

MEETING MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY DIRECTORS

MONDAY, JULY 7, 2025

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

ATTENDEES: Nicholas Jakubowski, Elizabeth Kanachovski, Andrea Kapchensky, Danielle Rivard, Pina Salvatore, and City Council Liaison Sebastian Panioto.

Library Director Deborah Prozzo and Assistant Library Director Scott Stanton.

Absent: Valina Carpenter, Eric Frenette, Barbara O'Neill, and Kimberly Ploszaj.

Item 1- Call to Order

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

Item 2- Public Participation

Lucas Amoroso-Whittles, a reporter for *The Bristol Edition*, was present. Introductions were made.

Item 3- Approval of Minutes

A quorum was established at 6:35 p.m. with the arrival of Director Rivard.

Director Kapchensky MOVED to approve the Minutes of the June 2, 2025 Regular Meeting. Seconded by Director Rivard. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Item 4- Communications

Library Director Prozzo and Assistant Library Director Stanton received a thank you from Chris Bohjalian regarding the Author Luncheon. "I remain so grateful for my day in Bristol, Connecticut. It was such a delight to meet you two and the whole remarkable team. As I said from the dais, I speak often, but rarely, maybe never, have I seen an event so masterfully coordinated and decorated. All of you are rock stars. Hoping our paths continue to cross. Keep up the great work. Thank you again. All the best, Chris." It was very nice to be acknowledged in that way.

Scott received a direct communication and Debbie received a library website email from Monica Gonzalez at Huntington Woods inviting the library to their annual National Night Out event on Tuesday, August 5th from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. We will have a team there with our community outreach truck to promote library services, programs, and getting a library card. If any Library Board members would like to join us, please let us know. Library Director Prozzo will see if any of the Friends want to attend.

Item 5- Reports and Committee Reports

a. Finance Committee

No Report.

Library Director Prozzo did not receive paperwork from Main Street Community Foundation so the votes to accept or reinvest quarterly distributions from the trust funds will take place at a future date, perhaps at a special meeting or electronically.

b. Property Committee

Director Kapchensky reported the following:

Beth Martin, Claudia Dinep (the landscape architect), Debbie, Holly (of the Friends), and I met with Mr. & Mrs. Cawley to discuss the garden. They looked at the space selected for the garden. A teak bench will be ordered and we discussed the idea of native plants to be planted in the fall. No specific plants have been chosen yet. As the 5 ft. teak bench that Mr. Cawley chose is not in stock, he agreed to a 4 ft. bench. Beth ordered the bench and it's come in.

c. Policy Committee

No Report.

d. Strategic Planning Committee

No Report.

e. Library Director's Report

1) **May 2025 statistical highlights:**

Director Jakubowski inquired about the 280% increase in items withdrawn. Library Director Prozzo explained that every month the various departments withdraw out-of-date and damaged items to address space concerns, however, this big increase is due to clearing out the database in anticipation of the migration to the new ILS system called Polaris, a sister company to Sierra, which we use now. We have a year to get ready for the transition. We don't want to migrate items that are not actually in the collection. The last migration was in 2014. These are not physical items; they are just in the database. I was on the ILS task force that selected Polaris. This will be my 6th migration. There's a lot of work on the back end before we go live but Polaris has some great, user-friendly features and will serve the community better. There will be plenty of opportunities for training for both the staff and the public.

I'm entering statistics and performance measures into the city's Budget Book. The deadline is this week. The year-end numbers look very good, all things considered. I should have them for the September Library Board meeting.

The Annual Report for the state is due on October 1st.

- 2) **Year-to-Date Budget Report:** We have finished the fiscal year but have not closed it out. We still have a couple weeks to work on final invoices.
- Library Revenue: We are up over \$7,000 from last year and the original projection. The money goes to the city. We still have to make the last deposit for June. We already have revenue coming in for FY26 for meeting room rentals.
 - **94.9% @ Main Library:** This number will change because we still have invoices coming in.
 - **95.9% @ Children's Library**
 - **84.2% @ Manross Library** - The money not used was in wages.
 - Manross Miscellaneous Trust Fund: We spent \$57,974.62 and we still have \$64,686.38 available to start the new fiscal year. The money will carry over. It does not go back to the city.
 - Library Trust Funds: The interest deposited goes back to the end of April. We spent \$12,951.41 out of Samuel Goodsell and we still have \$26,730.13 left. We didn't use any money in the Main Library Trust Fund which we are trying to grow.
 - Centennial Fund: We don't have anything beyond the April 30th deposit. There's \$46,105.29 available in interest. The trust fund sits with the city and still has \$143,000.00 plus.

Director Kanachovski asked about upcoming projects. Library Director Prozzo shared what she heard from Dave Oakes. They're wrapping up the window project at Manross. She wasn't surprised to hear that there is a roofing concern. We have the first of 3 quotes needed for a new roof at Manross. She will probably have the other 2 quotes for the Board in September. The money to pay for this project might have to come out of the Frederick Manross Trust Fund because it was not an anticipated building project that was budgeted for. Discussion followed regarding solar shingles. In addition, there are plumbing issues at the Main Library that need to be addressed. There are leaks occurring throughout the building, which is showing its age.

- 3) **Staff News:** Debie Alos retired from the Children's Department on June 27th. She had been with the library for many years. We were fortunate to be able to do an overhire. Shantel Isaacs started on June 9th. She was able to learn the functions of the Children's Department and jump right into summer reading.

Valerie Toner, Supervisor of Children's Services, will be retiring on August 15th. The paperwork went over to the mayor. The job hasn't been posted yet.

Library Director Prozzo met with the HR Director and Eric Evans, who is in charge of the IT Department for the city, to discuss the vacant Computer Lab position. She was told that there would be some movement on this, but it hasn't been posted yet.

The maintenance position at the Main Library is still vacant. The 2 custodians we have cannot keep up with everything, so there is an impact.

- 4) **Summer Reading:** We are a few weeks in on the adult side. The Children's Department started a bit later after school got out. We hope you've all signed up. We'd like to see participation increase from last year. To date, we have served almost 750 free lunches to the children. It's a great program for our community with no qualifications. Any child up to age 18 can come and have a free lunch. Please spread the word because it's very important. This might be the only meal some of them have all day. We tie lunch in with programming so the children can enjoy socializing.
- 5) **Author Luncheon:** The Author Luncheon on June 5th was a great success. We had wonderful feedback from everyone, including the author. The DoubleTree did a great job, as always. Thanks to the Friends of the Library. We could never do it without them. I've already been in communication with our Authors Unbound representative. We're looking at certain authors and there's one in particular with a very good price point. I'd like the Board to allow me to continue negotiating to see if we can secure this author who shall remain nameless. I don't have a final number yet, but we would use money from Manross Trust funds, Main Library professional fees, and the amount that the Friends give every year.
- 6) **Donation:** We received a donation from the family of Joan Kubler from Diamond Point, New York. While cleaning out a family residence, they found a lot of artwork by Glo Sessions. They brought it all in. I don't have a full inventory because there are portfolios with numerous pictures. There are framed pictures and a few big pieces. The family gave a generalized description of the collection. By the next meeting, I'd like to go through it all to have a better listing of the items and determine if it's all Glo's. Then the Board can officially accept the donation and decide what to do with it.

f. City Council Liaison Report

No Report.

City Council Liaison Sebastian Panioto is not running again. His last meeting with the Library Board will be in November.

g. Friends of the Library

Director Salvatore reported the following:

The Friends are partnering with the library to attend the Farmers' Market on June 21st, July 19th, August 16th, and September 13th. On June 21st, the Friends gave away a gift card to 10 Main Street Café. There were 91 raffle entries. The Friends also gave away activity booklets for kids. Rose Ann plans on having these two items at the upcoming farmers' markets.

The summer mini sale ended at the end of June. There is no sales information yet. Rose Ann is working on that.

Thank you to the Friends volunteers, especially Rose Ann, for coordinating the Author Luncheon on June 5th. It was a well-run event. Chris Bohjalian was personable, gracious, engaging, and entertaining. He really connected with the audience. There was a lot of laughter in the room.

The Friends of the Library are looking for book donations, especially fiction books.

Director Kanachovski mentioned that she spoke with Rose Ann about giving Bristol residents a day or two to come in and purchase Author Luncheon tickets ahead of non-residents because they sell out really fast. Library Director Prozzo stated that Rose Ann has come up with a very good idea and they are going to see if they can make it work.

h. Community Outreach Committee Report

Director Kanachovski reported the following:

I attended the first Farmers' Market. It was really busy - 199 people stopped by the table. The library staff made 8 new adult cards and 3 new children's cards. They also renewed/replaced 4 adult cards.

A Family Day event was going on that day as well. The library had a table. There were booths for homeschooled kids, vendors, giveaways, and children's authors.

Library staff attended the Bristol Blues game on June 8th. They had 68 table visits and handed out quite a few bags containing the adult and children's program flyers.

Item 6- Old Business

Library Director Prozzo stated that Eversource did the lateral to the library and the laterals for others on the street who have gas. They worked on a weekend so it didn't impact services. They will need to do a final paving at a later date. Communication was better at the end of the project.

The donate button which will be linked to the Centennial Fund is on hold because we don't have a Computer Lab person. The Board could ask Susan Sadecki for a breakdown to determine how much money has gone into the Main Library fund via the donate button.

Item 7- New Business

Chairperson Salvatore stated that there are some vacant positions on the five Library Board committees. Director Rivard is not on any of the committees at the moment. We can work on filling the vacancies in the fall. People will be able to move around and switch committees if they want. City Council Liaison Panioto asked if a council liaison could be on a subcommittee as a non-voting member. Discussion followed.

Chairperson Salvatore reminded everyone that the Library Board does not meet in August. The next meeting will be on September 8th because the first Monday of the month happens to fall on Labor Day. Have a good summer.

Library Director Prozzo received notification from Dawn La Valle, Director of the Division of Library Development at the State Library, regarding state regulations and additional mandatory policies for public libraries. There is a very tight deadline of November 1st. If we don't get the paperwork in on time, we cannot apply for any state grants and we will not receive money for doing the Annual Report. Library Director Prozzo will attend a state webinar next week to find out exactly what's required. We will send each policy to the state for review and recommendations. The policies will then go back to the Library Board for approval. We need to send the state the final approved policies along with the minutes from the meetings where they were approved. Discussion followed.

In response to Director Kapchensky's inquiry, Library Director Prozzo stated that we have not heard anything more from Attorney Favazza from the Department of Education.

Item 8- Adjournment

There being no further business, **Director Jakubowski made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting at 7:24 p.m. Seconded by Director Kanachovski. All present voted in favor and the meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Vontell

This meeting was digitally recorded.