

## WICHITA PUBLIC LIBRARY

Minutes of a Meeting of the Library Board of Directors  
December 16, 2025.

The hybrid meeting of the Library Board of Directors was held on Tuesday December 16, 2025 at the Advanced Learning Library with the following present in person: Ms. Sarah Balderas, Ms. Lauren Hirsh, Mr. Kurt Oswald, Ms. Andrea Scarpelli, Mr. Chuck Schmidt, Ms. LewJene Schneider, Ms. Susie Ternes, and Mr. Jonathan Winkler. The following attended virtually: Ms. Brandi Newry and Ms. Karyn Shorter.

### 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 (Ternes) to approve the agenda as published. **Motion carried unanimously.**

### Introductions

Director Nix introduced Andrea Scarpelli, who has been appointed to the Board by Councilmember Ballard and will join the Finance Committee.

### Staff Presentation

Director Nix advised board members that the library has historically faced challenges funding furniture and certain technology replacements. In the past, the library has relied on annual grants to support amenities not covered by system maintenance funds overseen by the Public Works Department.

Following completion of the Branch Master Plan, library staff were tasked with developing a funding model to address operational needs not covered by any City of Wichita departmental budget. In the absence of an updated Facilities Master Plan, a defined budget strategy is necessary to sustain both public and private investments.

In late 2023, the Wichita Library Foundation entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Wichita, undertaking to contribute \$200,000 upon completion of a funding plan to ensure library facilities continue to provide quality furnishings and equipment. Research conducted in collaboration with staff from Public Works, IT, and the City Manager's Office resulted in a proposed ten-year plan covering library furniture, audiovisual systems, and security technologies.

Library leadership has consulted with the City Manager and Finance Director regarding the plan's methodology and has been directed to incorporate it into upcoming budget cycles for both the Library's General Fund budget and the Capital Improvement Plan. The plan gives \$3,873,197 as the estimated amount necessary to carry the identified expenses across seven library locations for the coming decade.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Minutes of the regular meeting held November 18, 2025 were presented. Kurt Oswald moved (Schmidt) to approve the minutes as included in board packets. **Motion carried unanimously.**

### **Unfinished Business**

None

### **New Business**

Jonathan Winkler moved (Oswald) to endorse the Library Funding Plan as provided in board packets. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Director Nix provided the Board with new descriptions and draft 2026 action identified for three board committees: Advocacy, Finance, and Operations. Board members were encouraged to review the body of work for each committee in advance of the annual meeting, when officers will be elected and committee assignments will be made. **No action taken.**

### **Finance Committee Report**

On behalf of the Finance Committee, Chuck Schmidt moved to approve the November 2025 finance report and supplemental bills in the following amounts: General Fund bills of \$1,003,772.46; Grant Fund bills of \$14,598.04; and Gift bills of \$103,862.47, for a total of \$1,122,232.97. **Motion carried unanimously.**

### **Operations Committee Report**

No meeting.

### **Planning & Facilities Committee Report**

No meeting.

### **Public Affairs Committee Report**

No meeting.

### **Special Committee Reports**

*Friends of the Library* – Erin Shields reported that the Friends have brought in more income than expected for 2025, so their contribution to the library will be more than originally envisaged. A new board president and slate of officers for 2026 has been elected. The 2026 budget has been approved, and the organization’s investment portfolio is being re-evaluated.

*Library Foundation* – Kourtney Carson reported that the year’s last letter to potential donors

has been mailed and focuses on how libraries can assist with crime prevention in communities. The Foundation is close to reaching its fundraising goals of the year. An event featuring author Kate Quinn is being planned for February 2026 as part of the WPL 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations.

Wichita Genealogical Society (WGS) –

No report.

*Sarah Balderas left*

*Chuck Schmidt left*

**Director of Libraries Report**

Director Nix reported that the materials circulation statistics from last year were met and exceeded in October. The Angelou branch has seen a significant increase compared to past reporting periods.

The city has hired a new City Manager, who will receive an orientation to the library and its services from Director Nix in January.

A recent program titled Art Connecting Hearts was held in the Children’s Gallery at the Advanced Learning Library. It included an art sale, the proceeds of which come directly back to the library to support youth art activities.

In addition to the Kate Quinn event, the Library is partnering with Watermark for another in February that will feature Mychal Threats, the new host of "Reading Rainbow" and a viral librarian known for his engaging storytelling and advocacy for literacy.

The Wichita Journalism Collaborative will focus on literacy for their 2026 project.

The 2026 Library Work Goals will be presented to the Board at the January meeting to inform members about the work planned for staff in the coming year.

**Announcements**

None

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:02 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be January 20, 2026.

Respectfully submitted,

Jaime Nix