

Portland Library Board of Directors
DRAFT Meeting Minutes
Van Beynum Room
September 18, 2025

Board Members Present: Don Eiler, Myra Finkelstein, Betsy Graziano, Melissa Kelley, Laurel Steinhauser

Absent: Olenka Castelli, Jade Richardson

Others Present: Jennifer Billingsley (Library Director), Tim Lavoy (BOS Liaison), Ralph Zampano

Laurel Steinhauser called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

1. Public & Staff Comment

2. Additions and Approval of the Agenda

Add additional item b. under New Business “2026 Holiday Library Schedule.” A motion was made by Betsy Graziano to approve the amended agenda, seconded by Myra Finkelstein, all were in favor, motion carried.

3. Review Minutes:

a. Action on the Minutes of the August 21, 2025 Meeting

Melissa Kelley made a motion to approve the minutes of August 21, 2025, seconded by Don Eiler, all were in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, motion carried.

4. Corresponding Secretary’s Report

A donation was received in celebration of Karen Slocum’s 28 years at the library. She will be getting a green leaf and a note was sent to her letting her know. A retirement card was signed during the meeting. Next week, the leaf will be taken for engraving.

5. New Business

- a. **2026 Library Board Meeting Dates and Times.** This is a draft. Members were asked to take it home and review it. There is also an option to start the board meetings at 6:00 p.m. Another option was to follow the daylight savings time schedule. A third option would be to start the board meetings at 6:30 p.m. This will be revisited at the next board meeting.
- b. **2026 Holiday Schedule:** Jennifer explained why some of the dates are as stated. This was given informally and there was no vote on it.

6. Old Business

a. New Display Policy

Jennifer said that the State library confirmed it is compliant with Public Act No. 25-168. The attorney suggested two changes, which were included in what was submitted to the state. Don Eiler made a motion to adopt the amended New Display Policy, seconded by Myra Finkelstein, all were in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, motion carried.

b. Revisions to Programming Policy (previously Program Policy)

Jennifer explained the “compromise” changes on Page 5, as discussed at the 9/3 Board of Selectmen’s meeting and said this section of wording is not statutory and that the State library is aware that there may be changes to this section and that it will remain compliant with Public Act No. 25-168. Don Eiler made a motion to adopt the amended Programming Policy, seconded by Melissa Kelley, all were in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, motion carried.

c. Revisions to Collection Development and Maintenance Policy (previously Materials Selection Policy)

Jennifer explained that sections on controversial materials and digital collection/databases were included to be compliant with the State library’s checklist. The former Materials Selection Policy was split in two and the statutory language was populated into it. There were some word changes. Melissa Kelley made a motion to adopt the revised Collection Development and Maintenance Policy, seconded by Don Eiler, all were in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, motion carried.

d. New Material Review and Reconsideration Policy and Form.

Jennifer explained the changes and said that the form allows consideration from other policies that were discussed. Only other change were what the attorney suggested, at the end. Betsy Graziano made a motion to adopt the revised New Material Review and Reconsideration Policy and Form, seconded by Myra Finkelstein, all were in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, motion carried.

e. Update on BOS Meetings Moving to Mary Flood Room

The relocation of the BOS meetings will take place in October. Jenn demonstrated the chair that she hopes will be used. The chairs will stack. It is approximately \$4,000 for the chairs and shipping. The chairs will also be available for other meetings. The chairs will not have wheels since they will not stack if they have wheels. They have not yet been ordered. Tim will encourage the BOS members to visit the library and try out the proposed chair. A brief discussion ensued regarding the possible split of the cost. Myra did not think the Library should pay for the chairs; and could buy books with that money. Betsy Graziano made a motion to

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DRAFT Meeting Minutes
Van Beynum Room
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allocate \$2,005 from the Memorial Fund to split the cost of ten chairs for the Mary Flood Room to be used for the BOS meetings, seconded by Melissa Kelley, none were opposed, Myra Finkelstein abstained, all others voted aye, motion carried.

f. America 250 Portland CT Committee

The tee shirts were ordered for the committee to sell at the Fair. They also could sell the shirts at a table at the Halloween on Main event.

7. Friends of the Portland Library

- The Friends accepted the invitation from Melissa Kelley and the Fair Committee to have a display in the Community Tent at the Portland Fair. We will have information about the Friends-funded museum passes that provide free or reduced admission to more than 15 local museums and will promote the upcoming Fall Book Sale. (See our ad in the Fair Book!)
- The purchase of museum passes was approved for the Connecticut Museum of Culture and History (formerly the CT Historical Museum) and for the Mattatuck Museum.
- Final planning for the Fall Book Sale (October 17 - 19) was discussed including volunteer scheduling. Promotional information will include notifying book dealers that scanners will not be permitted until 6 p.m. on Friday, Oct 17 during the Members-only sale time (3 p.m. - 7 p.m.)
- Next Friends meeting is Monday, September 29, 2025 7 p.m. Mary Flood Room. Volunteers for setting up for the sales are welcome. Contact Monica if interested.

8. Chair's Report

9. Director's Report

Jenn pointed out some of the items in her report as follows:

- On P. 3, 50 new patrons;
- The Fall window art is amazing;
- Voices of Portland event was a huge success. Two copies of the book that was compiled will be available in the library, one that will circulate and one held in this meeting room (the Van Beynum room).
- Highest numbers for summer reading since 2018 for children and highest for adults ever.
- Jenn Renk will be out on medical leave for up to 8 weeks;
- New part-time employee, Rachael Amoruso, will start work on Tuesday. Interviews took place for the other position. Hopes to be filled by beginning of October.
- Jennifer will be away from October 1-8.

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DRAFT Meeting Minutes
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10. Other Discussion

11. Adjournment

Myra Finkelstein made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Betsy Graziano, all were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Hoy

Sharon R. Hoy
Recording Clerk