

CRANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

A meeting of the Cranston Public Library Board of Trustees was held on Wednesday, May 14, 2025 at 6:00 pm at the Cranston Public Library, Oak Lawn Branch.

Present were:

Michael Goldberg

Lisa Kirshenbaum

R. Drayton Fair

Diane Schaefer

Jack Tregar

Ed Garcia, Library Director

Tayla Cardillo, Oak Lawn Branch Librarian

Allyson Van Wyk, Administrative Assistant

Excused: Regina Spirito, Dr. Taino Palermo, Julie Holden

INTRODUCTION: 6:01 pm

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 pm.

MINUTES:

A motion was made by Drayton Fair to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of April 9, 2025. Diane Schaefer seconded. Motion carried (5-0).

LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION REPORT:

Administration Updates

The FY26 budget was passed by the City Council. There were no amendments to the library's budget. Administration is currently reviewing the budget for potential cost saving measures and will have recommendations for the Board in June.

OLIS is moving forward with the Summer Reading Grants to libraries after temporarily suspending the awards due to uncertainty with IMLS funding. CPL will be receiving a \$2400 grant.

Julie Holden was a panelist on the May 6th Northeast Summit on Climate Adaptation for Library Facilities webinar series: **Libraries as Cooling Centers: Every Library Can Be One!** She spoke about how it is easy to open your library as a "cooling center" during heatwaves, and that Cranston has been a cooling (and warming) center for years. Some flexibility in code of conduct policies might be necessary during extreme weather events.

Julie Holden and Karen McGrath will be attending the “eBook Strategy Summit” at the Ferguson Library in Stamford, CT on May 14 & 15. Librarians from the Northeast, from Maryland to Maine, will be gathering to come up with a coordinated plan to combat high eBook prices and restrictive terms.

Judge McDonnell ruled in favor of the 21 state Attorneys General for a preliminary injunction halting the dismantling of IMLS. This suit was co-led by RI AG Neronha. OLIS has already been notified by IMLS that the agency will receive its supplemental award later this month. The American Library Association also filed a lawsuit in federal court and a temporary injunction was issued in that case as well.

The RI senate passed the Sub A version of the Freedom to Read Act bill by a vote of 30-4. All Cranston senators voted in favor. The bill now goes to the House.

Ed Garcia met with the new Parks and Rec Director on Monday, May 12, about the library’s landscaping. We are exploring quotes for private contractor to assume landscaping at the Auburn, Oaklawn, and Knightsville branch, as the parks and rec department’s does not have the proper equipment to properly maintain our smaller properties.

Buildings and Grounds

We are currently working with the city Purchasing Agent on an RFP for HVAC and boiler preventative maintenance services.

Exploring with the Purchasing Agent and insurance agent a new insurance policy for the library to potentially include building and contents coverage.

The Knightsville branch alarm system installation has been completed.

Programs

On Wednesday, April 16, Cranston Public Library commemorated Genocide Education Month with Victoria Atamian Waterman, author of *Who She Left Behind*, in conversation with Pauline Getzoyan, chair of the Rhode Island Holocaust and Genocide Education Commission. *Who She Left Behind* is a generational story of survival, love, and motherhood in the aftermath of the Armenian Genocide. In addition to our speakers, Steve and Dawn Porter from Stillwater Books in West Warwick were on site to sell Victoria's book. We had 24 attendees join us for this program, with a vibrant discussion during and after as Victoria signed copies of her book.

Staff Updates

Hall Librarian Zach Berger won the third place prize in the 2025 Notable Works’ Poetry Contest which focused on ‘healing and bridging the divide that misinformation can create as it pertains to our natural environment and social concerns.’ Tina Cane, Poet Laureate of Rhode Island was the final judge of the contest.

Joseph Silveria has been hired as our new IT Manager. He will officially start on May 19th.

Elena Rios, Youth Services Librarian, has left CPL. Her last day was April 24th. The position has been posted.

Karen McGrath, Auburn branch Librarian has announced her retirement after 39 years of service. Her last day in the library is scheduled to be July 2. The programs and services managed by Karen in addition to her branch management duties at the Auburn Branch will be reviewed to evaluate whether they will stay at Auburn or be distributed to other branches.

Director Garcia is the incoming President of Ocean State Libraries and will take office at the conclusion of the OSL membership meeting on May 15th.

BUDGET REPORT:

The budget actuals as of April 30, 2025 and the FY 2026 Library Budget Forecast were presented and reviewed.

OAK LAWN BRANCH LIBRARIAN REPORT:

Adult Services

Over the past six months, the Branch Librarian has completed extensive weeding of the Adult Fiction and Adult Non-Fiction collections to improve the overall quality and condition of the collection. Collection maintenance at Oak Lawn has focused on creating a highly browsable collection based on community interests, while relying on the Central Library and other branches for materials covering a wider variety of topics.

Youth Services

In Spring 2024, the Oak Lawn Branch began offering a second weekly storytime on Wednesdays. This decision was based on census data indicating a large population of children under the age of five in the Oak Lawn neighborhood. Since its implementation, the additional storytime has been well attended, and the Branch Librarian has received positive feedback from patrons.

During the 2024 Summer Reading Program, attendance at school-age programs at Oak Lawn increased by over 100 participants. During the school year, The branch has been offering school-age programming once a month on Saturdays. Successful and well-attended examples include *Escape from Wonderland* (an escape room), *Life-Sized Candyland*, and *Dinosaur Explorers* (a program with dinosaur themed crafts and activities).

As part of the Youth Services Department-wide collection development initiative, the Branch Librarian has conducted significant weeding of the J Non-Fiction, Picture Books, and J Chapter Books collections. These efforts have allowed for the relocation of various collections to areas better suited to the library's space and patron needs.

Building and Grounds

Over the past year, the Branch Librarian, in collaboration with the Assistant Director and Youth Services Coordinator, has reorganized several library collections to better utilize available space and meet the evolving needs of patrons.

- Adult New Books and Large Print materials have been relocated to a new shelving unit near the library's entrance.
- The public computers were moved to the alcove next to the circulation desk, and the Teen collection—formerly in that space—was relocated to the back of the library to create a dedicated teen area, complete with relocated furniture.
- Additional seating, including a parent-child chair, was added to the Children's Room to accommodate the high demand for seating before and after programs.
- Children's Non-Fiction materials were moved to the front side of the main stacks to increase their visibility and accessibility for young patrons.

ADJOURNMENT: 6:55pm

A motion was made by to adjourn the regular meeting of May 14, 2025 by Jack Tregar. Diane Scheafer seconded. Motion carried (5-0).