

MINUTES

BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS

June 17, 2025 | 5:15 pm

111 Library St NE | Board Room

Anderson called the meeting to order at 5:15 pm.

1. ROLL CALL

Board Members Present:

Rachel Anderson, Kelly Boston, Justine Bryant,
Kathryn Dilley, Bryan Holt, Kevin Peterson,
Lauren Woolsey

Board Members Absent:

Administration Present:

Robert Adcock, Natalie Drew, Lindsay Laplow,
John McNaughton, Jen Vander Heide;
Patrick Beatty

Staff Present:

Megan Biggins, Matt Black, Wyatt Lardie, Erin Hart,
Jason Kotarski, Ann Neff-Rohs, Julie Tabberer,
Aubrey Wagg

Public Present:

Brandee Ritsema, GRMC Documenter

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL AND REGULAR BOARD MEETINGS ON APRIL 29, 2025

MOTION: By Commissioner Woolsey, supported by Commissioner Boston, that the Board of Library Commissioners of the City of Grand Rapids approve the minutes of the special and regular Board meetings of April 29, 2025.

No comments.

ACTION: AYES 7 – 0

Motion passed.

3. BOARD COMMENTS

Bryant comments that she attended the Polansky Dance event and went to the poetry competition readings. She adds that we have some amazing poets in this city.

Peterson comments that he and Bryant were at the Neighborhood Summit event and there was a great turnout.

Anderson comments that she and Dilley attended MLA Advocacy Day at the end of April.

Boston comments that her child enjoyed the Bluey Scavenger Hunt programming over Spring Break.

4. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Legislative

Peterson says they are looking at ALA's legislative priorities.

Woolsey states that the final version of the informative handout has been distributed to the Board tonight and has been given out at City events.

b. Policy

No comments.

c. Board Retreat

No comments.

5. STAFF & FOUNDATION REPORTS

A. Library Director's Report

McNaughton introduces Regional Branch Manager Jason Kotarski. Kotarski presents on the West Leonard Branch. Anderson asked if he knows when the road construction on Leonard Street will be complete. Kotarski answers that the City indicated October. Boston asked if the art programs have a cost to attend. Kotarski answers no. Boston asks what titles are going to be part of the book club in the Fall. Kotarski answers that they will have 4 non-fiction titles.

McNaughton introduces Deputy Director Jen Vander Heide. Vander Heide presents an update to the Staffing Assessment Project. Woolsey asks if this level of detail has been shared with staff as a whole. Vander Heide answers yes. Anderson asks how this will fit in with the Strategic Plan happening next year. McNaughton answers that it will come along with it.

McNaughton states that they went into closed session with the Lakeland Library Cooperative (LLC) Board to focus on policy language around access to patron records, library membership, and LLC membership.

i. GRCM Collaboration

McNaughton states that a group is meeting this week. Dilley asks if the GRCM meeting will include the City. McNaughton answers yes.

ii. GRPL + GREIU Contract Negotiations

McNaughton states the next meeting is scheduled for next Thursday.

B. Financial Report

Adcock states that there is no enclosed financial report this month due to the City's transition to a new financial system. Adcock reminds the Board that he will have FY25 final numbers in either August or September.

Woolsey asks how disruptive the change in fiscal years is in day-to-day work. McNaughton answers that it's important to all staff. Adcock adds that a large impact rests on the Business Office staff. Vander Heide adds that the Collections Department follows the fiscal year timeline very closely as well.

Anderson asks if there has been any feedback from the public on reducing Hoopla borrowing limits. Neff-Rohs answers that most feedback she has received indicates that the users understand and appreciate the transparency.

C. Foundation Update

No comments.

6. OLD BUSINESS

A. Backstage Library Works Project Update

McNaughton introduces Grand Rapids History Center Manager Julie Tabberer. Tabberer presents on the Grand Rapids History Center's Backstage Library Works project. Dilley asks how the current space constraints impact what donations to the archives we accept. Tabberer answers that we haven't turned anything down and have hired a vendor for extra storage space. Boston asks if there is any kind of weeding system for archives. Tabberer answers yes. Boston asks how much of the items with vinegar syndrome have been digitized. Tabberer answered that they prioritize 8 x 10 negatives because they are impacted first. Woolsey asks if there is a long term plan for digitizing. Tabberer answers that they are prioritizing the ones with vinegar syndrome first. Neff-Rohs adds that if patrons have a request, then those images end up scanned and digitized too.

Tabberer presents on the completed Newspaper Viewer project. Anderson comments that it looks great on mobile. Peterson asks if this is compatible with other accessibility tools. Tabberer says she does not know. McNaughton states that he will let him know.

The Board thanks Tabberer for the work on these projects.

7. NEW BUSINESS

None.

8. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Media Index

No comments.

B. Staffing Report

Peterson congratulates the staff with anniversaries.

C. Statistical Report for April 2025

No comments.

9. GRAND RAPIDS EMPLOYEES INDEPENDENT UNION

No comments.

10. AGENDA ITEMS FOR REGULAR BOARD MEETING: JULY 29, 2025

Anderson states that she will not be present and Boston will lead the July meeting. She asks the Board to let her know if they would like anything added to the agenda.

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Wagg comments that she has been a Library Page at the Main Library for 2.5 years. She says this is the first year she has attended Board Meetings and has learned a lot about the Library in that time. She concludes that she is following up on the topic from the February meeting regarding the Library Pages joining the GREIU and urges the bargaining team to keep this at the top of mind during negotiations.

12. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: By Commissioner Bryant that the Board of Library Commissioners of the City of Grand Rapids adjourn the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 6:12 pm.