

CRANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

July 8th, 2026 – 6:00pm

Cranston Public Library, Auburn Branch Program Room

Present were:

Michael Goldberg

R. Drayton Fair

Lisa Kirshenbaum (arrived 6:15pm)

Diane Schaefer

Jack Tregar

Ed Garcia (Library Director)

Julie Holden (Assistant Library Director)

Nomi Hague (Auburn Branch Librarian)

Allyson Van Wyk (Secretary to the Board)

Excused:

Regina Spirito, Taino Palermo

INTRODUCTION:

The regular meeting of the Cranston Public Library Board of Trustees was called to order on Wednesday, July 8, 2026 at 6:01pm at the Cranston Public Library, Auburn Branch Program Room.

MINUTES:

A correction was noted: Page 7, line 5 “bene” to “been”.

A motion was made by Jack Tregar to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of June 10, 2026, as amended. Diane Schaefer seconded. Motion carried (4-0).

BOARD COMMUNICAIONS:

Ed Garcia & Michael Goldberg presented Jack Tregar with a citation from Mayor Kenneth Hopkins thanking him for his 14 years of service (10 as Chair) of the Board of Trustees.

LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION REPORT:

Administrative Updates

-Ocean State Libraries (OSL) membership agreement was executed for FY27.

-The Library received a \$1000 grant from the Centerville Bank Charitable Foundation in support of the summer reading program.

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- The Library received \$251.54 per branch (excluding Arlington) from the City of Laurel vs. Cintas class action suite for a total of \$1,257.70.
- The Library will be receiving an additional \$32,411 in state aid in the approved FY27 budget. This is a larger amount than was previously anticipated.
- The Friends of the Library has purchased two new 3D printers for the C-Lab.
- The Rhode Island ebook bills have become law as of June 24th. The Governor did not sign the legislation and it became law six days after transmission.
- We have been having parking issues with parishioners of the Church of the Ascension next to the Auburn branch. They are parking in the library lot when the building is open. At some point in the past, the library agreed to let the church use the parking lot on Sundays. Ed will be scheduling an appointment with the Pastor to discuss the situation.
- Director Garcia has applied to the Rhode Island Foundation for a \$15,000 capacity grant to help offset the cost of a consultant to conduct a community assessment and help craft a new five-year strategic plan. The Library's current plan runs through 2027. The cost of a consultant will likely be in the \$30,000 range. Director Garcia will return to the Trustees for approval of additional funding if needed.

Buildings and Grounds

As it has been noted as functionally obsolete and deficient, we will be replacing the Oaklawn fire alarm panel with a new Fire Lite alarm panel as part of the AES radio box upgrade project with funds from the CLMG grant.

CLMG grant projects updates: New security cameras have been ordered for the Central Library and Knightsville Branch (\$6,000). Storage and Shelving for the C-Lab have been ordered through WB Mason MHEC pricing (\$10,000).

The Library is having Atlantic Elevator completely filter the existing hydraulic fluid/oil in the Hall elevator to remove contaminants. They have indicated that this will extend the life of the elevator and improve its performance while we work on replacing the elevator.

The Central Library experienced a drainage emergency on 7/7/26 that resulted in the closure of the public restrooms. A plumber was called and necessary repairs were made to reopen the restrooms.

The Auburn branch restroom project was approved in the FY26 Capital Budget. Director Garcia hopes to move forward with an RFP for the project by September 2026.

Programming

-The Web They Wove: Women & Their Wardrobes During the American Revolution

On Tuesday, June 23, 55 people learned about what life was like in Revolutionary War-era New England for women and the clothes they wore. Two costumed historical interpreters from Dirty Blue Shirts used slides, fabric samples, and clothes to explain what was worn and why. They told how the British took flocks of sheep from colonists forcing them to hide sheep so they would have

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enough wool for their needs, for example. This fascinating talk was co-sponsored by the Cranston Arts Council and the Cranston 250 Commission.

Summer Reading Kick-off

On June 25, from 4:30-6:30 PM, youth services kicked off the summer reading program with a free book fair at the William Hall Library. At this event, we gave away 398 youth books, which is 109 more than we gave away at a similar event last year. From 2023 to 2025, we held the summer reading kick-off at Sprague Mansion in collaboration with the Cranston Historical Society, but the cost of holding the event there kept increasing. By hosting the event at the William Hall Library, we were able to shift our spending to fun activities, and the results were increased attendance and more opportunities for staff to interact with the public. For kid's activities, the event included snacks, a musical statue garden, a dragon egg hunt, a hidden picture gallery, and a Minecraft bounce house. There was also a welcome tent with a Spanish/English interpreter and representatives from adult services and Cranston Public Schools, and in the auditorium, community partners tabled and the CPLA sold t-shirts. All staff plus more than 30 teen volunteers contributed to creating a warm, welcoming atmosphere that we hope will inspire many to return to the library all summer.

Staff Updates

Director Garcia gave several presentations at the recent annual conference of the American Library Association in Chicago June 25-30. Ed gave a legislative update on the RI eBook legislation at ALA eBook day, delivered a white paper on the RI Freedom to Read Act at the Law4Librarians symposium, was part of a panel discussion on building coalitions based on the RI Freedom to Read Coalition model, and was a panelist on "Leading ALA Into the Next 150 Years". Director Garcia also served as emcee for the inauguration for ALA President Dr. Maria McCauley.

BUDGET REPORT:

Director Garcia presented the fiscal year operating budget report for the period ending June 30, 2026. These are unaudited final budget numbers.

The Restricted Funds report will be brought to the September meeting.

The final FY26 Financial Reports will be brought to the Board this Fall once the audited financials are released by the City.

AUBURN BRANCH LIBRARIAN REPORT: By Branch Librarian Nomi Hague

Building:

-The Auburn Public Library Association continues to do a stellar job of fundraising each year. Thanks to their efforts we were able to purchase the following for the children's room: 12 chairs to match the 4 recently purchased elementary school tables, a small preschool table with 4 chairs, and new toys and manipulatives.

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-For the past several years a generous donor, Janet Feyler, has given funds to specifically be used for children's programming at Auburn. This enables us to bring in presenters this summer from the Reptile Nook, Audubon Society, and the Denison Nature Center.

-New blinds were purchased to cover the bare windows in front of the staff work area.

-Hours were restructured to allow patrons library access earlier in the day on Thursday while still providing patrons access two evenings a week until 6pm. Patron response has been positive and more people are using the library on Thursdays.

Programming:

The Auburn library works to provide high quality programs keeping in mind the building's smaller program space and parking constraints.

Youth: Our children's programs continue to be well attended. We offer two weekly morning story times, one monthly early evening family story hour, one monthly Saturday STEAM program called Little Lab which is structured around a specific topic and two opportunities per week for teen volunteering. Central youth services staff came out to provide K-5 programming this Fall and Spring. Program highlights include an April school vacation week Creatures of the Night program by Roger Williams Zoo with an attendance of 29, a Little Lab Dinosaur program with an attendance of 47, and a family story hour that included a Kids Reading Across RI free book giveaway with an attendance of 46. This summer offers weekly K-5 programs, a weekly story time, a weekly story and art program and many opportunities for teens to volunteer. All programs and teen volunteering opportunities are off to a strong start and are so far filled to capacity.

Adult: In addition to a weekly knitting group that has met at Auburn for over a decade, the following new programs have been added this year for adults: a monthly book group, a yoga series, a Mah Jongg series, and a gardening workshop. All have been well attended with Mah Jongg being the most popular and generating a full wait list each week. An adult craft program will also take place as part of our adult summer reading program offerings.

Collections:

The fall and winter were spent relabeling, reshelving and reclassifying the entire adult and children's nonfiction collection into the traditional Dewey decimal system which is used by the rest of our Cranston library locations. This large and time-consuming project could not have been accomplished without the help of tech services and youth services staff. There was no impact to patrons and the collections were always accessible to the public. Simultaneously, much weeding and updating of the adult nonfiction collection also took place. In general, weeding is always ongoing across all collections to ensure that current, high quality, attractive and easy to locate materials are available for all ages.

Staff:

Auburn staff continue to be kind, friendly, and helpful which contributes to creating a welcoming and positive environment for all our patrons.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Nomi Hague,
Auburn Branch Library Branch Librarian

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

Adoption of Naming and Recognition Policy:

The draft Naming and Recognition Policy was presented. The Trustees have authority for decisions on naming and recognition of library spaces. This policy codifies that authority.

There was a question from Mr. Fair concerning the duration of the naming opportunities, Director Garcia responded that the Board would have the discretion to both renew a naming opportunity after the duration has ended as stated in the policy or revise the policy to change the duration limits.

A motion was made by Jack Tregar to adopt the Naming and Recognition Policy as presented. Drayton Fair seconded. Motion carried (5-0).

Adoption of Finance Policy:

The draft Finance Policy was presented. The Board had directed Director Garcia to codify all the various longstanding financial practices of the library into a single policy. The policy is grounded in the authority of the Trustees as established by Rhode Island General Laws, the city charter, and RI case law. Director Garcia had reviewed the draft policy with Dr. Palermo prior to the meeting. He recommended some amended language to further align small purchases language in Section 200.10 (c) with RI. Gen. Laws. The policy also incorporated the previously adopted policy concerning spending from the Peterson Memorial Trust.

A motion was made by Jack Tregar to adopt the Finance Policy as amended and incorporating the Peterson Memorial Trust Policy into the Finance Policy. Lisa Kirshenbaum seconded. Motion carried (5-0).

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was by Jack Tregar to adjourn the regular meeting of July 8, 2026 at 7:04pm. Diane Schaefer seconded. Motion carried (5-0).

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