

MINUTES
BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS
OF THE CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS

December 16, 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 (arrived at 5:17 pm), Justine Bryant, Kathryn Dilley, Bryan Holt, Kevin Peterson, Lauren Woolsey
Board Members Absent:	
Administration Present:	Robert Adcock, Lindsay Laplow, John McNaughton, Jen Vander Heide; Patrick Beatty
Staff Present:	Megan Biggins, Erin Hart, Erin Keener
Public Present:	Dan Poortenga, GRPLF; AJ Bunker, LCC

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING ON OCTOBER 21, 2025

MOTION: By Commissioner Woolsey, supported by Commissioner Holt, that the Board of Library Commissioners of the City of Grand Rapids approve the minutes of the regular Board meeting of October 21, 2025.

No comments.

ACTION: AYES 6 – NAYS 0

Motion passed.

3. BOARD COMMENTS

Woolsey states that the October minutes are great as is and wants to acknowledge that she abstained from voting on Item B due to a reported conflict of interest.

4. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Legislative

Bryant reports that over the past year they have met 7 times, created a handout over the summer for community members to get more involved, attended events, tracked key items, drafted a new talking points handout, and created a list of elected officials in GR areas. They plan to continue this in 2026. Peterson adds that they are watching MI State Budget cuts and encourages the Board to view the KConnect webinar tomorrow.

Anderson states that next year, if they chose to remain on the committee, it is an election year so they should encourage people interested in serving on the Board to have everything submitted to the City Clerk by April. Boston asks how early citizens can declare their desire to run to the City Clerk. Anderson says the earlier the better, as they will need a petition with 50 signatures from people who live within the City of Grand Rapids.

Woolsey adds that the handout the committee created over the summer also explains what it means to be a Library Board member.

b. Policy

Anderson states that they have an update to the Asset Management policy in New Business.

c. Board Retreat

Boston states that she will be sending out a survey to the Board to determine what they would like for the Board Retreat in 2026.

5. STAFF & FOUNDATION REPORTS

a. Library Director's Report

McNaughton thanks the Board for participating in the Strategic Vision stakeholder interviews this month. He adds that GRPL recently had Fall Staff Day with a Strategic Vision session, and it was very productive. McNaughton states that we're working on large projects that tie into the Strategic Priorities and they are all coming together. He concludes that the community survey is wrapping up on December 19 and asks the Board to remind their friends and neighbors to participate if they haven't yet.

McNaughton introduces Van Belkum Branch Manager, Erin Keener. Keener presents on the Van Belkum Branch. Holt asks if they see a lot of unhoused folks in the space. Keener answers yes. Anderson asks what kind of impact the closure of the brewery across the street has had on the branch. Keener says there hasn't been much of an impact. Boston asks how parking is for patrons. Keener answers that there generally aren't issues.

McNaughton introduces Deputy Director, Jen Vander Heide. Vander Heide presents on the Interior Space Redesign Project. McNaughton says after the new year, the committee for this project will meet, and it includes two Board members. Bryant asks if any firms have mentioned universal design.

Vander Heide answers yes and that we are interested in universal design as well as inclusive design. Boston asks if the firm will be launching feedback seeking methods. Vander Heide answers yes, we are looking for in-person and survey feedback from the community. Anderson asks when a space assessment like this was last done for this building. Adcock answers that the last renovation to the Main Library was in 2003. Dilley asks if our choices for the renovation in 2003 were based on surveys. Adcock answers that he isn't sure. Peterson asks if the intent is to roll this out to the branches after this. McNaughton answers yes. Vander Heide adds that moving forward, we are hoping to have furniture standards that will span the whole system. Dilley asks if there can be a consideration of quality and continued usability for furniture we already have. McNaughton answers yes. Boston asks if the committee will include staff members from different positions throughout the organizations. Vander Heide says they haven't selected all committee members yet. Dilley asks about the historic Ryerson portion of the building and says that it isn't as usable in its current state. McNaughton says they want to be respectful of the architecture while updating the space to make it more usable so we will be bringing in professionals. Holt asks if we can have Community Services Manager, John Bosma, come to a future Board meeting for a presentation on safety concerns compared to last year. McNaughton answers yes. Holt wonders if there will be increases to incidences in regards to the redesign and impact to staff. McNaughton says that if situations arise, he will continue to address it in a public forum.

Anderson comments that she is happy to see the resurgence of teen readership.

Boston comments that staff are dealing with hard mental health situations and states that she greatly appreciates what they do.

b. Financial Report

Adcock states that reports are getting better with Oracle. He adds that we are in the middle of the FY27 budget process, so if there are any questions, please reach out to him.

Anderson thanks Adcock for the detailed explanations of expenditures.

Boston asks what LifeLabs is. Vander Heide answers that it's training for management. Boston asks if we plan to repeat this in future years. Vander Heide answers yes.

c. Foundation Update

Poortenga comments that for the past few years they have been requesting and receiving grants from the Wege Foundation for diversity-focused programming. He states that they usually request \$50,000 every year, but due to cuts to funding, this year they are getting \$75,000 over two years.

6. OLD BUSINESS

None.

7. NEW BUSINESS

a. Nominating Committee Appointment

Anderson explains that this is for Board Officers for the calendar year and asks Dilley if she would be willing to lead this again. Dilley agrees. Dilley requests that if anyone is interested in being President or Vice President to let her know.

b. Update to Policy 40-1 | Asset Management

MOTION: By Commissioner Woolsey, supported by Commissioner Peterson, that the Board of Library Commissioners of the City of Grand Rapids approve the proposed updates to Policy 40-1 | Asset Management.

Anderson asks what the motivation is behind this update. Vander Heide answers that the process for the removal of GRPL assets was previously very complicated. Adcock adds that this provides a clear direction for the disposal and removal of items. Anderson asks how we will determine whether something is of value. McNaughton answers that it will be largely determined by the usefulness of the item.

Beatty states that there are typos within the document. The Board agrees on which edits need to be made to the document: "Draft" removed, initial A before items in 2a removed, change "saleable" at top of page 2 to "sellable", and remove the strikeout on page 2.

MOTION: By Commissioner Woolsey, supported by Commissioner Peterson, that the Board of Library Commissioners of the City of Grand Rapids approve the proposed updates to Policy 40-1 | Asset Management, as amended and corrected.

ACTION: AYES 7 – NAYS 0

Motion passed.

c. Resolution to Adopt 80%/20% Employer/Employee Health Care Cost Option as Set Forth in the 2011 Public Act 152

MOTION: By Commissioner Boston, supported by Commissioner Woolsey, that the Board of Library Commissioners of the City of Grand Rapids approve to adopt the 80%/20% option as its choice of compliance under the 2011 Public Act 152 for the medical benefit plan 2026 coverage year.

No comments.

ACTION: AYES 7 – NAYS 0

Motion passed.

d. FY26 Michigan Arts and Culture Council Grant Application

MOTION: By Commissioner Peterson, supported by Commissioner Bryant, that the Board of Library Commissioners of the City of Grand Rapids approve for the GRPLF to submit the Michigan Arts and Culture Council (MACC) grant application for FY26.

No comments.

ACTION: AYES 7 – NAYS 0

Motion passed.

e. Approval of 2026 Meeting Schedule

MOTION: By Commissioner Peterson, supported by Commissioner Holt, that the Board of Library Commissioners of the City of Grand Rapids approve the proposed Board meeting schedule for 2026.

Anderson says that the big change this year is combining November and December meetings due to difficulty in timing these meetings due to holidays.

Woolsey asks why the meetings in June and October are not the last Tuesday of the month. Anderson answers that June and October have library conferences the last week of each month.

Bryant asks if we could consider a different date and time for the regular meetings next year. Anderson states she'd like to stay at this time for public access but is open to discussion around changing the dates. Boston asks if we want to discuss changing the meeting dates from Tuesday to another day for 2026. Anderson says she'd like to receive more feedback before making a decision.

Beatty states that the City Charter has an absence of language around the required amount of Board of Library Commissioner meetings, so he approves moving forward with the proposed dates.

ACTION: AYES 7 – NAYS 0

Motion passed.

f. 2026 Closing Calendar

MOTION: By Commissioner Woolsey, supported by Commissioner Peterson, that the Board of Library Commissioners of the City of Grand Rapids approve the proposed library closing calendar for years 2026 - 2028.

McNaughton comments that everything is standard, but there is now a proposal to close at 6:00 pm the day before Thanksgiving. Laplow adds that the closures for July 4, 2027 were updated as well.

Woolsey asks if we have gotten feedback on holding Staff Day on a day other than Wednesdays. Laplow answers yes, however we have the highest attendance rate when it is held on Wednesdays.

ACTION: AYES 7 – NAYS 0

Motion passed.

8. INFORMATION ITEMS

a. Media Index

No comments.

b. Staffing Report

No comments.

c. Statistical Reports for October 2025

No comments.

9. GRAND RAPIDS EMPLOYEES INDEPENDENT UNION

No comments.

10. AGENDA ITEMS FOR REGULAR BOARD MEETING: JANUARY 27, 2026

- Election of Board Officers
- Review of Committee Assignments
- Foundation Board Appointment by Board President
- BoLC Policy Manual Approval
- Attendance Record from Previous Year
- Voluntary Commitment to Serve

Anderson asks the Board to please let her and McNaughton know if they would like anything added to the agenda.

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No comments.

12. ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 6:19 pm.