LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, October 15th 2025

5:30 P.M.

DOWNTOWN RENO LIBRARY 301 S. Center St, Reno NV 89501

0) Salute to the Flag led by Assistant County Manager Dave Solaro.

1) Roll Call [Non-Action Item]

- Present: Chair Silver, Vice Chair Moser, Trustee Jacks, Trustee Ruf.
- Trustee Rodriguez joined at 5:44pm.

2) Land Acknowledgement [Non-Action Item]

- Read by Vice Chair Moser.

3) Public Comment –Three Minute Time Limit Per Person [Non-Action Item]

- Jody Baden: Founder of the News Literacy Community Initiative. Read a quote about totalitarianism. Advocated for media literacy education and offered partnership with the library during News Literacy Week. Emphasized nonpartisan, community-focused programming.
- Laura Wetherington: Supported Assistant County Manager's budget recommendation. Emphasized libraries as essential services, especially for vulnerable populations, and the importance of staff input. Shared a personal story about the Downtown Library.
- William Puchert: Addressed 1st amendment auditor and questioned his presence at the meeting. Criticized past board decisions and alleged political bias. Opposed potential closure of the Downtown Library.
- Joni Hammond: Advocated for removing "vulgar" books from children's sections. Cited Supreme Court precedent and child protection concerns.
- Krysta Flanagan: Thanked County staff for their work putting together the proposed budget. Encouraged trustees to advocate boldly for library funding and to "aim high" in budget negotiations.
- Lauran Fallon: Spoke as a Quaker in support of LGBTQ+ inclusion. Quoted the library's own collection development policy to support diverse materials.

- Cate Salim: Appreciated staff input in budget creation and emphasized the need for staff, not volunteers, at Senior Center. Opposed the suggestion to eliminate the Assistant Library Director position. Called for transparency from the board and requested they retract their suggestion.
- Drew Ribar: Alleged swearing at board meetings is acceptable due to a Supreme Court case. Criticized board rules on public comment and alleged censorship. Accused county employees of interfering with his speech. Opposed library funding and called for digital-only services.
    - [Chair Silver reminded Ribar throughout his comment to face the board, not the public]
- Victoria Peechatt: PhD student. Praised the library's educational role and spoke against book banning. Advocated for maximum funding to support youth and community programs.
- Jessica Braun: Graduate student who emphasized the library's role in equitable access. Opposed budget cuts and supported full funding.
- Janet Butcher: Argued that "banned books" is misleading. Called for removal of explicit content from children's sections.
- Sandee Tibbett: Shared appreciation for staff and board members and supported Solaro's staffing model. Suggested reducing hours at low-traffic branches to support others. Questioned if there was an Assistant Director prior to Stacy McKenzie.
- Eithne Barten: Highlighted Sierra View Library's diverse programming and community service. Supported maintaining full library services.
- Cliff Nellis: Opposed explicit content in children's sections. Called for the privatization of the library and a balanced library director.
- Rosie Zuckerman: Praised libraries as public institutions not driven by profit. Opposed running libraries like businesses.
- Stacey Spain: Advocated for libraries as essential infrastructure, the same as roads and fire protection. Emphasized their role in serving at-risk populations and

child development. Thanked the board and asked them to focus their efforts on serving the entire community.

4) Board Comment [Non-Action Item] – Limited to Announcements, Strategic Plan Activity, Updates or Issues Proposed for Future Agendas and/or Workshops
    - Chair Ann Silver acknowledged the seriousness of deciding the budget and suggested the possible need for additional meetings.
    - Vice Chair Moser thanked Jody Baden for her presentation and requested more information. Spoke on the importance of finding the right director and how she would utilize public comment on the subject.
    - Trustee Jacks shared public engagement materials and showed off her library bag. Emphasized the importance of public comment and encouraged the public to contact board members directly. Noted that the Speak Up portal is only for the BCC. Mentioned that comments sent directly to board members are not part of the meeting packet. Addressed accusatory comments sent to her email. Mentioned the importance of libraries for the homeschool community. Emphasized that all trustees pay attention during the meeting and take notes.

5) Approval of Meeting Minutes
    - Approval of Minutes from the Special Library Board meeting on October 1st, 2025 [For Possible Action].
        - Trustee Rodriguez raised concerns about a name that was not called at the previous meeting. She claimed a public commentor had written down her name but was never called. Requested to see the sign-in sheet from October 1st.
        - On motion by Trustee Ruf, seconded by Chair Silver, which motion duly carried on a 4-1 vote with Trustee Jacks voting no, the meeting minutes from October 1, 2025 were approved.

6) General Business

a) Presentation of a video (approximately 10 minutes) outlining a day in the life of a full-service library branch at the Washoe County Library System. [Non-Action Item for Information Only]

- Assistant County Manager Dave Solaro introduced a short documentary created by library staff showcasing daily library operations across the branches. The video highlighted programming, outreach, community engagement, as well as the smaller but important daily tasks that are often overlooked.

b) Discussion between the Library Board of Trustees and the Office of the County Manager outlining the budget needed for staff to operate the locations, times, and days of the Library system for fiscal year 2027 (July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027) as identified by the Board at the meeting held October 1, 2025 and possible direction to the Office of the County Manager staff related to Budget needs for the Washoe County Library System. [For Possible Action]

- Assistant County Manager Dave Solaro reviewed the staffing models for FY27 with budget projections. His projected model included hours for Duncan/Traner, Verdi, and Senior Center, along with all currently vacant positions being filled. Solaro further explained that staffing costs account for most of the library budget and included projected increases due to the bargaining agreement.
- Solaro outlined other budgetary costs including administration, services and supplies, and the collections budget. He noted the static nature of rent costs for the North Valleys and Sierra View libraries in the projected budget due to uncertainty in rent changes.
- Solaro reminded the board of the October 1st meeting and their declaration that library programming was essential. Mentioned phone call with Vice Chair Moser related to programming. Noted that a deeper discussion can be had regarding programming when a new director is hired and the strategic plan is outlined.

- Solaro recommended maintaining the FY26 base budget for FY27 and for the board to submit a separate above-base request to the BCC for the 10% collections budget. Expressed his confidence that the board has done what the BCC asked by reviewing library services and determining the right course.
- Trustee Rodriguez asked if the current vacancies will be filled and if closures will stop. Solaro confirmed.
- Trustee Ruf clarified the budget amounts and asked if the new director will be allowed to ask for more if needed. Solaro confirmed that they will be able to request more funding through the standard budget process. Trustee Ruf asked about the Verdi library hours. Solaro noted his recommendation for a Tuesday – Thursday schedule for partnership libraries. Hours can be adjusted.
- Chair Silver stated that the conclusion to these budget talks have brought them back to the beginning and questioned why they went through this multi-month process. Solaro shared he had the same question but understands that the BCC heard public comments regarding library operations and wished for the Library Board to undergo a process to determine if the current structure was working for the community. Solaro stated that this full circle process seems to confirm that the current library operations are working well and puts the board in a good position to work with a new director.
- Trustee Jacks stated that she did not feel confident in making a decision, and believed more study needed to be done by the board. Referenced pie chart showing how library users utilize library resources such as print vs digital materials. She would like to see more data about user count, ebook vs physical, service hours per staff members, and check out frequency vs staff numbers. Expressed opinion that the libraries are overstaff and overspent, and that budget cuts are necessary. Stated that population growth does not mean that the workload for librarians increases.
- Trustee Rodriguez thanked staff for the video. Mentioned her visits to every branch except for the partnerships, and shared her appreciation for how they

operate and how busy the branches are. Recalled Spanish Springs's birthday celebration. Expressed her view that the proposed budget is thorough and a reasonable request.

- Trustee Ruf asked Trustee Jacks for clarification of her viewpoint regarding the budget. Jacks stated she would like to see staffing cut. Ruf stated she is against cutting staff and voiced her support for the proposed budget.
- Vice Chair Moser thanked Solaro and library staff for their work. Shared support for Solaro's proposed budget. Expressed the board's need to avoid "getting into the weeds" and to trust staff going forward.
- Trustee Jacks asked if the new director will be able to adjust the budget. Solaro stated that the proposed budget will become the baseline for future budget discussions and the new director may request changes as needed.
- Chair Silver questioned why the hybrid option wasn't chosen if it was only one thousand dollars more. Solaro stated that the difference was a million dollars, not one thousand. Chair Silver asked if the hybrid model was more of what staff indicated. Solaro confirmed, and stated that it was based on the board's original choice of Option A.
- Chair Silver stated that there would be no layoffs or branch closures.
- Trustee Jacks expressed concern that the board hadn't spent enough time researching options based on Washoe County's budget deficit. Stated again her belief that the budget needed to be "slashed".
- Chair Silver questioned what would have happened if WC1 had passed; would the money have meant more staff? Solaro stated that they wouldn't be having the conversation if WC1 had passed because there wouldn't have been any budget issues.
- Vice Chair Moser stated that she learned a lot about library operations throughout the exercise of creating the budget and proposed a motion to vote on the budget Solaro presented.

- Chair Silver emphasized that there will be no layoffs or branch closures and that current vacancies will be filled. Asked when they have to go to the BCC to request the additional 10%. Solaro was unsure and stated that historically requests go to the BCC in February or March to be included in the process for adoption.
- On motion by Trustee Rodriguez, seconded by Trustee Ruf, which motion duly carried on a 4-1 vote with Trustee Jacks voting no, the budget as written in Solaro's staff report was approved to be presented to the BCC.

7) Public Comment – Three Minute Time Limit Per Person [Non-Action Item]
    - Shari Sanders: Emphasized that libraries are absorbing the burden of defunded social services and must be kept open. Thanked Solaro and library staff.
    - Cliff Nellis: Reiterated opposition to LGBTQ+ content and public employee protections. Restated opinion that the library should be privatized. Pointed out a t-shirt in the library staff's video that said "Death Saves" and questioned the reference.
    - Cate Salim: Urged adherence to Robert's Rules and questioned why the updated bylaws were not on the website.
    - Drew Ribar: Called board members "communists" and mentioned threats he has received. Advocated for digital-only services.
    - Krysta Flanagan: Clarified "Death Saves" as a Dungeons and Dragons reference.
    - Eithne Barton: Thanked the board for going through the exercise to understand how the library operates and advocate for a full budget. Spoke to the importance of libraries for human connection.
    - Janet Butcher: Asked about board preparation and questioned where the wording for the motion was taken from. Requested meeting decorum be discussed.
        - Trustee Jacks answered that the wording was in Solaro's staff report that was provided in the meeting packet.

8) Staff Announcements [Non-Action Item]

- Collections Development Manager Debi Stears announced that the library's primary vendor, Baker & Taylor, was going out of business. Informed the board and the public of resulting delays in book arrivals and asked for patience. Emphasized that her staff are working to identify new vendors and maintain the same level of service quality.

9) Adjournment

- Chair Silver adjourned the meeting at 8:22 pm.