



Richmond Public Library
Library Board of Trustees
 101 E. Franklin Street
 Richmond, VA 23219
 (804) 646-4256 / fax: (804) 646-7685



Library Board Meeting Minutes
December 3, 2025

PRESENT: Chair Christine Peterson, Vice Chair Sheron Carter-Gunter, Emily Altman, Brent Graves, Cynthia Hinds, Janet Woody,

ABSENT: Garrett Sawyer, William Yates, Friends of the Library Chair Ruth DeBoer

STAFF: Scott Firestine, Clay Dishon, Attorney Shannan Fitzgerald, Gianna Pack, Cheryl Clarke, Susan Revere, Hayley DeRoche, Danielle Tarullo, Phil Shephard, Heather Montgomery

The Richmond Public Library (RPL) Library Board of Trustees (LBOT) meeting was called to order by Chair Christine Peterson at 11:46 a.m. at the Westover Hills Branch Library located at 1408 Westover Hills Boulevard, Richmond, Virginia 23223. The meeting was posted, and the public could attend in person or by viewing the Richmond Public Library YouTube channel <https://bit.ly/2VfKL9U>, where it was live streamed. A quorum was established.

Chair Peterson welcomed new Board Member Antoine Green.

Agenda	<p>Approve the December 3, 2025, Agenda as submitted.</p> <p><i>Motion: <u>Emily Altman</u>, Second by <u>Sheron Carter-Gunter</u></i></p> <p><i>AYES: <u>6</u> NOES: <u>0</u> ABSTAIN: <u>0</u> Approved Unanimously.</i> <i>Mr. Brent Graves was not present for the vote.</i></p>
Consent Agenda	<p>Approve the October 22, 2025, Meeting Minutes, the Current Financial Reports, Statistical Reports, and Donations Report as Submitted:</p> <p><i>Motion: <u>Cynthis Hinds</u>, Second by <u>Emily Altman</u></i></p> <p><i>AYES: <u>6</u> NOES: <u>0</u> ABSTAIN: <u>0</u> Approved Unanimously.</i> <i>Mr. Brent Graves was not present for the vote.</i></p>
Public Comment Period	<p>None present.</p>

Reports	
<p>Friends of the Library (FOL)</p> <p><u>Ruth DeBoer</u> <u>Clay Dishon</u></p>	<p>Mr. Dishon provided an update on the Friends of the Library’s activities in the absence of Chair Ruth DeBoer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Meeting (October 23): Well attended; featured local author Tony Gentry presenting <i>The Night Doctor of Richmond</i>. Mr. Gentry joined as a Friend of the RPL after the meeting. • Fall Book Sale: Strong turnout with many new attendees; unofficial revenue approximately \$18,000—the best sale since before COVID. Official accounting expected this week. • Board Membership: One potential new Board member currently being interviewed. Sixteen of eighteen positions are filled, but additional members are still needed to fill vacancies and prepare for upcoming retirements. • Executive Board Meeting (December 3): Planned meeting replaced by attendance at the RPL Foundation gathering; informal board business will be handled via email.
<p>Library Foundation</p> <p><u>Susan Revere</u> <u>Scott Firestine</u></p>	<p>Ms. Revere provided an update on the Foundation’s recent activities and developments:</p> <p><u>Foundation Update:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Impact Report has been released, and early feedback has been very positive. • The Annual Appeal is scheduled for release early December. <p><u>Grant Updates:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Jack R. Anderson grant check for \$20,000 has been received. Funds will support upgrades to the Children’s Area. Project rollout is expected after January 1, 2026. • The REB Foundation has awarded \$5,000 to support the Read with Ripple program. • Ms. Revere will partner with Heather Montgomery in January 2026 to prepare a grant application for El día de los niños, scheduled for April 25, 2026, at the Broad Rock Branch Library. <p><u>Upcoming Event:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Foundation’s Year-End Open House will be held on December 3, 2025, from 5:00-6:00 PM at the West End Branch Library. Ms. Revere extended an in-person invitation to attend.
<p>Administration</p> <p><u>Scott Firestine</u></p>	<p>Director’s Report: In addition to the items submitted in this month’s written report, Mr. Firestine provided the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlighted circulation being up overall 5%. • Another successful Read Up Event with about 100 attendees. • GRTC had a request to add a bus stop enhancement to the east side of the Broad Rock Branch Library. Currently it is just a post. GRTC would like to put a concrete pad down with bench seating and a little shelter to cover it. GRTC does not have enough room in the city’s right-of-way to do that on their own, so they need permission from the LBOT to proceed with installation and design work. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chair Peterson moved the item to New Business for voting.

Reports (Continued)	
Belmont Branch Library Update <u>Hayley DeRoche</u>	Library/Community Services Manager Hayley DeRoche gave an overview of the Belmont Branch Library Mural Project, which was completed by local artist Zara Stasi, with funding from a Museum District Association grant awarded to Ms. Stasi. The mural is an aesthetic addition to the library and has updated the overall feel of the Belmont children’s department.
Advocacy Task Force <u>Christine Peterson</u> <u>Sheron Carter-Gunter</u>	Chair Peterson shared advocacy-related items for the Board’s awareness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A holiday greeting card is available in both digital and hard-copy formats. • The Advocacy Taskforce developed a budget-focused advocacy plan. • A visual map highlighting all library locations as well as lack of library locations, has been created as an advocacy resource. • A “By the Numbers” infographic has been developed to support advocacy efforts.
Policy Taskforce <u>Emily Altman</u>	No Formal Report.
Chair Report <u>Christine Peterson, Chair</u>	Chair Peterson introduced Mr. Green to the LBOT. Mr. Green shared his background and love of Richmond as a resident and user of the Richmond Public Libraries.
Finance <u>Bill Yates, Chair</u> <u>Scott Firestine</u>	Mr. Firestine reported the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial performance is tracking as expected. • Twenty-six percent of the budget was expended in the first five months of the year, which is consistent with projections and indicates the city remains on track to meet its targets. • Budget requests have been submitted and are currently under review by the Administration. • The mayor is preparing the proposed budget, which will be presented to the City on March 6, 2026. • The Administration is reviewing year-end revenues and expenditures. • City departments are presenting their budget needs and long-term priorities to the CEO.
Facilities <u>Janet Woody, Chair</u> <u>Scott Firestine</u>	No Formal Report.
Governance <u>Garrett Sawyer, Chair</u>	No Formal Report.
UNFINISHED BUSINESS	
No Unfinished Business was discussed.	

NEW BUSINESS

Holiday Schedule:

Approve the Richmond Public Library Holiday Schedule as submitted noting the libraries will follow the City of Richmond's approved dates for closure and is subject to change when needed.

Motion: Janet Woody, Second by Cynthia Hinds

AYES: 7 NOES: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 Approved Unanimously.

Meeting Schedule:

Approve the Library Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule for Calendar Year 2026, as submitted.

Motion: Antione Green, Second by Sheron Carter-Gunter

AYES: 7 NOES: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 Approved Unanimously.

GRTC Request:

Library Board of Trustees authorizes GRTC to proceed with installation of a bus stop that includes a shelter and seating and a trash can and is ADA compatible.

Motion: Sheron Carter-Gunter, Second by Cynthia Hinds

AYES: 7 NOES: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 Approved Unanimously.

COMMENTS

Before adjourning the meeting, Chair Peterson, on behalf of the members of the LBOT, congratulated the Library/Community Services Managers and their staff on a successful year and extended warm wishes for a happy holiday season.

Ms. Carter-Gunter expressed her appreciation, on behalf of the LBOT, to the Outreach and Engagement Team and staff for their dedication and hard work throughout the year.

Ms. Hinds shared the following remarks: "Working with this Board over the past year has been a valuable and enriching experience that has deepened my understanding of our work. I look forward to continuing to expand my knowledge to ensure our libraries remain efficient, customer-focused, and a vital resource for all. Thank you."

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:33 p.m. by unanimous consent from the members who were present.

The LBOT's next meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 28, 2026, at the Main Library located at 101 E. Franklin Street, Richmond, Virginia, 23219, starting at 11:45 a.m.

Approved: _____

Christine Peterson, Chair

Recorder: *Gianna Pack, CAP*
Senior Executive Assistant