

Library Board Meeting Minutes

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2025, 8:00 a.m.
BENNETT MARTIN PUBLIC LIBRARY
LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Present: Jackie Ostrowicki, Joe Shaw, Morgan Gerteisen, Patty Beutler, Marilyn Moore. Arrived late: Terri Dunlap. Absent: Lisa Hale, Nichole Bogen.

City of Lincoln Staff present: Ryan Wieber, Jodene Glaesemann, Sarah Dale, Jennifer Hatfield, LeeAnn Sergeant, Jocelyn Golden.

CALL TO ORDER AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF POSTING OF OPEN MEETINGS ACT

President Ostrowicki called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and announced the Open Meetings Law and today's agenda were posted and available for review.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA*

Ostrowicki noted that the Agenda was posted according to the Open Meetings Act of the State of Nebraska. Beutler moved approval of the corrected Agenda. Moore seconded. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Gerteisen, Beutler, Ostrowicki, Shaw, Moore – AYE. Motion carried 5-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

No Public Comment.

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 21, 2025 MEETING MINUTES*

Gerteisen moved to approve the October 21, 2025 meeting minutes. Shaw seconded. There was no discussion. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Ostrowicki, Shaw, Moore, Gerteisen – AYE. Beutler – Abstained. Motion passed 4-0 with one (1) abstention.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee on Administration

Met to discuss evaluation of Director, will discuss in closed session following Board Observations.

Committee on Buildings and Grounds

Did not meet.

Committee on Technology

Did not meet.

Committee on Finance

Meeting was cancelled.

Treasurer Dunlap arrived at this time.

Approval of Monthly Recap of Expenditures

Treasurer Dunlap shared that the Operational Expenditures for October 2025 were \$1,318,068.32. The Total of Expenditures of Other Funds was \$434,154.04 for Total Expenditures of \$1,752,222.36. Dunlap motioned approval. Gerteisen seconded. There was no discussion. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Beutler, Ostrowicki, Dunlap, Shaw, Moore, Gerteisen – AYE. Motion carried 6-0.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Foundation for Lincoln City Libraries

Executive Director, Tiffani Hill was absent but sent reports to each member. Director Wieber noted lots of good news in the reports, lots of presentations have been made, and meetings generated. He shared that there are verbal commitments made from \$250,000 up to 1 million. He expects more detail on those in the coming months. He noted that fundraising is up to approximately 50% of the total needed. Wieber shared, there is one large ask out for \$5 million to a local foundation, which is hoped to be settled by year end. He said, the Foundation's aim is to have 80% of the total committed from majority local donors before seriously working with any potential donors in Omaha.

Wieber reported that the Foundation Board is now meeting monthly instead of quarterly. Board liaisons are Joe, Jackie and Terri. Dunlap reported that one of the Foundation Board ideas is a 'Penny a Page' donations program for local kids, where kids can solicit friends and family as sponsors for their reading.

One Book One Lincoln (OBOL)

Gerteisen shared that there were approximately 225 in attendance for the OBOL Winning Author, and having her here in person was the cherry on top. She's heard very good feedback from the community. Wieber shared kudos to Jen Jackson for her interview. The recording will be posted to the City's YouTube Channel and seen on Public Access as well.

NEW BUSINESS

Approval of Polley Music Library Annual Report

President Ostrowicki announced that Librarian Scott Scholz would be presenting the year's review from Polley Music Library. Wieber thanked Scott for his excellent work presenting live music, and his work with KZUM. His weekend shows are both amazing and eclectic. He reminded the Board that the approval of the Polley Annual Report each year is a requirement of the Polley Trust.

Scholz reported that it's been a great year. He's started working on the Polley design for the new Central Library, and has been using the City's new Music Box (MBX) facility across the street, has been a fun, productive year. Wieber asked Scholz to elaborate on how the MBX supposed to work and his role? Scholz explained that the plans are still in process, but have been hampered by a lack of funds for staff. It's part of the downtown music advisory group. The Downtown Lincoln Association got grant funding to build out the space, the use of which was donated to them by the City. It was initially aimed at being rehearsal space for teens and young adults, although older musicians are the majority of current users. The space has great equipment, small capacity, rehearsal and recording space. It has been great for hosting Polley events. There are huge screens behind the stage, making it great for presentations. The new Central Library space will be larger, with a podcast area, but not to the same level of refinement. Beutler asked, do you provide tech support? Yes, with only one part time staffer currently, folks are asking Scott for help too. Wieber encouraged members to view the facility, it's been a great collaboration that's benefited Polley. He also

noted that at the new central library, Polley will be more front and center. As there was no further discussion, President Ostrowicki asked for a motion to approve the Polley Annual Report. Shaw motioned approval. Dunlap seconded. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Ostrowicki, Dunlap, Shaw, Moore, Gerteisen, Beutler – AYE. Motion carried 6-0.

Approval of Schedule of 2026 Board Meeting Dates and Locations.

Ostrowicki directed members to the handout and asked if there were any changes or concerns. Wieber asked that the April meeting occur at Williams Branch instead of Eiseley Branch. Gerteisen motioned approval. Beutler seconded. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Dunlap, Shaw, Moore, Gerteisen, Beutler, Ostrowicki – AYE. Motion carried 6-0.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Ostrowicki noted that Thanksgiving was near and expressed her gratitude to members and staff for their dedication care. She read aloud a poem by Pulitzer Prize winning poet, Charles Simic titled “In the Library” and noted that the Board’s stewardship of the library allows for the community’s discoveries of the *great secret that lies on some shelf*, as written in the poem.

She noted that November is considered “National Family Literacy Month” and commended Lincoln City Libraries for their programming supporting families, like plentiful storytimes and the annual Summer Reading Challenge. She shared her experience hosting One Book One Lincoln (OBOL) winning author, Nguyễn Phan Quế Mai along with OBOL Committee Chair Alysia Diehl and selection committee member Mark Orr. They shared a meal and toured UNL campus. She noted that Mai’s presentation was so joyful and such a great experience for the audience. She also noted Mai’s active interaction with the community, with the Asian Community and Cultural Center, small booksellers and students at Lincoln High School. OBOL continues to be a strong program that brings us together as a community.

Library Board survey – will provide a summary next month. Several members of the Board took a field trip to the Columbus Library that opened in 2022. The Director gave positive feedback about light, lines of vision and ability to utilize flexible equipment and furnishings that can be moved around for different programs. Ostrowicki reviewed the first Advocacy Committee meeting, which met on October 27. This committee will support by engaging immediate past board members, influential and interested community members and other library champions. The committee will meet monthly during the building process of the new library.

Ostrowicki finished up by addressing the idea of ‘stewardship’ – that the Board’s job is to take this amazing thing that already exists and shepherd it forward, care for and support it. This resource belongs to everyone in the city, making it a real honor for all of us to be a part of the process. Finally, she thanked Administrative Aide Dale for her work supporting the Board.

ASSISTANT LIBRARY DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Assistant Director Glaesemann gave a staffing update, announcing the start date for Office Specialist Human Resources Clerk, Zymmir Rose McNeeLee and sharing the progress of an opening in the Virtual Services department.

Glaesemann updated the board on the expected date of receipt for the two new Bookmobiles, which is now mid-December. The process of ordering new collections for the bookmobiles has begun, and an updated service plan to include set routes as well as pop-up events. While CDL’s are not required for the new

vehicles, they are larger than usual so training will be provided for those wishing to learn. Brief discussion followed.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Central Library Update:

The process is moving quickly with great people all around working on the project. Sampson Construction and the Mill are being brought in on the process with an introduction to the Architects and a walk-through of 1111 "O" St. with Project Control and Superintendent Dan Miller. Sampson's contract is in the final stages, and approval via the City Council is expected in December.

An early priority will be estimating costs. The work the Architects have had done on the Schematic Designs will be tied in with Sampson's updated estimates. It's important to keep costs under control from the beginning. With respect to costs, the first month of electric bills on 1111 "O" came in quite high, which Superintendent Miller is working hard with LES to reduce.

The Design Assist contract for the Mill Coffee is ready for signatures, and a 5-year lease is the next step to be finalized this winter. The environmental goal has been established – the project will aim to earn two Green Globes, comparable to League Silver status for the building.

Estimates for the partner spaces build-out have been received, and each partner will meet with the architects to discuss those costs. There are no contracts in place yet, so the planning of the build-out costs will be a process of making sure both KZUM and UNL are comfortable with the plans. Beutler asked about UNL's plans for the space, Wieber described their ideas for displaying special collections and archives. They would provide full time staff, but also share space with Bennett Martin's local history space. Southeast Community College (SCC) is also interested in partnering with services (like cooking classes) but they wouldn't have a permanent space in the building.

The anticipated Centerpointe funding for a full-time Social Worker to work out of Bennett Martin starting in January, and moving to the new building when it opens is close to being announced.

LCL is dedicating some existing Keno money along with some carryover, totaling around one million dollars, to dedicate to the Central Library fund, similar to what was provided for the construction of Williams Branch. Finance will also provide a report of how the interest from the Municipal Improvement Bonds (MIBs) will be applied to the project, the estimate for those funds is close to \$500,000. Approximately one million dollars in funds from Park and Go will be geared towards facility and alley improvements, and approximately \$500,000 from Project "O" Street will be used for landscaping projects, etc. Brief discussion followed.

BOARD OBSERVATIONS

Beutler enjoyed listening to the Columbus Library Director pointing out the things that have worked well and things she'd have done differently. Gerteisen took away the benefit of having a front-facing, welcoming front desk and the idea that anything you can put on wheels, put on wheels. Some items aren't being used to their fullest extent due to a lack of staffing. Dunlap loved the tv screen to advertise library events. She hopes awareness of library programming can be increased. Shaw talked about visiting the Key West library, where there was a beautiful courtyard next door where they were hosting a book fair on a Saturday with local authors selling books, and the Friends provided him with some information and event schedules to share. Shaw hopes the outdoor space at the new Central Library can be used in a similar fashion. Ostrowski noted that bringing folks up to the third-floor outdoor space at the Central Library will be critical

to getting people in. Moore shared her experience meeting with the Advocacy group, and noted how honored the people sitting around the table were to be invited into a continuing relationship with the library project, and how much they care about the library, and how willing they are to spread the word. Everyone was highly engaged.

CLOSED SESSION

At 8:50 a.m. President Ostrowicki asked for a motion to move into Closed Session for the purpose of conducting the Annual Library Director's Employment Evaluation. Gerteisen so moved. Beutler seconded.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Shaw, Moore, Gerteisen, Beutler, Ostrowicki, Dunlap – AYE. Motion carried 6-0.

At 9:18 a.m. President Ostrowicki asked for a motion to move out of Closed Session. Shaw so moved.

Moore seconded. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Moore, Gerteisen, Beutler, Ostrowicki, Dunlap, Shaw, – AYE. Motion carried 6-0.

President Ostrowicki asked for a motion to Forward the Evaluation to Mayor's Chief of Staff, Rick Hoppe per Lincoln Municipal Code 2.25.040. Beutler so moved. Dunlap seconded. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Gerteisen, Beutler, Ostrowicki, Dunlap, Shaw, Moore, – AYE. Motion carried 6-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:19 a.m.