



MEETING MINUTES

I. Call to Order and Roll Call.

President Fishman called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. Director Auston called roll.

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

ABSENT: Trustees Cox, Di Lorenzo

VISITORS: Liz Seager – League of Women Voters, resident Bob Lepkowski

STAFF:

In recognizing the absences of Vice President Cox and Secretary Di Lorenzo, Trustee Sennett volunteered to serve as Secretary pro tem. Trustee Bederman moved approval of the appointment of Trustee Sennett as Secretary pro tem for this meeting. Trustee Pasko seconded.

Aye- Bederman, Mullman, Pasko, Sennett, Fishman

Nay- None

Absent or not voting – Cox, Di Lorenzo

MOTION CARRIED.

II. Review draft of June 17, 2025 Regular Board Meeting Minutes. Trustee Mullman moved approval of June 17, 2025 Regular Board Meeting Minutes, as corrected. Trustee Sennett seconded the motion. There was no discussion.

Aye – Bederman, Mullman, Pasko, Sennett, Fishman

Nay – None

Absent or not voting – Cox, Di Lorenzo

MOTION CARRIED.

III. Public Comment. Resident Bob Lepkowski thanked the new trustees for their time and talents and noted his support of staff in their decisions around the library's collections.

IV. Presentations. None.

V. Treasurer's Report.

A. Financial Report for June 2025. Trustee Bederman shared the following:

- Given the library's cash-basis accounting, the content of the year-end financial reports should remain largely unchanged when we receive the official financial audit later this fall.
- The Treasurer met with Director Auston and Finance Manager Discepolo to review financial procedures, policies, and investments to get a better picture of the financial structure.
- The anticipated \$350,000 deficit spend actually resulted in a surplus of over \$300,000.

President Fishman also called attention to the FY24/25 budget bottom line and net income for the year. President Fishman thanked Director Auston and staff for the budgeting achievement of not only avoiding the board approved general fund deficit spending of approximately \$350,000, but delivering a surplus of approximately \$300,000. Kudos to all staff.

- B. Bills and Salaries Check Detail for June 2025. Trustee Sennett moved approval of the June 2025 Bills and Salaries Check Detail, as presented. Trustee Bederman seconded the motion. There was no discussion.

Aye – Bederman, Mullman, Pasko, Sennett, Fishman

Nay – None

Absent or not voting – Cox, Di Lorenzo

MOTION CARRIED.

VI. Action Items.

- A. Ordinance No. 2025/26-215, Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Library Purposes for the Fiscal Year 2025-26 in Tentative Form. The ordinance is the second step of the library's annual budget process following the approval of the FY2025-26 Budget on June 17, 2025, and precedes the annual levy this fall. By law, all expenses must have an appropriation before the library may approve expenditures. The appropriation ordinance represents the legal authority of the library to expend its funds for the purposes designated in the ordinance. With the ordinance approved in Tentative Form, it will be sent for attorney review, and posted for the public. The Board will hold a public hearing on the Ordinance immediately prior to their August 19 Regular Meeting. Trustee Pasko motioned approval of Ordinance No. 2025/26-215, Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Library Purposes for the Fiscal Year 2025-26 in Tentative Form, as presented. Trustee Mullman seconded.

Aye – Bederman, Mullman, Pasko, Sennett, Fishman

Nay – None

Absent or not voting – Cox, Di Lorenzo

MOTION CARRIED.

- B. Approval of MEC Asbestos Abatement Project Contractor Recommendation of Kinsale Contracting Group in an amount not to exceed \$33,000. Director Auston spoke to the details involved in the process and benefits post project. Trustee Bederman moved approval of MEC Asbestos Abatement Project Contractor Recommendation of Kinsale Contracting Group in an amount not to exceed \$33,000, as presented. Trustee Pasko seconded.

Aye – Bederman, Mullman, Pasko, Sennett, Fishman

Nay – None

Absent or not voting – Cox, Di Lorenzo

MOTION CARRIED.

VII. Director's Report.

Director Auston presented the Director's Report for library activities from June 2025 to-date, including a summary of goals, statistics, and updates to the collections, programs, and services, as well as staff news.

FY24-25 ended on June 30 and staff are still compiling and analyzing our annual statistics; this month's board meeting is as early as it can be in the month and with the close of the year and the holiday at the beginning of the month, staff are still getting our figures in order. That said, here are the monthly details:

Monthly highlights:

- The library saw 24,482 visitors in June, averaging over 816 unique users each day.
- We welcomed 141 new cardholders in June.
- We circulated over 54,000 items in June, averaging 1800 items each day.
- We again saw strong digital circulation in OverDrive/Libby in June, though we also saw our usual June dip (patrons favor print in June).
- The Library App has seen 14% increase in use since the update in April.
- Our Local History Digital Collection, saw the highest number of page views this fiscal year, with 14,534 in June. This is up from an average of 5,389 views per month.

Staff accomplished several strategic plan goals this month:

- Our FY24-25 initiative to *digitize, preserve, and enhance access to rare and unique local history resources* was accomplished this month, including newly digitized issues available in WPL's Local History Digital Collection include *Wilmette Life* from 1950-1956 and 2019-2024 and miscellaneous issues addressing gaps in the *Wilmette Beacon* holdings. Thanks to local history and genealogy librarian Eva Johnson, we now have a nearly complete collection of the most recent issues of the *Wilmette Life* from 2005-present and *Wilmette Beacon* from 2010-2020 available for on-site access, as well as a growing collection of earlier historical issues of *Wilmette Life* available to everyone. Librarians Suzanne Arist and Ted Remus have been diligently indexing the obituaries from the 1950s and 1940s during their multi-year indexing project, and this work has been linked to the newly digitized newspapers, providing enhanced findability and additional context for obituaries in these papers. Patrons can now learn more about local history, the library, Wilmette residents, and more in this unique resource, including the day that the "new" library building was completed and graced the cover of the *Wilmette Life*:
<https://history.wilmettelibrary.info/4085723/data>.

- *Host and promote public forums for residents to explore and discuss topics affecting our community.*

After nearly a year of advocacy, Librarian Suzanne Arist successfully facilitated a program speaking to the plight of refugees in the Chicagoland area, as well as amplifying avenues for community members to help. After researching and identifying Refugee One as an appropriate partner in this endeavor, Suzanne worked with Communication Director Sally Schulze to provide an informational program in conjunction with World Refugee Awareness Month that expertly navigated core issues and current challenges without skewing into partisanship.

In support of the same goal, on a lighter note, in partnership with Lora Amigo of Pink Couch Books, Assistant Manager Rachel Garcia designed and facilitated the library's first Romance Meet & Greet event. Attendees were gifted with a collaborative list of the most anticipated romance titles of the season, as well as

discussion prompts that sparked lively engagement regarding books, tropes, and other topics related to the popular genre. Most participants were new to bookish adult events at WPL and expressed support for more romance-related programming in future.

- *Curate and promote quality collections in a variety of formats.*
Revitalize and reimagine the first floor and lower level of the library.
To advance a pair of strategic goals rooted in refreshing collections and in right-sizing use of valuable library spaces, Adult Services selectors have continued to enhance their skills in assessment and curation of collections. Examples include:
 - Using combinations of available data reporting to identify low-circulating materials, dated information, and items that may have circulated so often as to show wear
 - Undertaking systematic visual shelf checks of collection areas to identify issues not illuminated via reporting, as well as to glean insight into areas with disproportionate numbers of legacy items for the subject area
 - Advanced analysis of whether circulations are to Wilmette community or neighboring partners, as well as attention to whether circulation numbers are discrete borrows rather than auto-renewals
 - Increased prudence in purchasing, as extensive analysis of collection areas has provided increased understanding of current interests

Youth Services offered 47 events in June that were attended by 1,838 patrons. Programs included our first Pride party, multiple crafting programs, interactive and passive programs, author visits (like Dahlia Richards), music concerts (like Grammy winning Dan & Claudia Zanes), our Stuffed Animal Campout, as well as 2 Lego Robotics programs.

School Engagement Librarian Eti Berland and Teen Librarian Krista Hutley are co-leading the Summer Reading Club Teen Volunteer Program, with around 50 teens participating in the program. Teens in grades 9-12 staff the summer reading club booth to promote signing up for summer reading and checking in children when they complete the program. They have also helped out during youth programs, as well as assisted with other tasks in the youth services department. In addition, two adult volunteers are assisting this summer, which includes Cecilia Clarke, President of the Friends of the Library, and former summer assistant, Susan Zonia.

The Studio is buzzing with activity, with a 30% jump in interactions from May to June. Lauren shared a number of fun and exciting projects and stories in their report this month. We also saw twice as many 3D prints this month over last.

Our teen volunteers are also helping in the Studio this summer, with 10 student assisting patrons with the button maker, doing routine Studio tasks, and working on their own projects. The volunteers have been freeing up staff to help patrons with more difficult questions and advanced projects.

June was an exciting and productive month for library programming, marked by strong collaboration across departments, high community engagement, and the successful launch of our 2025 Summer Reading Club, themed “Level Up.”

Our Summer Reading Club Kickoff was a success, drawing a large crowd and showcasing strong cross-departmental teamwork. C&E worked with various public service departments over the course of several months to coordinate this library-wide event. The event served as an all-ages celebration to kick off the summer, with activities, music, and games for the whole community. Programming Coordinator Jennifer Bartel led the coordination of several oversized lawn games that premiered at the kickoff as well as our all-ages concert featuring The Jolly Ringwalds, who delighted the audience with an energetic performance of 1980s music.

We were pleased to welcome back The Shakespeare Project of Chicago for their final performance of the season, a staged reading of King Lear. Once again, we had a full house, reflecting the community’s continued interest in live theatre and classical literature.

IT manager Michael Pocrnich purchased six new Samsung digital display monitors from Abt to replace the four digital displays on the first floor along with the displays in the Small Meeting Room and Board Room. CVI handled the removal of the old/defective units and installed the new ones. Both patrons and staff have complimented the sharp picture quality of the new TVs.

Fiscal year 2024-25 saw a turnover rate of 5% which is a slight decrease from the 7% turnover we experienced in FY23-24. This past fiscal year we had 5 staff members resign, 2 for other employment opportunities, and 3 for personal reasons. The library also welcomed 9 new hires this past fiscal year. We have seen a steady decline in turnover rate since the pandemic years and hope to see this number continue to decline.

Finally, we’re grateful to the Secretary of State’s office for notice that we will receive our FY25 Per Capita Grant (~\$41,000)

VIII. Committees - Report on Meetings.

A. ILA / RAILS Updates. Trustee Sennett noted IMLS is set to expire in September. RAILS has a page dedicated to IMLS advocacy and impacts: <https://railslibraries.org/imls-advocacy>. Director Auston noted ILA conference will be 10/14-16 in Rosemont, IL. He also added that ILA has taken over the Illinois Library Presents programming series and the library has renewed its agreement to continue offering these events locally (<https://www.ila.org/initiatives/illinois-libraries-present>).

B. Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee Update. No report.

IX. Information Items.

A. Communication. Comments from suggestion boxes were distributed at the meeting.

X. As a requirement of the Illinois Public Library Annual Report (IPLAR), the Board Minutes Secretary’s Audit Committee is required to review minutes of the WPLD Board of Trustees meetings of FY 2024-25 prior to the August meeting.

XI. New Business. None.

XII. Adjournment.

Trustee Bederman moved to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE. The meeting adjourned at 7:07pm.

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