

**CRANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES**

**September 9th, 2026 – 6:00pm**

Cranston Public Library, C-Lab

**Present were:**

*Michael Goldberg*

*R. Drayton Fair*

*Diane Schaefer*

*Regina Spirito*

*Ed Garcia (Library Director)*

*Julie Holden (Assistant Library Director)*

*Allyson Van Wyk (Secretary to the Board)*

**Excused:**

*Taino Palermo, Lisa Kirshenbaum, Kate Felder*

**INTRODUCTION:**

The regular meeting of the Cranston Public Library Board of Trustees was called to order on Wednesday, September 9, 2026 at 6:00pm at the Cranston Public Library, C-Lab.

**MINUTES:**

A motion was made by Drayton Fair to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of July 6, 2026. Diane Schaefer seconded. Motion carried (4-0).

**BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:**

Ed Garcia & Michael Goldberg sent a Certificate of Appreciation to Jack Tregar on behalf of the Trustees for his time on the Board of Trustees.

Michael Goldberg and Drayton Fair were reappointed, and Kate Felder was appointed to the Board of Trustees for three-year terms by the City Council.

**LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION REPORT:**

Administrative Updates

-The RITEAF annual form was submitted to Ocean State Libraries for the eRate program.

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-The Library received a \$5,000 grant from the entire Cranston House delegation to help fund ESL classes at Central and Hall. Reps. Art Handy and Chris Paplauskas came to the Central Library on August 21st for a check presentation with Director Garcia. This event was covered by the *Cranston Herald*.

-The Library completed our annual Rhode Island resource sharing certification to maintain our required membership in the Library of Rhode Island (LORI) network.

-The OLIS annual survey and state aid applications were completed on September 22.

-The Library has been authorized by OLIS to expand our application for endowment-based state aid to include the values and expenditures from the Peterson Memorial Family Trust and the Cranston Public Library Association investment accounts in addition to the William Hall Free Library Trust endowment.

-One of the conditions for the CLMG grant is proof of ownership of the library buildings. We are required to provide deeds for each building. Deeds were obtained from the city clerk's office. If grant funds are spent on a building not owned by the city which is the case with the William Hall Library, in addition to the deeds we are required to also sign an MOU with the Hall Trust stating the building will remain a library for at least five years after the grant completion. This MOU was executed by Hall Trust President Mike Milito and Board Chair Michael Goldberg (included in board packet).

-The library will receive \$45,000 from CCAP as part of the R.I. Dept. of Health opioid settlement funds. We will use the funding to start a "Read to Recovery" program, which will be a no-return recovery and resource center located in all of our locations. The idea behind no-returns is that patrons can take books on addiction, grief, wellness, etc. without returning them, to reduce the stigma associated with traditional library lending models. The funding will also be used for programming, staff training, and online resources.

-The 2026 Simplified Continuity of Operations Plan (SCOOP) has been completed and submitted to OLIS. This disaster plan is required as part of the Minimum standards and regulations for public libraries.

-Ingram Library Services has invited Director Garcia and Assistant Director Holden to visit their distribution center in Chambersburg, PA on September 17. Ingram is holding an open house and tour of their new facilities and has invited libraries from the northeast to attend. The Library has utilized Ingram as our primary book vendor through a state contract since 2012. During the 4th quarter of 2025 into the 1st quarter of 2026 Ingram faced significant challenges fulfilling and shipping orders to CPL along with other libraries in the northeast. They have added new advanced logistics at the Chambersburg facility and want libraries to see how the changes have addressed the shipping issues. Ingram has offered to pay for travel and lodging costs for Garcia and Holden to attend. Director Garcia discussed with Solicitor Millea, who stated there is no violation of the RI Code of Ethics for us to attend. After the Solicitor's opinion, Director Garcia contacted Chair Goldberg to ask for authorization to proceed.

-Director Garcia had applied for an RI Foundation Capacity Building grant to fund the library's upcoming Community Assessment and Strategic Plan. The Cranston Public Library was not selected; however, Director Garcia will continue exploring other funding options for this program.

-The 2026 Peterson Memorial Trust annual disbursement has been received, totaling \$16,987.20.

### Buildings and Grounds

-All of the outdoor lights at William Hall Library that were non-operational have been repaired by the Hall Trust except two spotlights on the rear roof of the building. These two lights cover the rear entrance and parking lot. Repair of these lights in process.

-Repairs were made at the Oaklawn branch by the Highway Department to fix a pothole starting in the parking lot and a large crack in the sidewalk in front of the building.

-The new RTU1 unit was successfully installed on August 17 by Delta Mechanical. This project was part of the CLMG grant.

-The Library has contracted with Shanahan Sound to install Auracast equipment in the Central Library Giles Room and the Hall auditorium. Auracast is new technology that provides sound to people with hearing loss that wear hearing aids with Bluetooth. This project is part of the CLMG grant and the MHEC MPA was used to procure Shanahan. The equipment will be installed by mid-September.

-Ed Garcia submitted an RFP for snow removal in FY27 to the City Purchasing Agent on September 4. The RFP will be released on September 15 and bids will be due to the Cranston Board of Purchase on October 6. The Trustees will select the successful bidder at the October 14 Trustees meeting and will be sent to the Board of Purchase for their October 20 meeting.

-On August 12, a large sinkhole or two opened up on Wilbur Avenue right near the Oaklawn branch, closing down the road in that area. We closed the Oaklawn library at 1 pm that day, but remained open for the rest of the time that it took to fix Wilbur, which was several days. The library parking lot was only accessible via Locust Glen Drive.

-The Hall Trust has signed a contract with KCI Paving to construct a new ramp to the Hall auditorium. This work will bring the library into compliance with the Governor's Commission on Disabilities which cited the library for deficiencies for the ramp's slope and railings. This work will take place in spring 2027 to avoid disruptions with existing auditorium schedules.

-The new boiler installation at the Hall Library is expected to be completed by the end of the week. This project was paid for by a 2024 Champlin Foundation grant.

-The Library was notified in 2025 by Rhode Island Energy that they needed to update the gas system in our area since the existing distribution system, located across Broad Street from the front of the library, is past its useful life. Because of the layout of the existing distribution system, coupled with the number of streets and residential and commercial driveways that connect with Broad Street, there is not enough space to install a new distribution connection on the same side of Broad Street as the existing system. They can't simply replace the old system with the new because that would

interrupt gas service for the entire area while the new system was installed. The new system must be fully installed and tested before the old system can be taken off line and the new system connected to the network. We were informed by Rhode Island Energy about a year ago that the only place to install the new system was in front of the southern end of the sidewalk, just north of the exit driveway. R.I. Energy arrived unannounced on August 31 to start this work which will probably take 4-5 weeks to complete.

The work will include the removal and replacement of the affected portion of the sidewalk, which will be protected by a 6-foot temporary fence during construction, and the closure of the sidewalk with signage directing pedestrians to use the opposite side of the street. The main entrance of the library will be open and available to patrons during the work. R.I. Energy will install a new sidewalk, at its expense, from approximately the southern side of the pedestrian entrance to the northern side of the exit driveway, and will attempt to mirror the finish of the existing sidewalk. They will be responsible for returning everything to the existing conditions.

We posted the following alert on our website, social media accounts, and by email to registered patrons.

“Please be advised that RI Energy is currently working to relocate the gas line station on Broad Street near the William Hall Library. This project will temporarily impact local traffic and library access.

Construction will take place on weekdays between 7:00 AM and 3:00 - 4:00 PM, and is expected to take approximately five weeks.

During work hours, Broad Street will be closed to through traffic between Ferncrest/Shaw Avenue and Albert Avenue, along with the section of Columbia Street near the library.

Traffic will be detoured around the area; however, local traffic, including library patrons, will be permitted to pass. Let the officer on duty know that you are visiting the library and that you will be allowed to pass through.

The closure cones and detour signs will be removed in the evenings and on weekends.

Additionally, until construction is complete, a section of the sidewalk on the library side of Broad Street will be fenced off. Pedestrians can navigate the area using the crosswalk to the opposite side of the street or by walking across the library's front lawn to access the building.

We appreciate your patience while this project is completed. Please contact the William Hall Library at (401) 781-2450 if you have any questions.”

### Programming

-On August 24th, the library partnered with the *Cranston Herald* to host a candidate forum at the Central Library for the Democratic primary citywide City Council candidates. There were 70 people in

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attendance and the forum was also livestreamed on the library's YouTube channel. General election candidate forums are planned for October 19 & 26.

-The Library received a Yiddish Book Center's 2027 "Between Two Worlds" Exploring Jewish Culture and Religion through Yiddish Literature program grant through the American Library Association. CPL was one of 40 libraries chosen nationwide. As part of the grant, the library will host book groups featuring 4 Yiddish titles in partnership with the Sandra Bornstein Holocaust Education Center. The library will receive \$2,000 for program costs and is required to send one staff member for a training session at the Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, MA from Nov. 15-17. The grant also covers all travel and lodging costs for the training session. Adult Services Coordinator Dave Bartos will attend the training on behalf of the library.

-Library card design contest: The contest started at the beginning of Summer Reading - July 31. Winners are included in the packet.

### Staff Updates

-Cataloger Christine Hall and Teen Librarian Alyssa Taft have been invited to present at the New England Library Association conference in Burlington, VT October 25-27.

-Director Garcia has been invited to present at the Sharjah International Book Fair in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates from November 7-10. Garcia will be presenting with ALA Immediate Past President Sam Helmick "Libraries as Critical Infrastructure: How Partnerships, Public Policy, and Community Leadership Build Stronger Communities". Travel and lodging are being paid for by the Sharjah Book Authority. There was safety concerns brought up by the Trustees due to the Iran War and State Department travel advisories to the Middle East. Director Garcia will monitor the situation before making a final decision whether to attend.

### **BUDGET REPORT:**

Director Garcia presented the FY27 Budget and Restricted Funds Reports for the period ending August 31, 2026, and the drafted FY26 Financial Reports. These have not yet been audited by the City.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### Approval of Revision to Library Use Policy:

Ed Garcia presented the two sections of the Library Use Policy with substantive revisions.

In section 300.3 (2), text has been added to expand the policy about defacement of library materials to include information that the library will report certain types of defacement that seem to target protected classes to the American Library Association Office of Intellectual Freedom and

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that those offenses may potentially be hate crimes in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 12-19-38. This matches similar language from the Request for Reconsideration Policy.

In section 330.4 (11) prop weapons would now be prohibited in the Library. All endnotes have also been revised to Blue Book legal style for legislation and ordinances.

A motion was made by Diane Schaefer to approve the revised Library Use Policy as presented. Regina Spirito seconded. Motion carried (4-0).

Approval to install an exterior acknowledgement sign at the Oaklawn branch:

The Cranston Public Library is working with local nonprofit organizations Cranston Cares and the Cranston Rotary to bring volunteers together to paint the exterior of the Oaklawn branch. This badly needed project will take place on 9/26, 10/3, and 10/10. As part of this project, the groups have requested a 3'6" by 3'0" metal sign with logos acknowledging those groups who helped with the project, be mounted on the exterior of the building. This request was first brought to the Cranston Historic Commission, as the building is located in the Oaklawn historic district. The Commission approved the request on August 12, 2026.

Drayton Fair recommended that the sign be mounted on pressure treated posts near the building, rather than mounted directly to the building to preserve the historical integrity of the structure and allow for easier maintenance.

A motion was made by Drayton Fair to approve the addition of an exterior sign at the Oaklawn branch, separate from the building as advised, in accordance with the Naming and Recognition Policy. Regina Spirito seconded. Motion carried (4-0).

Approval of new fee for certain notary services for FY27:

For several years the library has offered free notary services to the public even though we are allowed to charge for such services. Library Administration has reached the conclusion that a nominal fee for these services will provide the Library with additional revenue that is needed due to the level funding of the library's operating budget by the city of Cranston.

The Library Administration is recommending a \$2.00 fee per notary stamp be adopted starting September 21, 2026. Most notary transactions are between 1-4 stamps.

A motion was made by Drayton Fair to approve adding fees to notary services as presented to start on October 1, 2026, with a request for an update in six months. Diane Schaefer seconded. Motion carried (4-0).

**ADJOURNMENT:**

A motion was made by Diane Schaefer to adjourn the regular meeting of September 9, 2026 at 7:26pm. Drayton Fair seconded. Motion carried (4-0).

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