



MEETING MINUTES

I. Call to Order and Roll Call.

President Fishman called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. In Secretary Di Lorenzo's absence, Vice President Cox served as Secretary pro-tem and called the roll.

PRESENT: Trustees Bederman, Cox, Fishman, Mullman, Pasko, Sennett, Director Auston

ABSENT: Trustee Di Lorenzo

VISITORS: Liz Seager – League of Women Voters

STAFF: Marti Bellefontaine, Cathleen Blair, Sandra Discepolo, Lydia Hanchett, Andrea Vaughn Johnson, Marcos Levy

II. Review draft of May 20, 2025 Regular Board Meeting Minutes. Trustee Sennett noted a scrivener's error on page 4 of the draft minutes and moved approval of the May 20, 2025 Regular Board Meeting Minutes, as corrected. Trustee Bederman seconded the motion. There was no discussion.

Aye – Bederman, Cox, Mullman, Pasko, Sennett, Fishman

Nay – None

Absent or not voting – Di Lorenzo

MOTION CARRIED.

III. Public Comment. None.

IV. Presentations. None.

V. Treasurer's Report.

A. Financial Report for May 2025. Trustee Bederman noted the following:

Financials were reviewed and are accurate through the end of May. The timing of expenses will even out over the course of twelve months. The profit and loss statement through May still indicates a break even for the 2024-2025 fiscal year. Trustee Bederman expects to meet with Director Auston and Finance Manager Discepolo next week to further review the library's investment strategy.

B. Bills and Salaries Check Detail for May 2025. Trustee Bederman moved approval of the May 2025 Bills and Salaries Check Detail, as presented. Trustee Sennett seconded the motion.

Aye – Bederman, Cox, Mullman, Pasko, Sennett, Fishman

Nay – None

Absent or not voting – Di Lorenzo

MOTION CARRIED.

VI. Action Items.

A. Annual Budget for Fiscal Year 2025-26. President Fishman had the following comments: After the June 9, 2025 Finance Committee meeting to further discuss the 25-26 draft working budget, a few changes were made to reflect the following:

- During our closed personnel session, the board and the library's HR and Finance Managers discussed how WPL must stay competitive with other local libraries when addressing staff compensation, recruitment, and retention. Therefore, discussions led to board consensus to amend the personnel budget line to reflect a 3.5% increase in salaries from the originally proposed 3%. This increase contributes less than \$16,000 to the total budget. The board wants to reinforce how we value our staff and want to compensate them for their exceptional work.
- Additionally, changes to the first draft of the budget included contract increases for equipment and computer maintenance along with building maintenance contracts. Both are amended in this final draft of the 25-26 budget. This is a trend we anticipate growing in the coming years.
- Based on projected results for the 24-25 year using 11 months actual plus one month forecast, it appears the library will break even or have a small surplus.
- The Board will continue to monitor the budget throughout the year. Thanks to Director Auston and Finance Manager Discepolo, with their continued strong financial management, the library can show a surplus for fiscal year 24-25.

The Finance Committee met on June 9, 2025 to conduct their second review of the draft annual budget for FY 2025-26. The Finance Committee recommends approval of the FY 2025-26 budget as presented totaling \$6,754,870 for library operations for the year. Trustee Mullman moved approval of the Wilmette Public Library general operating budget for the fiscal year 2025-2026, totaling \$6,754,870, as presented. Trustee Bederman seconded.

Aye – Bederman, Cox, Mullman, Pasko, Sennett, Fishman

Nay – None

Absent or not voting – Di Lorenzo

MOTION CARRIED.

B. Review of Closed Session Minutes. In accordance with 5 ILCS 120/2.06, the Board will approve the release of the following closed session minutes (September 20, 2022; September 23, 2023; May 29, 2024; March 18, 2025; and June 9, 2025), and approve the destruction of the verbatim audio recordings of the associated meetings over 18 months old (September 20, 2022; and September 23, 2023). Trustee Sennett moved approval of the release of the following closed session minutes (September 20, 2022; September 23, 2023; May 29, 2024; March 18, 2025; and June 9, 2025), as presented. Trustee Pasko seconded.

Aye – Bederman, Cox, Mullman, Pasko, Sennett, Fishman

Nay – None

Absent or not voting – Di Lorenzo

MOTION CARRIED.

Trustee Bederman moved approval of the destruction of the verbatim audio recordings of eligible closed meetings over 18 months old (September 20, 2022; and September 23, 2023). Trustee Mullman seconded.

Aye – Bederman, Cox, Mullman, Pasko, Sennett, Fishman

Nay – None

Absent or not voting – Di Lorenzo

MOTION CARRIED.

VII. Director's Report.

The Summer Reading Club Kick-off Party was held on the library lawn last Saturday, June 14. Over 300 patrons showed up for our all-ages programs on the lawn, including Mr. Scott's Giant Bubble Show and a rockin' performance from the Jolly Ringwalds – complete with delicious Kona Ice. Over 100 patrons made their way through the Studio over the course of just 2 hours to create and make with fun drop-in activities there. Staff made it a wonderful success, all courtesy of the generous funding from the Friends of the Wilmette Public Library – thank you, Friends!

Our library Summer Reading Clubs are for everyone, and we have an exciting and engaging array of programs and prizes for all. All finishers will receive a free book of their choice. Simply track your reading this summer in one of our reading logs to earn book prizes. Visit our website for more details and find associated programs and events.

Staff have been busy designing the program and getting the word out. Beyond our regular publicity channels, staff have been conducting outreach and engagement to get our community excited, whether at partner agencies, at Kenilworth Food Truck Mondays, and beyond we're making sure this is one of our biggest summers yet. School Engagement Librarian Eti Berland and partners from Adult, Teen, Youth, and Digital/Maker Services connected with over 3,000 students in our community (including D39, Avoca, St. Francis Xavier, and Sears School). We look forward to seeing everyone in the Wilmette and Kenilworth communities at the library this summer.

Monthly highlights:

- The library saw 22,366 visitors in May, averaging over 745 unique users each day.
- We welcomed 154 new cardholders in May, including 17 new D39 student cards.
- We circulated over 51,000 items in May, averaging 1700 items each day.
- We saw another extraordinarily high rate of circulation in OverDrive/Libby in May, with nearly 21,000 items checked out.
- Digital circulation accounts for nearly 30% of our total circulation.

Explore More Illinois saw its highest usage ever this month with 52 free admission passes checked out for Gillson Swimming Beach. Our overall total for Explore More Illinois checkouts was 82. With 52 checkouts in May 2025 alone, Gillson Swimming Beach is now the second-most popular attraction of all time for Wilmette cardholders, behind the Chicago Children's Museum's lifetime total of 64 checkouts. As reported last month, 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

give people access to the beach, free of charge, by using their local library. Visit the Park District's website to learn more about the program, which is also accessible via the Explore More / Museum Passes page on the Wilmette Public Library website.
<https://www.wilmettelibrary.info/museum-passes>

Collection maintenance projects continued this month. Since May of 2024, when the project to right size the collection began, the collection has been reduced from about 230,000 to 190,000 items as of the end May 2025. This is an overall reduction of the collection by 17%, and represents significant progress to the targeted annual goal of an initial 20% reduction of physical items due primarily to condition, lack of demand, obsolescence, and physical limitations of space. The nonfiction maintenance project has reached its final 3 categories, which once complete, will allow for all of the adult nonfiction collections to be unified along the south side of the lower level, including a new, more logical layout plan.

This will facilitate the capital improvement project in the northwest corner of the lower level, what we have long called the 900s room. Later this summer, we will disassemble the shelving in this space in order to replace the 40 year old carpeting in the room, the adjacent corridor, and the north stairwell that serves this corner of the building and the Media Room above.

The attendant asbestos abatement project, which relates to the old tile beneath the carpeting that we're replacing, is currently out to bid, with the successful bidders likely to be awarded in July, and the work slated for September. We'll share more about this work as the summer goes along.

In the meantime, staff are planning the next phases of the related space enhancements, which will include relocations of collections and services to better meet our community's needs, as well as some refreshed furnishings in various places around the building. We installed 4 new two-top study tables on the mezzanine today, and we're coordinating with an upholsterer to renew some worn seating around the first and second floor this summer.

We established our first physical display of the Library of Things collection, currently located adjacent to the circulation desk. We're adding a number of board games to the collection this summer.

As May has the distinction of being Asian American and Pacific Islander Month and Jewish American Heritage Month, staff took inspiration to amplify both groups of historically marginalized voices through prominent displays of representative materials for all ages.

AS Librarian Rachel Rothe partnered with School Engagement Librarian Eti Berland at the Village of Wilmette's AAPI Heritage Festival. The library table was included in the program passport as a destination, and more than 120 people visited to interact with informational flyers, giveaways, and a curated selection of books for adults and children that could be checked out during the program.

Rachel Rothe also facilitated two community partner displays in May. Early in the month she curated informational resources, including collection items, to increase awareness of International Compost Awareness Week, sponsored by Illinois Food Scrap & Composting Coalition. This also supports WPL's strategic goal of supporting sustainability. Later in the month an inviting display amplified not only Mental Health Awareness Month but also Wellmette, the result of a recent intergovernmental initiative to establish a database of local mental health service resources.
<https://www.wilmette.gov/744/Wellmette>

Assistant Manager Rachel Garcia was invited by ALA to give a short presentation on her experience with the 2023 Stories of Exile program through the Yiddish Book Center. As part of an informational session for any libraries interested in applying for this year's grant, Rachel spoke to why Wilmette Library applied for the grant, her experience at the workshop in Amherst, how she executed the program at Wilmette, and her takeaways from the experience.

Genealogy and Local History Librarian EvaAnne Johnson's role on the Illinois State Historical Records Advisory Board afforded two leadership opportunities this month. In addition to determining the organizational winners of \$28,000 in grants, the members visited one of last year's awardees, Walnut Public Library in Walnut, IL. Eva has been serving as this library's mentor in their digitization journey, and a photo from their visit was shared on social media.

Our strategic plan goal to digitize, preserve, and enhance access to rare and unique local history resources continued this month with a substantial amount of recently digitized newspapers being sent to our Ontario partner OurDigitalWorld for importing into Wilmette Public Library's digital newspaper collection. We look forward to announcing their public availability soon. This collection is by far our most heavily used digital research resource with nearly 60,000 views this year, on target to surpass last year's highest number to date.

Teen Services Librarian Krista Hutley and School Engagement Librarian Eti Berland worked together to train and schedule teen volunteers to work in the youth summer reading club booth and help with youth and teen programs this season. Nearly 50 high school students have signed up to volunteer for the summer, and three separate orientation sessions were facilitated to support their training. We're incredibly grateful for their support.

On May 6-8, Community Engagement Librarian Sarah Jo Zaharako attended the first-ever National Convening on Children's Racial Learning in Chicago. This event, organized by EmbraceRace, brought together over 200 leaders across multiple sectors to network, collaborate, and accelerate the field of racial learning. Attendees represented the fields of education, research, children's media, healthcare, technology, philanthropy, and more. Sarah Jo made many new connections that will fuel future Let's Learn Together programming and create opportunities for collaboration and partnership.

The Studio was abuzz with activity in May, with nearly 600 individuals using the space this month. Lauren's provided a snapshot of just some of the creative projects that folks

are working on in the popular space, along with some choice bits of feedback from patrons, including “this is my girls’ favorite place on earth!” – we love it too!

We hosted our first live-streamed Armchair Travels program, which brought 85 patrons to Paris for a virtual tour. And to help facilitate an actual visit, we offered another 4-week session of Beginning French for the Traveler with Wilmette resident and retired middle school French teacher Heather Palmer. Over the four-week class, registrants wrote a story together and learned to exchange basic pleasantries, had practice using scripts to order at a restaurant or check in to a hotel, and learned about cultural norms. This popular course has been a great way for patrons to extend their lifelong learning opportunities, both as an intro class on its own, and a first step toward further learning opportunities using library resources.

We launched our summer newsletter this month, a feat of our many programming staff as well as our outstanding communications team of Sarah Beth Brown, Sarah Rose, and Lydia Fair. If you haven’t seen the print newsletter, please pick one up, and while you’re at it, subscribe to our digital newsletters for late breaking news and events, and follow us on social media too!

VIII. Committees - Report on Meetings.

- A. ILA / RAILS Updates. Trustee Sennett provided information about her new role as an elected member of the RAILS board and topics that the RAILS is currently reviewing. There was no ILA report.
- B. Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee. Trustee Sennett also represents the library on the Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee, which will be studying “civility” as its next theme, beginning with their September 2025 meeting.

IX. 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/>.

X. New Business. None.

XI. Adjournment.

Trustee Sennett moved to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE. The meeting adjourned at 7:11pm.

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