

Pollard Memorial Board of Trustees – Trustee Minutes

Date:

- o The meeting took place on Wednesday, March 11, 2026.

Location:

- o The meeting was held at Pollard Memorial Library (PML), 401 Merrimack St. Lowell, MA, as a hybrid meeting, both in person and via Zoom.

Opening Business

Meeting call to order

- o The meeting was called to order by Donna Richards at 5:30pm.

Attendance

Present:	Excused:	Guests:
Donna Richards, Chair Ellen Anstey, Vice Chair Suzanne Frechette Helen Littlefield Courtney McSparron Jack Moynihan Christine O'Connor Christopher St. Croix	Bridget Cooley, Library Director Titiana Tambi Judith Davidson, Secretary	Kitty Sharbrough, Asst. Director

Acceptance of / Amendment to Agenda

- o The agenda for *March 11th* was unanimously approved on a motion by Donna Richards, seconded by Courtney McSparron.

Prior Meeting Minutes Approval

- o The meeting minutes from *February 11, 2026* were unanimously accepted with no revisions on a motion by Ellen Anstey and seconded by Christine O'Connor.

Public Comment Period

- o Public comment time was made available. However, no members of the public were present to make a comment at this meeting.

Current Business

Review of PML Board of Trustees Bylaws

- o Group review of the PML Board of Trustee Bylaws. First noted was a recommendation to use a more updated font like *Calibri*.
- o Richards provided the City Ordinance establishing the library.
 - o This can be changed but requires going to City Council.
 - o Goal is to amend bylaws within the framework of the City Ordinance.
- o City of Lowell Solicitor's Office has offered support in updating Bylaws. A formal request must be made.
- o Article I was discussed, no changes submitted.
- o Article II was discussed, the following changes were suggested:
 - o Richards recommended changing Section 2 Term of Office from "They shall enter upon their duties on the first Wednesday of January" to "They shall enter upon their duties upon the 1st meeting of the new year".
 - o O'Connor suggested cleaning up the bullet points listed in Section 3 Resignations and Vacancies.
 - o Davidson had submitted a recommendation for Section 1 Number and Qualifications, increasing the number of Associate Trustees from 2 to 3.
 - There was some disagreement on this, generally centered on the difficulty in recruiting trustees.
 - o The group discussed adding language regarding the removal of a trustee, specifically if a trustee acts "out of order" in some way the rest of the committee feels may hinder its mission.
 - Only provision for trustee removal at this time exists in Article VII.
 - o Section 6 Report to the City Council was discussed:
 - The City Ordinance requires the report to be submitted in December, the Bylaws require the report to be submitted in May.
 - Recommendation was made to remove specificity of when the report will be submitted and instead state the Trustees will submit a report annually.
 - Much of what would appear in an annual trustees report is featured in the monthly director's report.
- o Article III was discussed, the following changes were suggested:
 - o Suggested to extend Officer terms to 2 years and add language around term limits.
 - For reference, North Andover limits officers to 2 successive terms.
- o Article VI was discussed, no changes were suggested.
- o Article V was discussed, the following changes were suggested:
 - o Davidson had submitted a recommendation for Section 1 Standing Committees to strike the Nominating/Personnel Committee.
 - Richards had a preference to keep the Nominating/Personnel Committee.
 - St. Croix suggested moving it to an Ad Hoc committee rather than a standing committee given the infrequent work required.
 - o Courtney suggested striking the Art committee
 - Sharbrough spoke about the staff being very cognizant of the art collection, aware of the inventory and the needs to maintain the collection.

- O'Connor mentioned the Trustees as a collective could take on the responsibility of keeping an inventory and schedule for repairs/restoration.
- o It was agreed that Governance/Policy Committee should remain.
- o It was suggested to remove Security/Building and Grounds committee.
- o It was suggested to rename the Outreach committee to Outreach/Advocacy.
 - The mission would largely remain the same.
 - The liaisons to the Foundation and Friends would remain part of this committee as well.
- o Discussion was tabled on a motion by Ellen Antsey, seconded by Courtney McSparron.
 - o The group left off at Article V Section 2 due to time constraints.
 - o Current recommendations were to be committed and submitted to trustees prior to the April meeting.

Update from Strategic Plan Task Groups

- o No updates from the Strategic Plan Task Groups.

Reports

Chairperson's Report - Open Meeting Law determination and compliance

- o The PML Board of Trustees received a complaint on June 5, 2025 for an open meeting law violation for deliberating outside of a posted meeting to prepare the letter sent in response to Executive Order 14238 targeting the Institute of Museum and Library Services for funding cuts. The board did not hold another meeting prior to sending the final letter. It was determined that this was not an intentional violation but a misunderstanding of the requirements of the law by Richards and no fine was issued. Pursuant to the Open Meeting Law Complaint Determination compliance requirement, the emails and responses from 5/2/2025 through 5/11/25 relating to this letter were made public with the March 11, 2026 agenda posted on the City website.
- o FYI - The MBLC invites all library Trustees and Directors across the Commonwealth to a primer on Open Meeting Laws. Presenter from the Attorney General's office, Kerry Kilcoyne (Assistant Attorney General, Division of Open Government) will focus on how to properly conduct a meeting under the state's Open Meeting Laws, when executive sessions are and are not appropriate, and how to apply open meeting laws to committee and subcommittee meetings. This 75 minute presentation will also include time for questions, which are encouraged!
 - This training will take place on Friday, March 20th at 10-11:30AM. The slides and recording will be shared with everyone who registers, but live participation is encouraged as you will have the opportunity to ask questions directly to the attorneys who are experts in open meetings. REGISTER on the Mass Board of Library Commissioners website.

Committee Reports

- o The Committees as defined in the current version of the Trustee Bylaws will meet on an as needed basis. Current trustee assignments are listed. When a committee convenes trustees can volunteer to participate.
- o No committee has met at this time.

Director's Report

- o Bridget Cooley prepared Director's Report dated March 6, 2026 which was distributed to trustees via email prior to the meeting. Asst. Director, Kitty Sharbrough, highlighted the following:
 - The Community Mosaic project on March 21st.
 - New initiatives with technology, bookmobile lending, and outreach activities.
 - Reorganization and improvements to the Adult Literacy Program.

Grants

- o No grants under discussion.

PML Foundation (Donna Richards)

- o Donna Richards provided the following PML Foundation Report.
 - The PMLF met on February 18, 2026.
 - Planning is in full swing for the Annual Meet the Author night – Thursday, May 7th at 6:00pm – J. Courtney Sullivan – the 20th anniversary of our annual fundraiser – I hope you'll join us.
 - The next PMLF meeting is scheduled for March 18, 2026.

Friends of the PML (Helen Littlefield)

- o Helen Littlefield provided the following Friends Liaison Report.
 - The Friends are organizing a Bingo for Books event on April 24th.
 - The twice-annual Book Sale will run from June 11th through June 13th.
 - The Friends are hosting a breakfast for library staff.
 - The Friends Newsletter will be sent quarterly.
 - The Friends next meeting is April 4th at 9:15am in the Director's Office.

Old Business

- o No old business was discussed.

New Business (Announcements and Questions)

- o No new business was discussed.

Adjournment

- o The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 PM on a motion by Donna Richards and seconded by Courtney McSparron. All in attendance were in favor.
- o Our next meeting is **Wednesday, April 8, 2026**.

Respectfully Submitted: *Christopher St. Croix*

Reviewed and Approved by the PML Board of Trustees: April 8, 2026