

CRANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

June 11, 2025

William Hall Library

6:00 pm

Present were:

Michael Goldberg

Lisa Kirshenbaum

R. Drayton Fair

Dr. Taino Palermo (arrived 6:04p)

Diane Schaefer

Ed Garcia, Library Director

Julie Holden, Assistant Library Director

Zach Berger, William Hall Branch Librarian

Allyson Van Wyk, Administrative Assistant

Excused: Regina Spirito, Jack Tregar

INTRODUCTION:

The regular meeting of the Cranston Public Library Board of Trustees was called to order on Wednesday, June 11, 2025 at 6:01pm at the William Hall Library.

MINUTES:

A motion was made by Drayton Fair to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of May 14, 2025. Diane Schaefer seconded. Motion carried (4-0).

BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:

Diane Schaefer and Lisa Kirshenbaum have been reappointed to the Board of Trustees by the Cranston City Council, term expiring 7/31/2028.

LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION REPORT:

Administration Updates

-The library received a Champlin Foundation grant for \$11,950 to replace 14 public computers that could not be updated to Windows 11. Windows 10 will no longer be supported by Microsoft in October 2025. These new computers will be rolled out over the next few weeks by our IT Manager.

-Using remaining funds from the current fiscal year, the library paid for the cost of three years of Microsoft Office LTSC 2024 licenses through a cooperative pricing agreement with Ocean State Libraries (OSL). As reported at the last meeting our current licenses will no longer be supported and Microsoft no longer offers educational institution pricing to public libraries. We purchased 125 licenses at a total of \$12,024. OSL has covered 25% of the cost using their reserve savings for all libraries and will manage the licensing process for all member libraries.

-We are moving the ESL classes from the Auburn branch to Central and William Hall this fall. Moving forward the basic level class will be at Central Tues & Wed in the C-Lab. The intermediate level classes will be at Hall Mon & Thurs in the program room. The classes are from 6-7:45pm. This transition will save 94 part-time hours. The 2025 summer semester has been cancelled and in the fall, the library will no longer be offering free childcare for students. This change will save approximately \$7000.

-The Cranston Public Library Association Board of Directors at their June meeting approved a request from the library for \$9450 to support the summer reading program. This request is broken down to \$8000 for youth services and \$1450 for adult services.

-The library received a \$5,000 legislative grant from Reps. Handy, Potter, Lima, Bennett, McNamara, Paplauskas, and Fascia. The grant is for general program support and be used to support ESL program.

-The Cranston Public Library Association recently received the following grants in support of the summer reading program: BankNewport (\$1500), Cranston Rotary (\$1000), Coastal 1 Credit Union Charitable Foundation (\$500), Bob's Discount Furniture Charitable Foundation (\$500). We are still waiting on a \$4000 grant from the Centreville Bank Charitable Foundation.

Buildings and Grounds

-Maplewood Landscaping completed spring clean-ups of the grounds at the Auburn, Knightsville, and Oaklawn branches. The Parks and Recreation Department has informed Director Garcia that are no longer able to maintain lawn mowing of the library properties. Director Garcia is discussing with the Mayor's office and seeking outside quotes as well.

-The Knightsville A/C unit failed on June 3rd. The HVAC company needed to install an entire new compressor to the chiller unit outside. Work was completed on June 6.

Programs

-The library hosted a successful Rally to support libraries event at Central on May 29th. Director Garcia emceed the event with the entire Rhode Island congressional delegation and RI Chief of Library Services Karen Mellor speaking at the event. The potential elimination of IMLS and how the loss of those federal funds would be devastating for RI libraries.

-The summer reading kick-off event will be at the Sprague Mansion on June 13 from 4:30-6:30p. This event is held in conjunction with our community partners OneCranston Health Equity Zone, Cranston Public Schools, Cranston Family Center, Cranston Historical Society, and the Cranston Fire Department. There will be a free family book fair, games, food, and information about the summer reading program (flyer included in board packet).

Staff Updates

-Tayla Cardillo will be moving to the Central Library as our new Youth Services Librarian replacing Elena Rios. Tayla will move to Central on July 1st. She was the Oaklawn branch librarian.

-Cranston staff participated heavily in the Rhode Island Library Association annual conference held on May 21 & 22. Julie Holden and Robin Nyzio served on the conference committee who helped plan and execute the conference.

The following staff members also presented at the conference:

Basics of copyright for libraries - Tayla Cardillo

Veteran Podcasting as Library Outreach - Dave Bartos, Tayla Cardillo

BUDGET REPORT:

The Gifts & Restricted Accounts Report was presented and reviewed.

The budget actuals as of May 31, 2025 and the FY 2026 Library Budget Forecast were presented and reviewed.

Due to budget shortfalls in the FY26 adopted budget including a reduction of approximately \$21,000 in the part time employment line, the library administration will make the following targeted reductions at the Oaklawn branch. These changes will begin on July 1, 2025. Open hours at Oaklawn will be reduced from 28 to 22 hours. The new hours will be Monday & Tuesday 1-5pm, Wednesday & Friday remain 10a-5p. Thursday the building remains closed and Saturday the building will now be closed. The current storytime schedule will remain on Wed & Fri. We will not hire a new Oaklawn branch librarian, instead we will add a Youth Services Librarian to the Central staff. The Youth Services team will rotate at Oaklawn each day with our existing part-time staff. The extra full-time Youth Services Librarian will also help support YS programming across the entire CPL branch system.

WILLIAM HALL LIBRARY BRANCH LIBRARIAN REPORT:

Building and Grounds

- We recently created a dedicated Staff Picks display of books from around the adult collection and items in the display are regularly getting checked out. Thirteen titles have circulated in the two weeks since we started this project, which allows us to build stronger readers advisory connections with our patrons.
- A recent music CD weeding project will allow us to tighten up the music collection and reorganize with better signage, making the browsing experience more pleasurable for patrons and easier for staff to find requested items.
- I am in the process of finalizing selected genealogy titles for purchase through a Merrick Funds grant. These purchases will meet demand from patrons who are looking to do their own family research in conjunction with the library's genealogy database offerings.
- The city electrician is working on some minor repairs of light switches and outlet fixtures. Peregrine Property Management will provide a quote for some minor scraping, repair, and painting work of the skylight above the stage in the auditorium, and is also working to remove a small tree that is somehow growing on the roof.

Programs

- The William Hall Board of Trustees has started the planning process for the building's 100th Anniversary celebration which will take place on May 2, 2026. At some point in the near future I will be included in the celebration preparations.
- Adult programming is on the rise. We host a monthly book group, a collage meetup, and an open mic for creative writers. We hold weekly Open Tech Time drop-ins, a knit and crochet group, and citizenship classes. A recent cooking demo series was well attended and supports the library's Healthy Families initiative.
- Twice a year in the auditorium we host Project Linus Blanket Day. This event gives volunteers and patrons the opportunity to help make blankets to donate to youth in traumatic situations statewide. At the last Blanket Day event on March 29, 226 participants spent several hours on these efforts, making this the most successful Blanket Day yet. The next Blanket Day is scheduled for October 25.
- The next Friends of the Cranston Library Annual Book Sale will take place on Saturday, November 1. The 2024 book sale raised \$1,356.00 for library programs and services.
- Youth programs continue to be very popular under the expert facilitation of William Hall Youth Services Librarian Martha Boksenbaum. A recent family story hour drew 68 participants. Martha also regularly engages with Cranston Public Schools and recently hosted 200 students from Edward S. Rhodes Elementary School during their Reading Week.
- Plans are in the works for finalizing the 2025 Summer Concert Series. I am awaiting confirmation of band bookings from the Cranston Parks and Recreation department.
- 13 shows have been finalized.

Staff

- Our new part-time Reference Librarian, Izzy Boden, started at the end of March and is doing a great job getting up to speed to provide reference and readers advisory services to our patrons.
- We are fortunate to have a talented, dedicated staff of full- and part-timers who are all supportive of each other and hardworking. We have received several four- and five-star reviews on Google!

NEW BUSINESS:

Karen McGrath is retiring after 39 years as the Auburn branch librarian. She will be honored at the Staff Meeting by Mayor Hopkins and Michael Goldberg. The RI General Assembly issued resolutions in both chambers honoring Karen's retirement. Her last day working in the library will be July 2.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:04

A motion was made by to adjourn the regular meeting of June 11, 2025 by Diane Schaefer. Lisa Kirshenbaum seconded. Motion carried (5-0).