



BILLINGS PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MEETING

August 14, 2025
12:00 p.m.

Board and City Staff present:

David Darby, Vice Chair	Trudi Paulson	Jennifer Smith
Staci Samuelson	Kathy Houska	Roger Young
Susan Plath	Kelsie Rubich,	Megan Thomas,
	Interim Library Director	Information Systems Coord.
Jamie Bratlie, Library & Facility Coordinator	Jaclynn Reaves, Patron Services Manager	

Absent:

Lawrence Klee, Chair	Peggy McSweyn
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Guests:

Jeannie Tracy, Library Foundation	Clare Young, Friends of the Library
Carol Young	

Public Comment

None

Chair's Comments

Vice Chairperson Darby told the Board about a Rotary meeting he recently attended. He wished everyone a happy summer.

Consent Agenda

- a. Motion and second to approve the July 2025 minutes as written. All in favor.

Paulson/Samuelson

Co+Lab Presentation

Thomas reviewed the Co+Lab's summer programming. She provided stats that included the Co+Lab summer programs created for its first summer season, including a Children's program with the Charlie Cart and Stompin' Grounds. Thomas explained that Staff is now looking forward, reviewing what was successful in the last year, and how to use that information to grow and expand into the upcoming year.

Houska asked if there is any concern that the Co+Lab will outgrow its space. Thomas told her that it already kind of has, and Staff is discussing that currently. Darby asked what public reaction has been toward the Co+Lab as it is not something ordinarily found in libraries. Rubich told him Staff has received appreciation for the access and instruction offered through the lab. Houska asked if a library card is required to access the Co+Lab. Rubich explained to check out a kit, a library account is required; but to access the Lab and the items available in the lab, a library card is not required.

FY25 Community Impact Report

Thomas handed out a flyer and covered the Community Impact Report for fiscal year 2025. She reviewed a number of the annual statistics and highlighted that, overall, the statistics either held steady or reflected positive increases.

Strategic Planning Committee

Rubich told the Board she is working with a consultant from the State Library to assist the BPL strategic planning process. Previously she asked for 2 – 3 volunteers to sit on the committee. Plath, McSweyn, and Samuelson had volunteered earlier, and Rubich asked to reconfirm if they were still interested. Samuelson noted she needs to know what day the committee will meet before she can commit. Rubich told them she will send an email with more details. Darby noted that sitting on the committee is an interesting process.

BPL Updates

a. BPL Management Updates

Kelsie Rubich, Interim Director: Rubich noted a few items for the Board:

- Final FY26 budget adoption is scheduled on the August 25th Council meeting.
- Starting this Friday, Staff will be prepared to assist patrons with applying for the tax rebate.
- Rubich let the Board know that Thomas recently completed the High-Performance Leadership Academy. Reaves and Rubich are registered to attend the training beginning in September.
- Heather Leander, Circulation, recently retired after 28 years at the library.
- Staff Development Day is scheduled on Friday, August 22. Rubich invited the Board to have lunch with Staff.
- Rubich said she is sitting as co-chair of the planning committee for the MLA Fall Retreat. She recognized that Darby has agreed to be the keynote speaker and she thanked him.

Megan Thomas, Interim Assistant Director: Thomas had a few updates for the Board:

- Overall Summer Reading participation was up 376 participants from last year.
- There is a new display in the south lobby, added to highlight non-library community events that are open and free to the public.
- The security camera and secure door access replacement, listed on the Library TRP, will begin next Monday.

Jamie Bratlie, Library and Facility Coordinator: Bratlie told the Board it is business as usual currently.

Jaclynn Reaves, Patron Services Manager: Reaves told the Board the Bike Library has been active this summer. She gave the Board the handout highlighting the bike library programs and the community events it will be attending as well.

- b. Friends of the Library: Clare Young said the Friends will have a Pop-Up sale this Saturday. Also, there will be a Collectibles sale on September 2. She said the Friends are currently planning the annual fall sale in October, and they will hold a Christmas Pop-Up in December. Young told the Board the Nook sales are great – last month sales were the best ever.

Houska inquired if the Friends ever have books that sell and then come back as a donation again. Young replied sometimes that happens.

- c. Foundation: Tracy told the Board all things currently are planning for Food for Thought, which is scheduled on October 14. She said the Foundation has five new sponsors this year. Tracy also noted there are a few spots still open for speakers and asked the Board if they have any ideas. There was discussion with ideas coming from a number of board members. Tracy said tickets go on sale next week.

Tracy said the Foundation endowment continues to do really well, especially in light of the recent economy.

Good of the Order

None

Adjournment: 12:45 pm. Next meeting: 9/11/2025.