



**Board of Directors
Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, July 8, 2025**

Officers Present: President Dave Hempson, Vice President Katie Armijo, Secretary Kathryn Carlson, Treasurer Maura Molnar

Trustees: Manny Arroyo, Kristin LaBeau, Ralph DeMasi, Susanne Guske, Kristin LaBeau, Bob Lotkowitz, Stephen McClintic, Larry Palmieri, Cristina Pietropaoli, Amy Roller

Staff: Library Director Nickie Marquis, Assistant Director Andea Snyder

Absent: Karen Bedard, Jennifer Feeney, Meghann Sandak, Paul Torrisi, Jr.

Members of the Public: Capital Campaign Director Erin McCormack

Call to order at 6:30 pm

Public Comment Period – none

Approval of the Minutes – Minutes from the June 10, 2025 regular board meeting were approved.

President's Report

President Hempson reported that the Strategic Planning Committee had met and developed a survey to identify needs the community may have for the library services. However, because Capital Campaign Director McCormack had just completed a survey requesting input into what the public would be looking forward to in a new library, it was deemed to be an unfavorable time to send out another survey. Therefore, the committee is requesting that the board extend the current strategic plan one year through 2026. Trustee LeBeau made a motion to that effect and Trustee DeMasi seconded it. The motion was carried unanimously. The committee thanked the board.

President Hempson also remarked that he, his wife and four grandchildren attended the summer reading program kick off event. There were at least 300 people in attendance and everyone seemed very excited and motivated to engage in the reading challenge.

Director's Report

Library Director Marquis referred the trustees to her report and said she had no additions. She remarked that after only one week of the summer reading program, some young readers were so excited by the trading card game that they had already completed the challenge. The staff will be creating a second level for advanced readers. Children and adults are involved and motivated. Kudos to Children's Librarian Schwartzwalder for the idea and for bringing the focus back to reading. Adopting a new summer reading program is a huge endeavor requiring a lot of time, planning and creativity.

Director Marquis noted that the front steps that were refurbished in 2021 are in need of regrouting. She received a quote for \$8000 but is investigating other options. They will need to be sealed yearly. Non-salt ice melt would be preferred but it is expensive and hard to find. She will keep the board informed.

She also reported that the air conditioning unit is not working properly downstairs. Holbrook has not been available to do the routine A/C maintenance yet, but did come for repairs. They fixed the children's area and the main area. However, the coolant still seems to be leaking and the main room is not being cooled properly.

Financial Report

Treasurer Molnar reported that because of the book sale, the holiday and the early date of the meeting, there are no financials. She has sent out reminders and instructions to all volunteers and shift captains for the book sale. The library has a new device for taking credit cards and a QR code for VENMO payments.

Fundraising Update

Capital Campaign Director McCormack reported that the library has received \$90K from fulfilled pledges and other donations. The goal is \$3M from the public phase. She will make sure people understand that the public phase is just part of the capital campaign, and there will still be a need for more funding after the public phase. This may include a bond issue.

A press release will kick off the public campaign. She is working with others on the microsite for the new building. There will also be a campaign video. She wants board members and others to make testimonials. There will be micro-naming opportunities for the public during this phase. She restated that we were in a very unique position. An important part of the public campaign is to demonstrate public support for the library so other donors and foundations will be encouraged to contribute. We are aiming for groundbreaking in 2026 if all goes well.

She reported that her survey had 400-500 responses. 99% were positive. The public liked the café, book store and children's spaces. They also wanted event space, adult spaces and quiet study spaces. A discussion was held about putting the survey in the back-to-school school newsletter and the August library newsletter. She will talk to the Chamber of Commerce also.

Barrow Art Gallery

Trustee Roller reported that the Barrow has had many, many visitors. Last Friday there were three docents and 26 visitors. The walking tours are also popular. Entire families are taking them. The separation agreement has not yet gone to the Attorney General. A question was raised about why are there two sets of attorneys at work to submit this document when there is just one board. The answer was that there are two entities, and both entities should be represented and show a united front to the Attorney General.

Fennell Street New Building Committee

President Hempson reported that the committee will meet Monday to finalize the new design and renderings. The total cost, counting the land, surveys, architect, CM and construction, should be about \$16M. LeChase (CM) estimates that first building a shell and then populating the inside at a later date would add an additional \$1M to the cost. Hopefully we can save some cost by recycling some of the design/development work that was

done for the first design. A discussion was held on the advisability of holding off on having the architect do the design/development work until after the public campaign when hopefully there will be more funds available.

Public Comment Period: none

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:21 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for August 12, 2025 at 6:30pm at the Library