

MEETING MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY DIRECTORS

MONDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2025

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

ATTENDEES: Valina Carpenter, Eric Frenette, Nicholas Jakubowski, Elizabeth Kanachowski, Andrea Kapchensky, Pina Salvatore, and Council Liaison Sebastian Panioto (arrived at 6:36 p.m.).
Library Director Deborah Prozzo

Absent: Kimberly Ploszaj and Danielle Rivard.
Assistant Library Director Scott Stanton.

Item 1- Call to order

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

Item 2- Public Participation

None.

Item 3- Approval of Minutes

Director Carpenter MOVED to approve the Minutes of the September 8, 2025 Regular Meeting. Seconded by Director Frenette. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Item 4- Communications

Library Director Prozzo received an email from Barbara O'Neill resigning from the Library Board effective immediately. Barbara also notified the mayor's office. Debbie has not heard anything about a new appointment yet.

Item 5- Reports and Committee Reports

a. Finance Committee

Director Carpenter stated that the Finance Committee met at 5:30 p.m. for an informational meeting to discuss the FY27 budget, the needs going forward, and the timeline. They offered their support and will advocate for the library to get the funds it needs to operate. Library Director Prozzo will have a rough draft of the proposed budget ready for the meeting on November 3rd so the Library Board can vote on it at the December meeting. She will then send it to the Comptroller's to get in the queue for review after the first of the year. The budget will be put together based on our needs, not with the idea of holding the line, because you can only do that for so many years. We need to have some growth in our budget.

Vote to accept or reinvest quarterly distributions from Main Street Community Foundation.

Director Jakubowski MOVED to accept the Bristol Libraries Fund 4th quarterly 2025 distribution of \$1,180.00. Seconded by Director Carpenter. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Director Kapchensky MOVED to accept the Samuel Goodsell Library Fund 4th quarterly 2025 distribution of \$7,922.50. Seconded by Director Frenette. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Director Kanachovski MOVED to re-invest the Manross Memorial Library Fund 4th quarterly 2025 distribution of \$28,190.00. Seconded by Director Carpenter. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Director Kapchensky inquired about the Frederick Manross Fund which we share with the Bristol Hospital. Library Director Prozzo explained that an annual distribution of approximately \$30,000 gets sent from Main Street directly to the Comptroller's. The account balance is approximately \$800,000. She's notified by letter after the deposit is made.

b. Property Committee

Director Kapchensky reported that last month they had a meeting at Manross with the designer to plan out the Cawley garden. They started planting today and should be done tomorrow. Many volunteers from the Friends helped. Next week, the mulching will be done. Director Kapchensky took pictures. There will be a dedication.

c. Policy Committee

No Report.

d. Strategic Planning Committee

No Report.

Chairperson Salvatore reminded the Board that the Strategic Planning Committee will have an informational meeting at 5:30 p.m. just prior to the November Library Board meeting. Everyone's invited to attend. Library Director Prozzo stated that we need to do an annual review of our strategic plan.

e. Library Director's Report

The Library Board did not have any questions regarding the August 2025 statistics or YTD Budget 9.30.25.

Highlight: We had a great Library Card Sign-up Month. Staff worked very hard to increase the number of cardholders. Right now, we are at 15,790. That's an improvement, but we'd like to be up over 20,000 for a city this size.

Vacancies: Interviews for the Computer Lab position were supposed to be held on September 22nd but they were pushed out because of Mark Bolduc's funeral that day. I haven't heard if they've been rescheduled. Interviews for the Reference Supervisor position will be held on Wednesday. So, we are still short-staffed. People have been working overtime to cover various departments. It has been a difficult few months.

Book Ordering: Baker & Taylor, our primary book vendor, has gone bankrupt. The company that was supposed to buy them out backed off because they did not want to take over the debt. I've spent the last week strategizing, moving money, increasing POs, and meeting with competitors. We will use Amazon as our short-term book supplier. We have Amazon Business Prime and will order through their special book division. We're looking at \$4,000 worth of books for the Adult Dept. at the Main Library and \$2,000 for Children's. We haven't got the total for Manross yet. Courtney Hanson (Technical Services Coordinator), Ruth (Admin), and I have done a lot of work setting up accounts, running reports, submitting change orders, closing POs, etc. Going forward, we will use Ingram. We are waiting for approval so we can start staff training on their ordering platform. This impacts our service to the community because books are our business. We are hustling to get all of this in place so that we can continue to serve the public. The Purchasing Department and the Comptroller's Department have been notified.

f. City Council Liaison Report

No Report.

Chairperson Salvatore thanked Council Liaison Panioto for his support. Next month will be his last meeting.

g. Friends of the Library

Chairperson Salvatore reported that the special book sale held on September 26th & 27th was a success. The Friends raised \$750. Thank you to Rose Ann, Sheila, and all the Friends' volunteers. There are plans to do this again sometime next year.

Chairperson Salvatore is the Friends' bookstore volunteer chair. The bookstore is currently open Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. I'm working on adding Thursday from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. beginning November 1st. I'm recruiting and training new volunteers. We'll have to do some advertising.

Chairperson Salvatore made a correction to last month's report. When the Bristol Historical Society selected the Friends of the Library as a recipient of the 2025 Community Service Award, the Friends received a check for \$150, not \$200, as previously reported.

Chairperson Salvatore stated that the Author Luncheon will be held on June 11th and the Reveal will be on March 24th. The method for purchasing tickets is changing to a mail-in or drop-off system. We hope this eliminates the long lines and waiting time. Director Kapchensky asked if Bristol residents will be given first dibs on tickets. Director Kanachovski feels that Bristol residents should be given first shot at getting tickets because Manross Trust Fund money is used for the event. Chairperson Salvatore explained that Rose Ann is still working on the plan.

h. Community Outreach Committee

No Report.

Item 6- Old Business

Library Director Prozzo will submit the Approved Minutes from the September Library Board meeting to the state for final approval of the new policies. She received an email today explaining that we will receive \$1,442 for the state initiative grant for doing the policies and \$3,833 (not \$3,983) for the borrowIT grant for lending out items to other libraries. She thanked the Board for approving the policies so we can get that money, all of which has to be spent on books. Chairperson Salvatore thanked Library Director Prozzo for all her hard work.

Item 7- New Business

None.

Item 8- Adjournment

There being no further business, **Director Carpenter made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting at 7:03 p.m. Seconded by Director Kapchensky. All present voted in favor and the meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Vontell

This meeting was digitally recorded.