



**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**  
**April 22, 2026**

**PRESENT:** Chair Christine Peterson, Vice Chair Sheron Carter-Gunter, Cynthia Hinds, Janet Woody, William Yates

**ABSENT:** Emily Altman, Brent Graves, Antione Green, Garrett Sawyer, Friends of the Library Chair Ruth DeBoer

**STAFF:** Scott Firestine, Clay Dishon, Attorney Shannan Fitzgerald, Gianna Pack, Cheryl Clarke, Susan Revere, Phil Shephard, Craig Gill-Walker

The Richmond Public Library (RPL) Library Board of Trustees (LBOT) meeting was called to order by Chair Christine Peterson at 11:48 a.m. at the North Avenue Branch Library located at 2901 North Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23222. 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.

<b>Agenda</b>	Approve the April 22, 2026, Agenda as submitted.  <i>Motion: <u>Sheron Carter-Gunter</u>, Second by <u>Cynthia Hinds</u></i>  <i>AYES: <u>5</u> NOES: <u>0</u> ABSTAIN: <u>0</u> Approved Unanimously.</i>
<b>Consent Agenda</b>	Approve the March 25, 2026, Meeting Minutes, the Current Financial Reports, Statistical Reports, and Donations Report as Submitted:  <i>Motion: <u>William Yates</u>, Second by <u>Sheron Carter-Gunter</u></i>  <i>AYES: <u>5</u> NOES: <u>0</u> ABSTAIN: <u>0</u> Approved Unanimously.</i>
<b>Public Comment Period</b>	None present.
<b>Guest</b>	DCAO for Human Services Amy Popovich attended the LBOT meeting to introduce herself and share an overview of her role within the City of Richmond. She provided a summary of her professional background, highlighting her experience in public service and her commitment to supporting community-focused initiatives. DCAO Popovich explained her responsibilities overseeing human services, including efforts to enhance access to resources, strengthen partnerships, and improve quality of life for residents.

<b>Guest (Continued)</b>	<p>She expressed interest in collaborating with the Library Board to ensure that library programs, services, and budget align with broader City goals, and she emphasized the importance of libraries as vital community hubs.</p> <p>DCAO Popovich concluded by thanking the Board of Trustees for their work and inviting ongoing communication and cooperation.</p>
<b>Reports</b>	
<b>Friends of the Library (FOL)</b>  <u>Ruth DeBoer</u> <u>Clay Dishon</u>	<p>No Formal Report.</p> <p>Mr. Dishon reminded members of the following upcoming events in May:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Next Book Sale: May 1–3 at the Main Library.</li> <li>• Next Full Friends Board Meeting: May 6, 2026, at the Main Library.</li> </ul>
<b>Library Foundation</b>  <u>Susan Revere</u>	<p>No Formal Report.</p>
<b>Administration</b>  <u>Scott Firestine</u>	<p>Mr. Firestine had no additional updates beyond what was included in his Director’s Report.</p>
<b>North Avenue Branch Library Update</b>  <u>Craig Gill-Walker</u>	<p>Library/Community Services Manager Craig Gill-Walker provided an update on recent events, programs, and partnerships at the North Avenue Branch Library since the last report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Door count has increased significantly from January through April, with hundreds more patrons utilizing library resources.</li> <li>• There has been a notable rise in one-on-one technology assistance, with patrons seeking help to improve computer literacy skills.</li> <li>• Storytime programs have frequently reached full capacity in recent months. Youth Services Librarian Richard Wissmiller has, at times, had to turn families away due to space limitations in the meeting room.</li> <li>• The branch has partnered with Smokey Mug to offer outdoor storytimes near the library. Additionally, Mr. Wissmiller is organizing a summer outdoor Storytime series at Battery Park.</li> <li>• In addition to the senior book club, the branch now offers the “North Avenue Readers” book club for adult patrons and a “Books to Screen” discussion group for teens and young adults.</li> <li>• Teen volunteers continue to support weekly branch operations, coordinated by Library Associate Kelli Young-Kravitz.</li> <li>• The branch will soon receive a new projector, which will enhance its ability to host family movie events.</li> </ul> <p>Overall, North Avenue staff remain engaged and enthusiastic, continuing to provide strong service to the surrounding community.</p>

<b>Reports (Continued)</b>	
<p><b>Advocacy Task Force</b></p> <p><u>Sheron Carter-Gunter</u> <u>Antonie Green</u></p>	<p>No Formal Report.</p> <p>On behalf of the Library Board of Trustees, Chair Peterson expressed appreciation to Library/Community Services Manager Jennifer Deuell for coordinating the Library/Summer Reading presentation at Councilmembers District Town Hall meetings. The events were well attended, and the Library was represented throughout.</p>
<p><b>Policy Taskforce</b></p> <p><u>Emily Altman</u></p>	<p>Mr. Firestine presented two policies on behalf of the Policy Taskforce in Ms. Altman’s absence:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 05.01 Library Card Registration</li> <li>2. 05.01.01 Computer Guest Pass</li> </ol> <p>He reviewed the proposed changes and responded to questions from the Trustees. Following discussion, Chair Peterson brought the policies forward under New Business for motion.</p> <p>Mr. Firestine also reviewed how the Trustees were going to approach updating the Strategic Plan to encompass the Facilities Improvement and Expansion push.</p>
<p><b>Chair Report and Governance Report</b></p> <p><u>Christine Peterson, Chair</u></p>	<p>Chair Peterson combined her Chair Report and Governance Report. She announced that Mr. Garrett Sawyer is resigning from the Library Board of Trustees due to increasing work-related travel that will limit his ability to attend meetings.</p> <p>Chair Peterson noted Mr. Sawyer’s significant contributions to the Board since 2020, highlighting his effectiveness as an advocate and a valuable resource. She emphasized that his knowledge and insight helped strengthen relationships with Councilmembers and elevate support for the Library. Among his accomplishments, Mr. Sawyer successfully persuaded then-Councilmember Michael Jones to allocate \$100,000 to the library budget, enabling the restoration of Sunday hours for the first time in several years.</p> <p>On behalf of the Board, Chair Peterson expressed sincere gratitude for Mr. Sawyer’s service and contributions and extended best wishes for his future endeavors. She also encouraged Trustees to reach out to him personally.</p> <p>Chair Peterson invited Trustees interested in serving as Chair of the Governance Committee to contact her directly by April 29. She also asked if any Trustee who has spoken with Mr. Sawyer regarding interest in the upcoming Chair and Vice Chair positions share that information with her on the same date. Based on the input received, Mr. Firestine will send an email to all Trustees during the week of May 4 outlining next steps.</p>
<p><b>Finance</b></p> <p><u>Bill Yates, Chair</u> <u>Scott Firestine</u></p>	<p>Mr. Yates reported that the budget process is progressing smoothly and is not expected to have any impact on the library. He reviewed both the Operating Budget and the General Fund Budget line items. Following discussion and additional clarification from Mr. Firestine, Mr. Yates confirmed that the financials remain on track.</p>

**Reports (Continued)**

**Facilities**

Janet Woody, Chair  
Scott Firestine

Mr. Firestine reported on two key topics:

1. The Final Dewberry Report will be complete on May 1, 2026. At that time, Mr. Firestine will schedule a virtual meeting where Dewberry will present the report to the Trustees.
2. The EV Bookmobile is on order.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

No Unfinished Business was discussed.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Chair Peterson called for a vote on the two policies brought forth by the Policy Taskforce:

Approve Policy 05.01 Library Card Registration as submitted.

**Motion:** William Yates, **Second by** Janet Woody

**AYES:** 5 **NOES:** 0 **ABSTAIN:** 0 *Approved Unanimously.*

Approve Policy 05.01.01 Computer Guest Pass as submitted.

**Motion:** William Yates, **Second by** Cynthia Hinds

**AYES:** 4 **NOES:** 0 **ABSTAIN:** 1

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:03 p.m. by unanimous consent from the members who were present.

The LBOT's next meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 27, 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 Paek, CAP*  
Senior Executive Assistant