board meeting on Friday, she will see if other libraries have received this notification and what the consortium is doing. She will then file this paperwork with Corp Counsel so they can have a record of it.

Library Director Prozzo received notification from the Connecticut State Library that we did not get the \$2,000 summer enrichment grant to pay for Lucky Diaz. She will have to reach out to the Division of Children and YA Services to find out why. She's disappointed and surprised. They hope we will consider applying next year. We don't know yet who received the grant. So, the funding for the Lucky Diaz author event will come entirely out of the F. N. Manross Memorial Library Trust Fund and our PR will say that.

Item 5- Reports and Committee Reports

a. Finance Committee

No Report.

Library Director Prozzo stated that due to a cold, difficult winter, we are short in our natural gas account, but have sufficient funds in the unencumbered program supply line item. To avoid running a negative balance, she would like to do a transfer now rather than at the end of the fiscal year.

Director Frenette made a MOTION to allow Library Director Prozzo to make a request at the April 28th Board of Finance meeting to transfer \$7,500 from Program Supplies to Natural Gas. Seconded by Director Carpenter. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

b. Property Committee

Director Kapchensky reported the following:

The Friends of the Library have made arrangements with Three Brothers to begin work in the garden at the Main Library at the beginning of May, as soon as schedules can be worked out and when there's not a lot going on at the library.

There is going to be a dedication ceremony at the Manross Garden in Forestville on June 17th at 10:00 a.m.

c. Policy Committee

No Report.

d. Strategic Planning Committee

No Report.

e. Library Director's Report

1) February statistics highlights:

February activity reflected the impact of several winter weather events and related closures. We saw a decline in circulation and some other in-building measures compared to February 2025, but overall library usage remains strong in many areas, particularly in digital services and online engagement. Hoopla and Advantage Overdrive are very heavily used. People are looking for technology assistance and adult programming. We did have substantial increases in our website visits, Wi-Fi sessions, and database use which demonstrates that the community is continuing to rely on the library's online services when physical access is limited.

2) Monthly Budget Report:

We are heading down to the last few months of the fiscal year.

Library Revenue is at 91.5% so we're a little bit behind where we were last year, but we anticipate making that up in the next couple months, so it's nothing to worry about.

Main Library - The only concern is the natural gas line item which is at 137.5%. Everything else is on track. We've been monitoring all of our POs to see what needs to be increased, closed, and allocated elsewhere. We are in very good shape.

Children's Library - We have a little more unencumbered money than I'd like to be carrying at this point in the fiscal year, but the situation with Ingram has been difficult. We might get another vendor onboard for children's books and materials. We are looking at Follett and Libraria, which are CLC vendors, so we'll get the state contract.

Manross Library - We're in good shape. There should be sufficient funds to get us through the rest of the fiscal year.

Manross Library Trust Fund - The detail report shows the expenditures, which include all of the adult and children's programs at Manross, children's and nature books, and digital content. Manross Library Trust Fund money will also be used for the Author Luncheon and the Lucky Diaz program.

Goodsell/Main Library Trust Funds - The detail report shows that the we have not spent any money in the Main Library Miscellaneous Trust Fund. We've built it up to an available budget of \$14,151 so it may be time to talk about doing a special project at the Main Library.

Centennial Fund Interest - The report shows the interest through 12/31/2025. There's \$48,083.53 in this revenue account. At some point, when the Library Board decides to do something with the money, it can be moved into the expenditure account which has approximately \$143,000. We're making progress with the donate button. The account that the online donations are going to go into is live. Scott, Don from the Computer Lab, and Muhammed from IT at City Hall are working on getting the donate button onto the webpage and linking it to the account. If people want to consider charitable giving, this is a great opportunity to see the library into the next century. Director Kanachovski inquired about advertising to the general public. Library Director Prozzo indicated that a big media PR blitz would be great. Director Rivard suggested having a QR code available at the Author Luncheon so that people could donate easily. Assistant Library Director Stanton stated that would be up to the city. Library

Director Prozzo noted that at the very least, we could create a QR code to link to our webpage which would give folks both the Centennial Fund and Main Street options. She will be able to generate a report for the Library Board showing the online donations.

Director Jakubowski asked about the \$18,000 coming out of program supplies. Library Director Prozzo explained that as we start closing the POs, additional money becomes available for a variety of things. It was a very complicated year.

Library Director Prozzo will attend the Board of Finance budget workshop on Wednesday night at 5:00 p.m.

3) Highlights of library activities:

- Sunday Hours have ended. The numbers were pretty much the same as last year. Again, we lost one Sunday due to bad weather. Not surprisingly, our highest numbers occurred on the two Sundays that we had adult programs and the day of the Friends' bag sale. Programming and activities drive foot traffic, especially on Sundays. It was easy to track.
- The Seed Library has opened for the season. Please stop by to pick up your free 5 packets of seeds. We had a great opening with a seed starting program that night. During the first week, we gave away 450 packets. We will replenish our inventory as we go along.
- Summer Reading planning is well underway. There will be programming and prizes for both adults and children. Thanks again to the Friends of the Library. We wouldn't be able to put on Summer Reading or Winter Reading without their support. We want to get the word out that kids can come for free lunch again this summer.

f. City Council Liaison Report

No Report.

g. Friends of the Library

Chairperson Salvatore reported the following:

National Library Week is April 19th - 25th. Tuesday, April 21st is National Library Workers Day. The Friends will recognize all library staff on that day with special activities and treats. The theme this year is "Find Your Joy."

The Author Reveal held on March 24th was a success. Almost all of the Author Luncheon tickets were sold that day. Out of 330 tickets, only 60 or so were left. The new process went smoothly.

As of last week, all the tickets had been sold and a waiting list had been started. Tickets will be mailed or available for pick up at the Circulation Desk on April 20, 2026 depending on which option you selected on the ticket order form. If you don't pick up your tickets by the end of that week, they will be mailed to you.

Although book donations were suspended during the winter book sale preparations, they have now resumed. The Friends are accepting all sorts of books, but really need more fiction books.

On April 8th at 11:30 a.m. there will be a reopening, ribbon-cutting event for the Friends' Café on the second floor. Light refreshments will be served. You can enter the raffle for two chances to win a gift card just for attending. No purchase is necessary. The café shelves have been restocked with new selections.

The next Friends' meeting will be on Thursday, April 23rd at 6:00 p.m. at the Main Library. This is the annual meeting. All Friends are invited to attend. If you're not a Friend yet, please come and join on the spot.

h. Community Engagement Committee

Director Kanachovski reported the following:

On Wednesday, April 22nd from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. the library will have a resource table at a child development program hosted by three schools.

On June 14th from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. the library will have a booth/tent on the Federal Hill Green. We are planning a fun activity for America 250. The Clock Museum will give tours.

The library will be at the Farmers' Market on June 20th, July 11th, August 15th, and September 12th. We will sign people up for library cards and bring low-cost children's books on the truck.

The Lucky Diaz author event will take place on Tuesday, August 18th. Information will be in the children's summer reading packets. Claire Strillacci will coordinate the staff duties.

The library will be at the Duck Race on Sunday, May 3rd at 10:00 a.m. We'll bring the truck and sign people up for library cards.

Director Kanachovski encouraged the Library Board members to introduce themselves to the library staff like she does.

Item 6- Old Business

None.

Item 7- New Business

- a. **Director Carpenter made a MOTION to close the library on Saturday, May 23, 2026 for the Memorial Day weekend. Seconded by Director Kapchensky. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.**

Item 8- Adjournment

There being no further business, Director Frenette made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 p.m. Seconded by Director Kanachovski. All present voted in favor and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Vontell

This meeting was digitally recorded.