

## WICHITA PUBLIC LIBRARY

Minutes of a Meeting of the Library Board of Directors  
November 18, 2025.

The hybrid meeting of the Library Board of Directors was held on Tuesday November 18, 2025, at the Advanced Learning Library with the following present in person: Ms. Lauren Hirsh, Ms. Brandi Newry, Mr. Kurt Oswald, Mr. Chuck Schmidt, Ms. LewJene Schneider, and Mr. Jonathan Winkler. The following attended virtually: Ms. Sarah Balderas, Ms. TaDonne Neal, Ms. Karyn Shorter, and Ms. Susie Ternes.

### Call to Order

Lauren Hirsh called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m., a quorum being present.

### Approval of the Agenda

Kurt Oswald moved (Schmidt) to approve the agenda as published. **Motion carried unanimously.**

### Staff Presentation

Director Nix announced that the Advanced Learning Library had been certified as a Family Place Library and would soon launch another round of parent/educator workshop series to bring in families over the next five weeks. The Family Place Library program is designed to transform libraries into community centers for early literacy, parent education, and family support. While the certification process is intensive for staff and supervisors, the program has strengthened partnerships with service providers and increased interest in collections.

With the impending retirement of City Manager Robert Layton, Library and City staff have identified the library system's participation in the Family Place Library program as way to recognize not only his service to Wichita residents, but also his dedication to library services and increasing childhood literacy across the community. Both the Library Board and City of Wichita have goals to certify all library locations as Family Place Libraries by the end of 2027. The Wichita Library Foundation will receive donations for the program and will present an annual report to the City Council on the State of the Young Child. This plan will be unveiled on December 11 at the retirement celebration for Mr. Layton.

### Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the regular meeting held October 21, 2025 were presented. Chuck Schmidt moved (Oswald) to approve the minutes as included in board packets. **Motion carried unanimously.**

### Unfinished Business

Jonathan Winkler reported that the Operations Committee took account of feedback received at last month's Board meeting on proposed revisions to the following policies:

- **ORG-001 – Library Board of Directors:** updates include additional strategic responsibility of the Board and changes to scope of standing committees.
- **ORG-001.1 City of Wichita Board of Directors Bylaws:** updates eliminate the Second Vice President and Treasurer positions; pare standing committees down to three (Finance, Operations, and Advocacy); and clarify the Director of Library’s responsibilities for program delivery.

The current package of changes (including the altered frequency of meetings) is designed to provide opportunity for an annual education retreat in the autumn, as well as deepen the impact of committee efforts. It also retains monthly meetings for the full Board. The proposed meeting schedule for 2026 is:

January:	Board meeting and Board education
February:	Board meeting and committee meetings
March:	Board meeting
April:	Board meeting (annual meeting to elect officers) and committee meetings
May:	Board meeting
June:	Board meeting and committee meetings
July:	Board meeting
August:	Board meeting and committee meetings
September:	Board meeting and Board education
October:	Board meeting and committee meetings
November:	Board meeting
December:	Board meeting and committee meetings

On behalf of the Operations Committee, Jonathan Winkler moved (Neal) to accept the new updates to policies ORG-001 and ORG-001.1 as provided by staff. **Motion carried** 8-2 with one abstention (Schneider) and one against (Oswald).

**New Business**

None

**Finance Committee Report**

On behalf of the Finance Committee, Chuck Schmidt moved to approve the October 2025 finance report and supplemental bills in the following amounts: General Fund bills of \$913,642.59; Grant Fund bills of \$79,603.41; and Gift bills of \$33,752.09, for a total of \$1,026,998.09. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Schmidt directed board members’ attention to the funding model template for the library system’s furniture, AV, and security over 10 years. It was endorsed by the Finance Committee and will be discussed in more detail at the December meeting.

**Operations Committee Report**

Jonathan Winkler reported that the committee met and discussed policy updates, security issues at Walters, the reduced evening opening hours for the Research Pavilion at the Advanced Learning Library, and the naming of a preferred vendor for the library’s new integrated library

system.

### **Public Affairs Committee Report**

Kurt Oswald reported that the committee did not have a quorum, but staff did discuss the creative brief that Gardner Design developed as part of the Library's just-begun rebranding project.

### **Special Committee Reports**

*Friends of the Library* – Brian Blackerby reported that the Friends Board are in budget discussions for 2026. The Friends also seek ways to support the library as it celebrates its 150<sup>th</sup> birthday next year. The last book sale of the year earned over \$3,000.

*Library Foundation* - Kourtney Carson reported that the Foundation currently has grant applications submitted to the Wichita Rotary Club and the city's Arts and Cultural Services. Gratitude postcards were recently mailed to donors.

*Wichita Genealogical Society (WGS)* – Margret Cramer reported that the annual conference in October was a great success, with over sixty-five registrants in attendance. The 2026 conference will be held at the Advanced Learning Library. There are currently 142 active members. There will not be a December monthly meeting and meeting dates for 2026 have now been selected.

### **Director of Libraries Report**

Director Nix reported that local elections earlier this month returned two serving City Council members (Districts 3 and 6) and one new (District 1). Plans currently call for new appointments to be made to the Library Board to fill vacant seats from the Mayor and Districts 2, 5, and 6.

Meeting room reservations for 2026 opened to the public on November 17 with the new meeting room policies taking effect. Staff have been addressing community questions and feedback, which have mostly been positive.

Leadership continues to assess current workflows and services to ensure staff efforts advance the strategic direction. A time study was conducted for cash handling, as every public service desk that facilitates account assistance or printing has a cash drawer that must be reconciled and verified at the end of a desk shift to comply with City policies for cash management. A plan is now underway to modify the customer payments that can be received through the online and self-service options that are in place currently. By allowing the elimination of cash from service points, this initiative will free library staff to focus on assisting customers using the library's technology, services, and programs. Part of this study investigated cost recovery for faxing and discovered fax charges would cost more to collect than they would bring in as revenue. As a result of this finding and the transition to a cashless model for the front desk, faxing services will be free beginning in 2026.

A creative brief for the rebranding project for the library system was included in this month's board packet. Each board member was encouraged to review this report as it identifies the personality, strengths, and opportunities for the organization.

**Announcements**

None

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:03 pm.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be December 16, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Jaime Nix