

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Cedar Rapids Public Library**  
**Board of Trustees**  
**July 3, 2025**

**Board members in attendance:** [President] Monica Challenger, [Vice President] Jeremy Elges, Chris Casey, Ana McClain, Susie McDermott, Elisabeth Hepworth, Jade Hart (in person); Rafael Jacobo (via Zoom)

**Board members unable to attend:** Hassan Selim

**Staff in attendance:** Amber McNamara, Jessica Musil, Erin Horst, Todd Simonson, Kevin Delecki (in person); Patrick Duggan (via Zoom)

**Others:** Charity Tyler, Executive Director, Cedar Rapids Public Library Foundation (via Zoom)

A. Call to Order

- Ms. Challenger called the meeting to order at 4:03 pm. She noted that there is a slight adjustment to the agenda. Ms. Schmidt is unable to attend the meeting due to a family emergency and would like to present on the strategic plan next month.

B. Consent Agenda – **Action**

- Minutes: June 5, 2025
- Special Event Application

*Ms. Hart moved to accept the consent agenda. Ms. McClain seconded. The action carried with unanimous approval.*

C. Public Comments and Communications

- There being none, the meeting continued

D. Foundation Report – Charity Tyler

- Ms. Tyler reported. Three new members were welcomed to the Foundation board; the new terms start on July 1. The Foundation staff continues to follow-up on capital campaign requests for support. They are getting closer to an announcement. Ms. Tyler hopes it'll come by the end of summer.
- The Foundation is planning two events for this August and September. On August 9, from 10 am-noon, the team will host a Back to School Social. Families are invited to mark the milestone of starting kindergarten. As children age out of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (DPIL) by turning five, kids can ride a real school bus and enjoy activities. DPIL partners will also be there to interact with families. The annual Van Vechten Society Brunch is scheduled for Sunday, Sept. 7. The event honors those who left estate gifts to the library or for individuals whose memorial gifts generated over \$1,000 in gifts to the library. Trustees will be invited to the event.
- Ms. Challenger asked about the specific partners who will attend the Back to School Social. Foundation Development Associate Jess Netolick has the final list. Ms. Tyler does now that several have committed and will assist with story times, games, and crafts throughout the morning.

E. Friends of the Library Report – Libby Slappey

- Ms. Tyler reported for Ms. Slappey, who was unable to attend the meeting. Summer is in full swing for the Friends with their Farmers Market sales. In June, both sales raised over \$5,000 with another six remaining this season. Amazon sales continue to have done well this month with over \$1,200 earned last month. Of those, ten were railroad books.

F. Library Board Committee Reports

- Advocacy Committee – Elisabeth Hepworth, Committee Chair
  - Ms. Hepworth reported. The committee has no action items. Right now, they are monitoring what's happening at the federal level for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS); there is nothing new to report. Ms. Hepworth noted it's a

good time to celebrate libraries with local representation and prepare for the next legislative session with initial research for correspondence and advocacy. For those looking for a specific advocacy, it'd be a good time to share great stories highlighting the importance of the library with lawmakers over the summer. For example, share tangible and positive impacts versus 'don't do...' statements. Ms. Hepworth encouraged people to look at the quarterly OPEN+ magazine for ideas of stories to share.

- Building Committee – Jade Hart, Committee Chair
  - Ms. Hart reported. At the Downtown Library, roof replacement will start on Friday, July 11 with T&K Roofing, who won the bid. We expect to see T&K daily with some weekend work, with an estimated completion of August 15. T&K will use a crane to move materials and waste to and from the roof; any crane work will be done before the library opens. For the Urban Plaza, a pre-bid meeting is scheduled for July 16 for contractors to see the site, discuss the project, and ask questions. Bids will be opened August 4 followed by approval of the bid winner at the August 12 City Council meeting. An official start date will be determined as a contractor is selected. At the Westside Library, the high roof structural steel has been completed and the crews will continue working on the low roof structural steel and masonry walls. Storm sewer installation for Sandberg Lane started, concrete in the basement and first floor areas. In addition, the Building Committee and library staff started meeting with Mindy from OPN to review and select furniture. At last week's meeting, the committee reviewed furniture for staff areas and patron-use seating in the collection areas. Meetings will occur every other week through the fall.
- Finance Committee – Chris Casey, Committee Chair
  - Ms. Casey reported on the May 2025 financials. At this time, we are 92% of the way into the fiscal year. We have received 90% of revenues and have spent 93% of the budget. Revenues should meet budget so long as the Contributions/Donations line is fulfilled. Ms. Tyler clarified that this money is checks from the Foundation on behalf of donors in support of the library's programs and services. Ms. Casey discussed the flexibility within our accounts, such as 7010, to offset any overages. She also showed line 531103 Books and Subscriptions gained \$200,000 due to lost funding in CIP for digital materials in order to make the budget. Ms. Casey anticipates we'll need to amend the FY26 budget in the future.
- Nominating Committee – Susie McDermott, Committee Chair
  - **Action:** Slate of Officers. The committee recommends keeping Monica Challenger as President and Jeremy Elges as Vice President. Each will have served two years in those roles.

*The motion to accept the Slate of Officers passed with unanimous approval.*
- Personnel and Policy Committee – Susie McDermott, Committee Chair
  - **Action:** Policy 1.00 Mission Statement. As discussed at the last board meeting, the committee reviewed the wording in the Vision Statement, and if the word should be: 'discovery' or 'curiosity'. The committee recommended keeping the word 'discovery'. Ms. McDermott shared that the other policies for review need to be changed because they previously cited the former mission and vision statements. The updates are strictly to update the language to reflect the new mission and vision and do not otherwise change the content of those policies. The policies below were reviewed and there was no discussion. The board agreed to vote on the policies in one motion.
  - **Action:** Policy 2.00 Collection Development
  - **Action:** Policy 2.05 Programming and Partnerships
  - **Action:** Policy 3.01 Library Cards and Customer Privileges

- **Action:** Policy 3.05 Internet and Computer Usage

- **Action:** Policy 4.00 Library as Place

*The motion to accept the revised policies as in the packet passed with unanimous approval.*

G. Library Director's Report

- Ms. McNamara reported for Ms. Schmidt. We are officially halfway through the summer reading challenge. We're seeing a lot of completions already. On social media, we posted that we've read 783,461 minutes at the moment data was captured. One thing to keep in mind: people like to bring their paper logs into the library in chunks, and we appreciate seeing the minutes no matter how and when they come. The messaging will now shift from signing up over to recording minutes and finishing the program. The Mega Readers program, which is designed to include day cares and kids' club for a shared reading experience, has enrolled over 800 kids. Ms. McNamara shared a message from the Freedom School at Tanager about how much they have appreciated the program and using the library.
- The Metro Library Network's respective library directors and City Attorneys will meet to discuss House File 856. The intention is to get a shared understanding and how it'll impact us as a consortium. Patrons don't necessarily understand that we're separate libraries as we share resources and move materials between buildings. It's critical for the three libraries to be united in major policies for a better patron experience.
- Issues in receiving materials from Baker & Taylor continue to a certain degree. Adult print is more difficult while children's materials are consistently arriving. We moved most of our adult print orders to Igram, another provider. Things are catching up with the alternate vendor. The vendors for library book materials is limited to a few.
- This past weekend, Ms. Schmidt along with Mayor O'Donnell presented on a panel with Kent Library District about the importance of relationship-building between libraries and cities. Their presentation was highlighted in an email from *American Libraries* magazine. Ms. McNamara read a portion of the article out loud. She noted that strong relationships are crucial and has been beneficial for both our library and our City.
- Ms. Challenger asked if the Mega Readers program would be extended to book clubs in the future. Mr. Delecki noted that it's not yet but it could be. However, individuals in book clubs tend to track their own reading instead of as a collective. We did extend the invitation to senior communities, and some are looking at how they can participate in the future. Ms. Challenger asked if the Mega Readers within the program at Tanager are reading their own books or the same book together. Most of the participants are reading their own books, though groups are welcome to read books as one.

H. Old Business

- There being no old business, the meeting continued.

I. New Business

- There being no new business, the meeting continued.

J. Adjournment

- There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:45 pm.

**The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Thursday, August 7, 2025, at 4 pm in the Conference Room, Downtown Library**