Library Board Meeting Minutes

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2026, 8:00 a.m.
BENNETT MARTIN PUBLIC LIBRARY
LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Present: Jacki Ostrowicki, Morgan Gerteisen, Terri Dunlap, Joe Yost, Marilyn Moore, Lisa Hale. Absent: Nichole Bogen, Patty Beutler.

City of Lincoln Staff present: Libraries; Ryan Wieber, Jodene Glaesemann, Jennifer Hatfield, Sarah Dale, LeeAnn Sergeant, Ali Bousquet. Other City Staff: Jocelyn Golden, Senior Attorney. Foundation for LCL Executive Director, Tiffani Hill.

CALL TO ORDER AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF POSTING OF OPEN MEETINGS ACT

President Hale called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m. and announced the Open Meetings Law was posted and available for review.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA*

Hale noted that the agenda was posted according to the Open Meetings Act of the State of Nebraska. Ostrowicki moved approval of the Agenda. Dunlap seconded. ROLL CALL VOTE: Gerteisen, Hale, Ostrowicki, Dunlap, Yost, Moore – AYE. Motion carried 6-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

No Public Comment.

APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER, 2026 MEETING MINUTES*

Gerteisen moved approval of the Minutes. Dunlap seconded. There was no discussion. ROLL CALL VOTE: Hale, Ostrowicki, Dunlap, Yost, Moore, Gerteisen – AYE. Motion carried 6-0.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee on Finance

*Approval of Monthly Recap of Expenditures

Treasurer Morgan Gerteisen shared the Recap of Expenditures for September, 2026. Total Operational Expenditures were $1,964,952.54. Total Expenditures from Other Funds was $551,512.11 for Total Expenditures of $2,516,464.65. Dunlap moved approval. Gerteisen seconded. There was no discussion. ROLL CALL VOTE: Ostrowicki, Dunlap, Yost, Moore, Gerteisen, Hale – YAY. Motion passed 6-0.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Foundation for Lincoln City Libraries

Foundation Director Tiffani Hill shared that some administrative work is being shared with board to help keep tasks moving and getting end of year emails sent to donors. Clover Frederick has been hired to direct the Foundation's strategic planning. Hill reported that the NLHA's 40th annual Spelling Bee is Wednesday night, the 28th from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. at Show Stoppers Family Dining and Entertainment. The Heritage Award will be presented and an interview

held with the winner. At the time of the meeting eight spellers had signed up. Hill indicated that the current Central Library fundraising total is up to $24.2 million. Brief discussion followed.

One Book One Lincoln

Gerteisen shared information about the 7:00 p.m. One Book One Lincoln Author Visit. She reported that several board members had gone to dinner the night before with Author, Bruce Holsinger and anticipated a wonderful event. She shared that Francie and Finch Bookshop will have a table set up to sell copies of *Culpability*, the Foundation will have a table to sell t-shirts and LNK TV will be filming the event for posting on YouTube.

Central Library Update

Director Wieber gave an update on the Central Library project. He noted that 100% of the construction docs have been delivered by BVH. The Gross Maximum Price for construction was settled this week at approximately $44.1 million. Once the final details are in place, Mayor will sign. The Value Engineering that was done to preserve the budget was effective, keeping the total at $60.4 million. More funding than was originally predicted will be coming from the bond proceeds, which will help offset the increased cost. Site prep is beginning. Time lapse cameras will be installed across the street to show the progress. Groundbreaking is planned for November 19th. Locations for artwork are being marked out, but fundraising specifically for artwork will be needed.

Accountant Jennifer Hatfield presented a report on Central Library Spending thus far. She showed the increase in Earned Interest that will add $1 million to the overall assets and showed the initial contributions from the Foundation for LCL. President Hale noted that the Board would like to see the to-date budget for the project expenses and compare it to the library's outlays. Wieber indicated he would get that report from Project Control for the board to review.

Summer Reading Challenge Report

Youth Services/Outreach Coordinator, Ali Bousquet reported on the 2026 Summer Reading Challenge. Registrations were up again to 21,603. Over ten thousand kids and parents visited storytimes this summer. Teen and adult registration were up. Splish Splash Storytimes are a huge event, with over 100 in attendance at each. The most popular presenters were Wildlife Encounters and Jeff Quinn, Magician. Book clubs, crafting programs, special programs for the US 250th anniversary, baseball games, pride parades and having the two new bookmobiles in business rounded out the summer. Summer outreach bookmobile events alone attracted 600 kids per week. All in all, another rousing success.

Centerpointe Report

Public Services Coordinator, LeeAnn Sergeant reported on the progress with the Centerpointe/Bennett Martin Library collaboration. Having staff from Centerpointe at BMPL for 20 hours a week has resulted in a slowly, but consistently growing group of folks coming in for assistance. They are seeing 20+ clients monthly and have become a significant point of service in getting folks housed. They also assist staff with de-escalating security issues. A bump in business is anticipated for the colder months. She shared that covering sick days has been an issue they hope to resolve if they can move forward with this grant-funded program.

Security Report

Administrative Aide, Sarah Dale provided the annual Security Report. The number of incidents and bans have remained consistent over the last few years. Some changes in the Library Behavior Policy have resulted in better staff awareness of the suspension and banning process, as well as increasing the number of harassment incidents that are now being adequately reported. New Incident Reporting software packages are being reviewed in the hope of finding one that works well with existing processes. This year's critter report showed the usual numbers of dogs and cats visiting the library, along with some bats, birds and bugs, and one emotional support pigeon.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Hale noted one adjustment to the Foundation for LCL Committee, where Treasurer Gerteisen will take over Hale's role as Library Board liaison.

ASSISTANT LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Glaesemann gave a staffing update, including new staff at Walt and Eiseley, and hiring continuing at Gere/South, Walt and Bennett Martin. The much-anticipated assistant to Building Superintendent, Dan Miller will be starting on Monday. She shared her experiences at the Nebraska Library Association convention in LaVista. Three LCL staff presented at the conference. Glaesemann and Walt Manager, Wyatt Packard presented on the Innovation Grant program at LCL, and Walt LSA Shannon Koch presented on her collection of LEGO sets that families can check out on-site at Walt Branch Library. Both were well received. She also shared that a new round of Innovation Grants will launch soon.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Wieber reviewed the process for members to access the necessary Continuing Education classes through the Nebraska Library Commission and reminded the board that these hours are required for the library to stay accredited. He shared that the Heritage Room for Nebraska Authors has helped create a list of NEBRASKA VOICES, 250 Authors for the Nebraska Authors website, celebrating the USA's 250-year anniversary. He introduced a National program LCL will be participating in called 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten. Families can participate at their own pace and keep track of their reading with a printed booklet. For each 250 books read, readers will be given a small incentive, and once they reach 1,000, they will earn a t-shirt. A press conference is scheduled for October 29 to announce the program.

BOARD OBSERVATIONS

Hale opened the floor for Board Observations. Ostrowicki shared a story about visiting the Vale, CO public library where, "Napping in an upright position is considered acceptable." She also noted that October 18-24 is National Friends of Libraries week and shared a New York Times article with the quote, "The nation's librarians are celebrating a milestone too: the 150th birthday of the modern American library. A lot has changed since the American Library Association was established in 1876 — even just over the past decade. The library has gone from a building full of books to arguably the most versatile civic center in any community lucky enough to have one."

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 a.m.