

CRANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

October 8, 2025

Cranston Central Library, James T. Giles Room

6:00 pm

Present were:

Michael Goldberg

Regina Spirito

R. Drayton Fair

Lisa Kirshenbaum

Diane Schaefer

Jack Tregar

Ed Garcia, Library Director

Julie Holden, Assistant Library Director

Not present:

Dr. Taino Palermo (excused)

INTRODUCTION:

The regular meeting of the Cranston Public Library Board of Trustees was called to order on Wednesday, October 8, 2025 at 6:01 pm at the Cranston Central Library.

MINUTES:

A motion was made by Jack Tregar to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of September 10, 2025. Drayton Fair seconded. Motion carried (6-0).

BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:

Request from US. PIRG to sign open letter to Microsoft concerning ending free support of Windows 10 operating system. The board declined to take any action.

LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION REPORT:

Administrative Updates

-The Annual Cranston Public Library Association book sale will take place on November 1st at William Hall Library.

-The Governor signed a law passed by the General Assembly this summer which amends RIGL 28-14-12 as follows: At the start of employment, an employer shall provide each of its employees, a written notice, in English, containing the following information:

- (1) The rate or rates of pay and basis thereof, including whether the employee is to be paid by the hour, shift, day, week, salary, piece, commission, or other method, and the specific application of any additional rates;
 - (2) Allowances, if any, claimed, pursuant to permitted meals and lodging;
 - (3) Employer's policy on sick, vacation, personal leave, holidays and hours;
 - (4) The employee's employment status and whether the employee is exempt from minimum wage and/or overtime;
 - (5) A list of deductions that may be made from the employee's pay;
 - (6) The number of days in the pay period, the regularly scheduled payday, and the payday on which the employee will receive the first payment of wages earned;
 - (7) The legal name of the employer and the operating name of the employer, if different from its legal name;
 - (8) The physical address of the employer's main office or principal place of business, and its mailing address if different; and
 - (9) The telephone number of the employer.
- (b) The employer shall keep a copy of the notice provided pursuant to the provisions of subsection (a) of this section, signed by each employee, thereby acknowledging their receipt of the notice.
- (c) Any person who violates the provisions of this section shall be punished by a fine of four hundred dollars (\$400) for a first or second violation and any subsequent violation shall be subject to the penalties provided in § 28-14-17(a).

This statute takes effect on January 1, 2026. The library administration is currently making preparations on how to provide this information as outlined. Our attorney also suggests that moving forward the library provides all new full-time hires with copies of the collective bargaining agreement with a signed acknowledgment form. Currently the union supplies copies of the cba to new full-time hires.

-Over the next few months, the library will be removing the "Glades" at the Auburn branch and returning to a Dewey Decimal-based collection. A glade refers to a category within a Dewey-free classification system where books are grouped together into broad, thematic areas rather than by

traditional Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) numbers, grouping items from different DDC classes that are of interest to similar user groups. We moved to a glades approach at Auburn 13 years ago after a staff visit to the Darien (CT) Library which had moved to glades. After 13 years, administration and the new Auburn branch librarian determined a return to DDC was warranted for ease of patron use and consistency with the other six CPL locations.

- Ocean State Libraries voted to approve at the September membership meeting a new online Library card application. The details are still being worked out and this will likely launch in February 2026.

- In consultation with the Auburn Branch Librarian, the library administration intends to eliminate the Friday 5-6pm hour from the Auburn branch schedule starting October 17th, 2025. The staff reports minimal door counts during this last hour of the day. We have also been having difficulty scheduling part-time staff to work that hour. This Friday hour was added at least 15 years ago to allow for CPL to meet the Unique hours requirement of 64 for our population size in the *Minimum Standards for Public Libraries*. This would drop us to 63 unique hours and we would need to file a waiver with OLIS for that requirement. However, the standards are being revised and when adopted next year the unique hours will be reduced for us to 60.

Buildings and Grounds

- The Oaklawn bubbler which was not operating has been fixed by the Building Maintenance Department.

- The library is working on an RFP for renovations for the Auburn branch public restrooms. This was approved in the FY26 capital budget.

Programs

- Back to school recap

In the 4-week period between August 20 and September 17, YS staff attended 6 back-to-school events at public schools in Cranston, providing information about library programs, signing people up for library cards, and in some cases offering fun activities for kids. Three of the events were parent-only "Open House" events, and three were back-to-school events open to children and parents. YS staff brought Branch7 to the events that included children. Since there's no master calendar of events like this, we mostly attend the ones to which we are invited. Five of the events were at schools where we have an established relationship, and one was at Peters Elementary School, a school in the Knightsville neighborhood that we haven't visited since 2020. In total, YS staff interacted with over 300 people at these events.

- Flight Path grant

The Cranston Public Library has been awarded a \$500 grant to bring programs about bird migration to the community. This is being done in partnership with Tangled Bank, a production company founded by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute which has partnered with the Space Science Institute and its

Star Library Network, a hands-on learning network for libraries and their communities across the US, to develop an initiative called Spark of Science @ My Library. Film screenings and bird-related events will take place at the library over the next year in partnership with local groups such as the Audubon Society. The grant was applied for by Adult Services librarian Robin Nyzio, who will also be managing the programs.

-September was Library Card Sign-Up Month. This year we invited new library cardholders to add a book to our display "shelf." Patrons could color a book or use one of our pre-printed designs. The display was up at Central. We were able to fill the display, and it was a beautiful representation of our new library cardholders. This year we had 219 new cards! Far surpassing last year's total of 124. This was our highest number in 5 years.

-CPL librarians hosted a library table at the "Guardians of Light" health fair for veterans at the National Guard armory on New London Ave on 9/27. The event was in honor of "September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month" and provided resources for our veterans who may be in crisis. The library has frequently worked with the Providence VA on these outreach events.

Staff Updates

-Dave Bartos, coordinator of adult services at Cranston Public Library, will be serving as vice-chair of the Rhode Island Holocaust and Genocide Education Commission (RIHGEC), appointed by the Governor Daniel J McKee through October 2027. The mission of the RIHGEC is to empower educators and their school communities to integrate learning about the Holocaust and other genocides as integral parts of their school cultures and studies, as well as provide public programming around the state to further awareness of the Holocaust and other genocides.

-Director Garcia will be participating in Common Ground for Intellectual Freedom from October 20-22 in Little Rock, AR. The in-person convening is invite only for librarians and allied groups working to defend intellectual freedom. There will be about 70 attendees. This event is co-hosted by Urban Librarians Unite, Library Futures, Library Freedom Project, and EveryLibrary Institute, and sponsored by the Mellon Foundation. The Mellon Foundation will cover all of Director Garcia's travel and lodging expenses.

-The administration has entered into a three-year contract extension with Assistant Library Director Julie Holden.

Additions

-The William Hall Trust will need to postpone the installation of the new boiler at Hall until the spring. The Champlin Foundation, who provided the grant funding for this project, has been notified.

-The RI Center for the Book "Page Turner Award" is being presented to Director Ed Garcia on November 13 for his work on the Freedom to Read law. Board members are encouraged to check their email for the invitation. The event will take place at the William Hall Library.

-The Cranston Arts Commission annual art show is now being shown in the James T. Giles Room at the Central library. This year's theme is Clothing: Costume, Expression, Inspiration. The Commission is also hosting some fashion design classes for middle school students at the end of October.

BUDGET REPORT:

The FY26 budget actuals as of September 30, 2025 were presented and reviewed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Approval of revised Employee Handbook – Section 18.8 – “Menopause support”

A motion was made to approve the revised Employee Handbook by Lisa Kirshenbaum, Regina Spirito seconded. Motion carried (6-0).

NEW BUSINESS

Action Item: Revision of Employee Handbook – *11.14 Contagious Respiratory Illness Policy, 11.15 Health Emergency Response Policy, and 23.4 Gifts and Honorariums*

A motion was made to approve revised Employee Handbook by Drayton Fair. Jack Tregar seconded. Motion carried (6-0).

Action Item: Approval of revision to the Library-Initiated Programs and Display Policy

A motion was made to approve the revised Library-Initiated Programs and Display Policy by Drayton Fair, Regina Spirito seconded. Motion carried (6-0).

Discussion of volunteer project to paint the exterior of the Oaklawn branch with potential use of Reserve Funds for supplies

A motion was made to approve the use of Reserve Funds for painting supplies by Lisa Kirshenbaum, Diane Schaefer seconded. Motion carried (6-0).

CLOSED SESSION:

No motion for a closed session was made by the board.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:00 pm

A motion was made to adjourn the regular meeting of October 8, 2025 by Jack Tregar, Diane Schaefer seconded. Motion carried (6-0).