

MEETING MINUTES

- I. Call to Order and Roll Call.
President Fishman called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. Secretary Di Lorenzo called the roll.

PRESENT: Trustees Cox, Di Lorenzo, Fishman, Nealon, O’Keefe, Sennett, Director Auston
ABSENT: Trustee Sommer
VISITORS: Georgia Gebhardt - LWV Wilmette, resident Bob Lepkowski
STAFF: Marti Bellefontaine, Cathleen Blair, Sandra Discepolo, Lydia Fair, Lydia Hanchett, Ethan Herdrich, Andrea Vaughn Johnson
- II. Secretary’s Certification of Membership of the Wilmette Public Library District Board of Trustees. The current membership of the WPLD Board of Trustees was announced and confirmed: Eric Bederman, Renee Cox, Maria Di Lorenzo, Joan Fishman, Jennifer Mullman, Matthew Pasko, and Carloyn Sennett.
- III. Administer Oath of Office to Trustees Elected in April 2025. Trustees-elect Bederman, Mullman, and Pasko took the oath. Secretary Di Lorenzo administered the Oath of Office individually to trustees elected in April 2025 – trustees Bederman, Mullman, and Pasko. All were elected to full four-year terms expiring in April 2029. The Oath of Office – Library Trustee Form was signed by trustees after the meeting.
- IV. Roll Call. Secretary Di Lorenzo called the roll. Trustees Bederman, Cox, Di Lorenzo, Fishman, Mullman, Pasko, and Sennett were present.
- V. Report of Nominating Committee (Trustees Cox and Sennett). Trustee Cox presented the slate for the Board offices of President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary as recommended by the Nominating Committee, for fiscal years 2025-27:
 - office of WPL Board President: Joan Fishman
 - office of WPL Board Vice-President: Renee Cox
 - office of WPL Board Treasurer: Eric Bederman
 - office of WPL Board Secretary: Maria Di Lorenzo
- VI. Elect Board Officers to Serve May 2025 to May 2027. Trustee Di Lorenzo moved approval of the report of the Nominating Committee, and its slate of officers, as presented. Trustee Sennett seconded.
Aye – Bederman, Cox, DiLorenzo, Mullman, Pasko, Sennett, Fishman
Nay – None
Absent or not voting – None
MOTION CARRIED.

- VII. Public Comment. Resident Bob Lepkowski thanked both outgoing and incoming trustees for their time and talents, and expressed his support of library staff's decisions regarding collections that are needed for our community.
- VIII. Review draft of April 15, 2025 Regular Board Meeting Minutes. Trustee Cox moved approval of the April 15, 2025 Regular Board Meeting Minutes, as presented. Trustee Di Lorenzo seconded the motion. There was no discussion.
Aye – Bederman, Cox, Di Lorenzo, Mullman, Pasko, Sennett, Fishman
Nay – None
Absent or not voting – None
MOTION CARRIED.
- IX. Presentations. None.
- X. Treasurer's Report.
- A. Financial Report for April 2025. Trustee Bederman reported:
Ten months into the year, income is 103% and expenses are at 78% of budget. The expectation is to be at 98 to 99% at the end of the fiscal year. CDs will continue to be reviewed for reinvestment. Reinvestments will be looked at with rate cuts expected. Trustee Bederman is finding his feet in his new role and expects to meet with Finance Manager Discepolo to become further acquainted with library finances and procedures.
- B. Bills and Salaries Check Detail for April 2025. Trustee Sennett moved approval of the April 2025 Bills and Salaries Check Detail, as presented. Trustee Pasko seconded the motion.
Aye – Bederman, Cox, Di Lorenzo, Mullman, Pasko, Sennett, Fishman
Nay – None
Absent or not voting – None
MOTION CARRIED.
- XI. Action Items.
- A. Resolution No. 2024/25-218, Resolution Honoring Trustee Trish Nealon. President Fishman read the Resolution into the record. Trustee Sennett moved approval of Resolution 2024/25-218, as presented. Trustee Di Lorenzo seconded the motion.
Aye – Bederman, Cox, Di Lorenzo, Mullman, Pasko, Sennett, Fishman
Nay – None
Absent or not voting – None
MOTION CARRIED.
- B. Resolution No. 2024/25-219, Resolution Honoring Trustee MaryAnne O'Keefe. President Fishman read the Resolution into the record. Trustee Mullman moved approval of Resolution 2024/25-219, as presented. Trustee Bederman seconded the motion.
Aye – Bederman, Cox, Di Lorenzo, Mullman, Pasko, Sennett, Fishman
Nay – None
Absent or not voting – None
MOTION CARRIED.

- C. Resolution No. 2024/25-220, Resolution Honoring Trustee Tracy Sommer. President Fishman read the Resolution into the record. Trustee Bederman moved approval of Resolution 2024/25-220, as presented. Trustee Sennett seconded the motion.
Aye – Bederman, Cox, Di Lorenzo, Mullman, Pasko, Sennett, Fishman
Nay – None
Absent or not voting – None
MOTION CARRIED.
- D. Ordinance No. 2024/25-214, Ordinance Setting Schedule for Regular Meetings of the Board of Trustees of the Wilmette Public Library District, Cook County, Illinois and Providing Repository of Certified Copies of Ordinances. Trustee Pasko moved approval of Ordinance 2024/25-214, as presented. Trustee Bederman seconded the motion.
Aye – Bederman, Cox, Di Lorenzo, Mullman, Pasko, Sennett, Fishman
Nay – None
Absent or not voting – None
MOTION CARRIED. *Ordinance is attached.*
- E. Annual Decision to Participate in the Public Library Non-Resident Services Program. Director Auston summarized this annual decision. Trustee Di Lorenzo moved approval of Annual Decision to Participate in the Public Library Non-Resident Services Program by the tax bill method, as presented. Trustee Sennett seconded the motion.
Aye – Bederman, Cox, Di Lorenzo, Mullman, Pasko, Sennett, Fishman
Nay – None
Absent or not voting – None
MOTION CARRIED.

Trustee Mullman left the meeting at 7:00pm.

XII. Discussion Items.

President Fishman shared the following comments by introduction of the Draft FY25-26 Working Budget:

- First of all, Director Auston and staff must be commended for working very hard on budgeting and keeping our commitment to a first-class library with services and resources that our community enjoys and appreciates.
- The Board certainly appreciates that staff is committed to maximizing resources toward offering innovative services and programming.
- However, the excellence we enjoy comes with challenges, especially in a fluid financial environment. As we all know, at home and Village-wide, this includes increasing operational expenses, the changing and competitive labor market, and many other factors outside of our control.
- To this end, we have sought outside financial guidance and have conducted annual long-range financial studies, projecting trends for general operations and planned capital reserve projects.
- Keeping aligned with our fund balance policy of retaining 50% to 100% in reserve of its annual operating budget, the staff and board need to be mindful of expenses and reviewing strategies for increasing revenues.

- The proposed 2025-2026 budget has closely followed this strategy and much of the budget remains flat or reduced. At the May 9 Finance Committee meeting, the budget was reviewed by the committee members and moved forward without any additional changes.

A. Review of May 9, 3035 Finance Committee Meeting, Draft FY25-26 Working Budget, and Schedule next Finance Committee meeting. The Board reviewed the discussion of the May 9, 2025 Finance Committee Meeting where the first draft of the FY25-26 Operating Budget was initially presented. The next Finance Committee Meeting will be scheduled via Doodle poll after confirming the new membership of the committee for a second review of the budget, including a closed session for analysis of the personnel budget.

XIII. Director's Report.

Director Auston noted the following from his report:

- The Northern Suburban Special Recreation Association has honored Wilmette Public Library with their Advocate of the Year award. The award recognizes individuals and organizations who have demonstrated a strong commitment to advocating for the inclusion and well-being of people with disabilities within the community. Community engagement librarian Sarah Jo Zaharako developed our partnership with the NSSRA and coordinates field trips to the library for participants throughout the year, providing behind-the-scenes tours and activities tailored to their interests. Sarah Jo, along with shelving manager Patsy De Vuono, welcome desk assistant Mary Dormin, and facilities and safety manager Marcos Levy received the award at the Shining Stars Awards and Recognition banquet on May 2.

Recreation Specialist Nick Falter, CPRP, presented the award with these generous words:

This award is given to an organization that not only understands the importance of inclusion—but actively lives it. It recognizes a partner who has made intentional, thoughtful efforts to ensure that individuals of all abilities feel welcomed, respected, and empowered.

This year's recipient has truly redefined what it means to be an inclusive community space. From the very beginning, Wilmette Public Library approached NSSRA with a clear purpose: to do better, to serve more inclusively, and to make their space accessible for everyone.

What followed was a model of partnership. Together, we've created social stories for both youth and adult participants, designed to help them navigate the library with confidence. They've worked with our ELA program to offer volunteer opportunities and have hosted tailored programming during community outings—making each visit meaningful, educational, and fun.

But what really stands out is how they care. The Wilmette Library staff go above and beyond in their preparation—reserving parking spots for our bus, planning ahead for sensory needs, and warmly greeting our groups with genuine excitement. They think

through every detail to make sure our participants feel safe and supported, never like an afterthought.

Their leadership and staff have created a culture where inclusion isn't just a goal—it's the standard. And it shows. Every time we walk through their doors, we are reminded of what's possible when accessibility is built into the foundation of a place.

- On a similar note, the library also received wonderful thank you notes/pictures from members of the Cove School volunteer corps who continue to support our shelving team after many years of partnership. The Cove School was the nation's first school founded exclusively for the education of children with learning disabilities, and it remains a premier school in the field. Shelving Manager Patsy DeVuono and her team work with our volunteer interns who have expressed their gratitude for the opportunity and experiences provide by their time partnering with the library – and the feeling is entirely mutual for us as well. Thank you to Aidan, Mia, Zach for their generosity and support – it's a sincere pleasure working with you too!
- Statistical highlights for April 2025:
 - The library saw 22,253 visitors, averaging over 740 unique users each day.
 - We welcomed 137 new cardholders.
 - We circulated over 52,000 items, averaging 1700 items each day.
 - We saw our third highest month of circulation of all time in OverDrive/Libby in April, with over 20,000 items checked out.
 - Digital circulation accounts for nearly 30% of our total circulation.
- The first major update to the library app was launched in April, and patrons are responding favorably to the enhancements, including the ease of access to their library card and account information.
- The Wilmette Park District has partnered with the statewide library program Explore More to provide area beachgoers to enjoy free admission to the Gillson Swimming Beach—all thanks to your library card! Their new Beach Bound Library Passes will give people access to the beach, free of charge, by utilizing their local library. Visit the Park District's website to learn more about the program (<https://wilmettepark.org/introducing-new-library-passes-for-free-beach-access-at-gillson/>), which is also accessible via the [Explore More / Museum Passes page](#) on the Wilmette Public Library website.
- Further examples of the library's strong and growing community partnerships are included in the director's written report this month, and include New Trier High School, Mather Place Senior Living, and area preschools and elementary schools.
- Youth Services manager Andrea Vaughn Johnson and Community Engagement librarian Sarah Jo Zaharako presented at the Lead the Way: Community Engagement at the Heart of Librarianship conference in Madison, WI on April 21. Their presentation *Let's Learn Together: Creating Infrastructure to Support Safe and Meaningful Programming* provided comprehensive guidelines for planning events

that address complex topics and social issues. The session reflected the development of the Let's Learn Together initiative and celebrated three successful years of programming that invites curiosity and challenges bias. The presentation was well received and 37 sets of Let's Learn Together booklets were distributed to public library workers across six states.

- Community Engagement Librarian Sarah Jo Zaharako and Communications Manager Sarah Beth Brown published the 2025 Let's Learn Together booklet on neurodiversity. The free booklet is available to patrons both in print and digitally on the [Let's Learn Together landing page](#). Special thanks to Sarah Rose for graphic design and Stephanie Boron for content consultation. Programs in support of this year's initiative include the April 12 Magnificent Minds program and the April 25 Between the Lines: All Brains Are Beautiful program with speech and language pathologist Stephanie Boron, in partnership with D39 PTAs and PTOs.
- Our Summer newsletter will hit homes later this month and feature range of exciting programs and events for this summer, including information about our big Summer Reading Club activities and prizes for all ages, all sponsored by our generous Friends of the Wilmette Public Library. Our theme this summer is Level Up! And we have a host of gaming-related programs and activities to keep you engaged all season long. Join us for our kickoff event on the library lawn on Saturday, June 14 as we welcome back the Jolly Ringwalds and more for an afternoon of music, entertainment, and Kona Ice.

XIV. Committees - Report on Meetings.

- A. ILA / RAILS Updates. No ILA report. Trustee Sennett provided information from RAILS about the recent federal executive order to eliminate the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The most direct impact to Wilmette Public Library would be any loss of funding associated with the delivery of our interlibrary loan services (though RAILS has confirmed that these programs remain funded at this time whether by a partial grant from IMLS or by appropriated funds from the state), though the range of impacts to smaller and rural libraries will undoubtedly affect our operations in a variety of ways if the IMLS cuts stand.
- B. Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee. Trustee Sennett noted the next quarterly meeting is coming up and should include conversation on the chosen topic of civility.

XV. Information Items.

- A. Communication. Comments from suggestion boxes were distributed at the meeting.
- B. The American Library Association (ALA) Annual Conference is scheduled for June 26-30, 2025: <https://2025.alaannual.org/>. For more information on United for Libraries programs and training opportunities offered for Trustees, see <http://www.ala.org/united/>.
- C. On April 22, 2025, all newly elected officials in the Village participated in an orientation and training by parliamentarian Nancy Sylvester, coordinated and hosted by the library.

XVI. New Business. None.

XVII. Adjournment.

Trustee Di Lorenzo moved to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE. The meeting adjourned at 7:33pm.

President
Board of Library Trustees of the
Wilmette Public Library, Cook County, IL

Secretary
Board of Library Trustees of the
Wilmette Public Library, Cook County, IL

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