

**MEETING MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY DIRECTORS**

**MONDAY, MAY 4, 2026**

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

**ATTENDEES:** Valina Carpenter, Elizabeth Kanachovski, Andrea Kapchensky, Kimberly Ploszaj, Pina Salvatore, and Betty Talmadge.  
Library Director Deborah Prozzo and Assistant Library Director Scott Stanton.

Absent: Eric Frenette, Nicholas Jakubowski, Danielle Rivard, and Council Liaison Steve Seymour.

Item 1- Call to order

Chairperson Salvatore called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Item 2- Public Participation

None.

Chairperson Salvatore sent a thank-you letter on behalf of the Library Board to Erik Madsen, who came to the Library Board meeting a couple months ago. He did not respond to her email.

Item 3- Approval of Minutes

**Director Talmadge MOVED to approve the Minutes of the April 6, 2026 Regular Meeting. Seconded by Director Ploszaj. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.**

Item 4- Communications

On April 16, 2026, Main Street Community Foundation informed Library Director Prozzo that the following quarterly distributions had been made: \$1,210 to the Bristol Libraries Fund, \$8,120 to the Samuel Goodsell Library Fund, and \$29,450 to the Manross Memorial Library Fund. The Comptroller was cc'd on the communication. The money has been deposited in the various accounts.

Item 5- Reports and Committee Reports

a. Finance Committee

No Report.

Library Director Prozzo received a late communication from Jodi McGrane in the Comptroller's Office regarding some additional money that came in: \$60 for the Main Library Trust Fund and \$395 for the Samuel Goodsell Library Fund. These monies, which might be donations through the donate button, along with the \$29,450 quarterly distribution to the Manross Memorial Library Miscellaneous Trust Fund (total of \$29,905) need to be transferred as an appropriation from the revenue accounts to the

expenditure accounts so that the money will be available for future use.

**Director Kanachovski MOVED to approve the additional appropriations for future expenditures. Seconded by Director Kapchensky. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.**

b. Property Committee

Director Kapchensky reported that we are still waiting for a date for the work to begin on the garden at the Main Library. The ceremony for the garden at Manross will be held on June 17<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.

c. Policy Committee

No Report.

d. Strategic Planning Committee

No Report.

e. Director's Report

1) March 2026 statistics highlights:

- Overall circulation showed a decrease of 7% driven by an 11% drop in juvenile materials, while adult circulation saw a more modest decline. In contrast, our digital collections continue to grow. There were increases across e-books, downloadables, and streaming services, which highlights a continued move toward online content.
- Program offerings remained relatively stable, but attendance declined by 18% particularly in juvenile and young adult programming. Adult program attendance, however, did see a slight increase. Despite this, overall library visits rose by 1% and meeting room usage increased significantly, indicating that the library remains an active community space.
- Technology showed pretty good growth. Wi-Fi sessions increased by 57%, website visits increased by 19%, and computer lab usage more than doubled. Database usage and tech help questions also saw increases. This reflects a rising demand for digital resources and support.

In summary, while some of the traditional service areas experienced declines, the March data demonstrates strong community use of library spaces and a really clear trend toward digital engagement and technology-based services.

## 2) YTD Budget Report:

We are on track as we approach the end of the fiscal year. We are trying to get all of our orders placed by the middle of May so we can close out the books.

Our revenue is currently at 91.6%. The copier and printing money is a little bit down from last year, but our online Princh app shows huge increases. That amount does not get calculated into the monthly deposit. Library rentals show a strong increase so I think we will be very close to making our revenue projection for the fiscal year.

Our three departments (Main Library, Children's, and Manross) are pretty much where we were last year at this time with the exception of our Ingram account. Ingram is still struggling to meet the demand and it may take a couple years for them to get caught up. Beth Martin and I noticed that the public utilities and natural gas at both libraries took a big hit this year without having a maintenance technician onsite to constantly monitor the temperatures daily and hourly and adjust as needed. Days would go by and the temperature would not be running where it should be. At the Main Library, there are three floors and a melding of the old building with the new which makes temperature control challenging. These problems resulted in a \$7,500 increase in the natural gas and there's an increase in Eversource electric as well. The CT Solar program is good but we didn't have enough sun this winter to offset the Eversource amount so we struggled with that.

We're going to be working with a new vendor for book leasing. We'll take some money from the Ingram accounts that we're not using and open up Brodart-McNaughton Purchase Orders. This will help with getting multiple copies of high-demand items and books for our book clubs. I just filled out the paperwork today and we're hoping to start with them by June 1<sup>st</sup>.

- Manross Miscellaneous Trust Fund - The full, two-page detail report shows that we've spent this money on lots of programming for both children and adults at Manross, Library Connection for digital online resources, Hoopla, and various items needed at Manross. We've made thoughtful purchases to enhance the services that Manross can offer the community. Beth Martin is doing an excellent job.
- Samuel Goodsell/Main Library Trust Funds - The detail report shows that Goodsell money has been used to purchase reference materials and nonfiction books. We haven't used any money yet from the Main Library Trust Fund which now

has \$14,151 in it. We are building it up to do something bigger at the Main Library.

- Centennial Fund Interest - There is \$48,565.30 in the interest account up through February. March and April haven't been posted yet. There's some donation money. There is \$143,000 in the expenditure account. At some point the Library Board might consider moving the interest into the expenditure account. There's no urgency on that.

Last Tuesday, I went to the Board of Finance meeting and the Budget Adoption meeting which immediately followed. They did not adopt a budget because they were waiting for money from the state to come in and didn't know those amounts. The next budget meeting will be on May 18<sup>th</sup>. It doesn't look like there were any cuts to our budget but it still needs to be voted on.

3) Highlights of library activities for April 2026:

There were lots of activities throughout the library for National Library Week. It was a busy place. Thanks to the Friends of the Library for providing a pizza luncheon for the staff on National Library Workers' Day. It was a nice treat and very generous.

April was also Passport to Libraries Month. It's held every other year. We handed out 87 passports, 346 people came in to have their passports stamped, and 17 passports were returned to us to be entered in the statewide raffle. People really enjoyed going out and seeing other libraries. The gas prices may have had an impact on the number of people wanting to travel around, but overall, it was a great event that we will do again in two years.

June 13<sup>th</sup> is the last Saturday that the library will be open for the season.

We are still working on the donate button. I remain cautiously optimistic.

f. City Council Liaison Report

No Report.

g. Friends of the Library

Chairperson Salvatore reported the following:

The Friends of the Library will join the library staff at the Farmers' Markets on June 20<sup>th</sup>, July 11<sup>th</sup>, August 15<sup>th</sup>, and September 12<sup>th</sup>. The Friends will sell books, including low-cost

children's books, housed on the library truck. Rose Ann will be looking for volunteers on those dates. The staff will also be signing people up for library cards. One of their goals is to increase the number of library card registrations.

The Friends will be selling books in the lobbies of both libraries for two weeks in June. The dates haven't been set yet, but will be posted on the website and around the library.

The Friends will attend the America 250 event on the Federal Hill Green on June 14<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Once we get more details, Rose Ann will be asking for volunteers to man the booth.

The Friends ran a raffle at the Main Library last month. Patrons received a raffle ticket for each item purchased either in the bookstore or upstairs in the café. On May 1<sup>st</sup>, the winner was drawn. Terry Roach won a \$25 Amazon gift card. A similar raffle will be held at the Manross Library in May.

The Friends had their annual meeting on April 23<sup>rd</sup> and set the next three meeting dates: September 10, 2026, January 14, 2027 (snow date is January 28, 2027), and April 29, 2027. The April meeting will be the annual meeting and elections will be held. Elections take place every two years. All of the meetings are at 6:00 p.m. at the Main Library.

#### h. Community Engagement Committee

Director Kanachovski reported the following:

She will try to attend the Farmers' Markets and encouraged other Library Board members to do so as well.

The Forestville Duck Race was held on Sunday. Claire Strillacci, the Supervisor of Children's Services, Beth Martin, the Supervisor of Branch Services, and custodian Ryan Laprise attended. They issued nine new library cards and 50 people stopped by the library table. The location of the table will be changed next year due to the noise factor.

Sarah and Alex of the Children's Department attended the Curriculum and Resource Night on Wednesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>. They issued 29 library cards and spoke with 166 children and adults about the various library programs.

Director Kanachovski attended the goat program at Manross on Saturday. Her nieces loved it. Next week is the Plant Swap. If you bring a plant, you get a plant. The program has really grown.

Director Kanachovski suggested purchasing pins or badges for the Library Board members to wear when they attend events like America 250 on June 14<sup>th</sup>.

The Author Luncheon is always a big event for the Friends and the for the library in general. Discussion followed regarding the total number of tickets sold and how many tables were added.

Item 6- Old Business

None.

Item 7- New Business

None.

Item 8- Adjournment

There being no further business, **Director Kapchensky made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting at 7:02 p.m. Seconded by Director Ploszaj. All present voted in favor and the meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Vontell

*This meeting was digitally recorded.*