

Pollard Memorial Board of Trustees – Trustee Minutes

Date:

- o The meeting took place on Wednesday, May 13, 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 5:32 pm.

Attendance

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

Acceptance of / Amendment to Agenda

- o The agenda for *May 13th* was unanimously approved on a motion by Judy Davidson, seconded by Suzanne Frechette.

Prior Meeting Minutes Approval

- o Pending discussed revisions, the meeting minutes from *April 8, 2026* were unanimously accepted on a motion by Donna Richards and seconded by Jack Moynihan.

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 The suggestions to the bylaws made at the April 8th trustee meeting were incorporated by Richards. Richards provided each trustee with the original bylaws, a marked-up version of the original bylaws and a clean copy. The Trustees reviewed each section again to verify everything was captured as requested.
- o Chris O'Connor is planning to review the latest copy from a legal perspective. She also suggests we run it through an AI review, such as "Co-Counsel" through West Law. [This is a very accurate review from a legal standpoint.] Questions we might want to ask include: Are there any provisions we might want to incorporate from the bylaws of other communities? American Library Association? State and Federal Law?
- o O'Connor will provide the review and then send response to the library director, after which we can address it as a group.
- o There is also discussion about providing the City Legal Division with the past adopted versions of the by-laws, along with the newest version.
- o Davidson had also done some close editing in regard to the order of items in the bylaws, which O'Connor will compare to the latest version and make suggestions on how to proceed.
- o When we have completed our review, Cooley will send the corrected copy to the City Legal Department, ask them to run it through co-counsel, and hopefully get it back to her in time for the June meeting, but if not we can call a special meeting or take up in September.

Advocacy - Updates

- o Courtney McSparron and Titania Tamba were scheduled to provide an update on their planning regarding Advocacy activities. Neither could be present at the meeting. Discussion is held over for June.

Update from Strategic Plan Task Groups

- o Culture (Judy Davidson / Courtney McSparron)
- o Advocacy (Donna Richards / Ellen Anstey)
- o City Engagement (Ellen Anstey / Donna Richards)
- o Community Engagement (Courtney McSparron / Christine O'Connor)
- o Planning & Building Usage-Accessibility (Helen Littlefield / Jack Moynihan)
- o Collection Development (Library Staff Only)

None of these groups have met in the last month.

Reports

Chairperson's Report - Open Meeting Law determination and compliance

- o On May 12, 2026, the City Council acknowledged the timely receipt of the recommended Budget for Fiscal Year 2027 from the City Manager. A public hearing on the budget is scheduled for **Tuesday May 26, 2026**, in the City Council Chamber.
- o On May 12, 2026, the City Council adopted and approved the Budget for Fiscal Year 2027 in the sum of \$577,396,177 which sum shall be appropriated and raised by taxation and other

sources, including but not limited to intergovernmental revenue, charges for services, licenses and permits, miscellaneous departments receipts, grant funds, etc.

- o The FY2027 State Budget process hit another milestone yesterday as the Massachusetts House Ways & Means Committee released their [FY2027 Budget](#). The budget maintains the Governor's **2% increase** across the MBLC's budget lines.
- o The secondary award for the City of Lowell's Pollard Memorial Library is **\$196,367.60** and has been received.
- o On Tuesday, May 26th at 12PM the [Massachusetts Municipal Association \(MMA\)](#) will be hosting **Public Libraries: Community Hubs for Civic Engagement**
 - A panel of 3 MA librarians: Janelle Abreau (Lawrence PL), Anna Bognolo (Greenfield PL), and Smadar Gekow (Stoughton PL) will be highlighting their libraries' work engaging their communities with the library at the center, including citizenship services, ESOL instruction, voter registration, student involvement, and more.
 - If you are not able to attend live, **you will be able to access the recording, slides and resources** with your registration.

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.
 - Governance/Policy Committee (J. Davidson*/S. Frechette/C. O'Connor)
 - Art Committee (___ */Ellen Anstey/Donna Richards)
 - Security/Building/Grounds (Suzanne Frechette*/Helen Littlefield)
 - Outreach (Donna Richards*/Judy Davidson/Helen Littlefield)
 - Nominating/Personnel (___ */Donna Richards/Ellen Anstey)
- o No committee has met at this time.

Director's Report

Bridget Cooley prepared the Director's Report dated May 8, 2026 which was distributed to trustees via email prior to the meeting. Specific discussion arose around numerous issues including:

- o Friends Book Sale Drop-off starts this weekend.
- o Senator Markey and Representative Trahan will be at the library on Saturday (same day as Commencement at the Tsongas Arena!)
- o Lowell Artist Showcase continues.
- o Book Mobile is going out to test new Park stops.
- o Bi-Centennial Mosaic is being admired and was part of Doors Open Lowell.
- o The City Council presentation from Bridget is still getting positive comments.
- o Kitty Sharbrough, Assistant Library Director, has just started teaching a Basic English class for people who are at the early stages of learning English.
- o There is a plan getting off the ground in the city for creating a Welcoming Weekend for the Fall. The goal would be to make an invitation to everyone City wide. But it will also be 25 years since 9/11 and there are several events for that. We do not want to conflict.
- o Katelyn Baker's visit to Minneapolis and Public Library Association meetings was mentioned. Baker's article on the experience is in the PLA online publication.

- o Cooley is waiting on DPW for word on the Capital Projects she submitted. There is a spending freeze for everything that is not an emergency—announced today.
 - The Library was approved for a Chiller in the FY27 budget.
- o FY27 Budget Issues:
 - The library budget does meet the MAR so we meet our obligation financially to qualify for State Aid funding but there are still other metrics to be met.
 - Cooley discusses her strategies for working with the city budget shortfall, particularly with staffing.
 - Cooley provides information about the cross-training efforts that have been going on to prepare for this. Staff are also learning to think about themselves as not so narrowly focused, and how to pitch in and learn new skills.
 - Cooley has worked hard to be transparent with her staff—and to honor those who are leaving and encourage staff to share their feelings.
 - The library can expect to lose filled positions and vacant positions will be left open. [7 positions will be lost overall.] Contract positions from ARPA will no longer be funded at end of June.[1 librarian and 1 library assistant position]]. The leveling of internal colleagues is approved, Bridget feels that she can maintain a level of service expected from patrons.
 - Cooley is working with Literacy Volunteers to provide information for their grant. Even if they do not receive the literacy grant they plan to continue doing the literacy classes and other activities.
 - Trustees appreciate the Director's leadership in handling this difficult budget cycle and the willingness of staff to take on more. Trustees offered to advocate as needed.

Grants

- o No grants to discuss.

PML Foundation (Donna Richards)

- o Donna Richards provided the following PML Foundation Report.
 - The PMLF met on April 15, 2026.
 - Final details and assignments for Author Night were discussed. The event was held on May 7th and was very successful. Attendance was highest they have ever had, and we have increased sponsorship for the event. It was also a special evening because we celebrated the 20th anniversary of this fundraiser.
 - The next regular PMLF meeting is scheduled for May 20, 2026 at 8:30am. New members are proposed and voted on at this meeting. The Annual Meeting is planned for May 28, 2026 at 5:15pm. At this meeting the newly appointed members are introduced and the slate of officers are voted in. The PMLF does not meet over the summer and will resume in September.

Friends of the PML (Helen Littlefield)

- o Helen Littlefield provided the following Friends Liaison Report.
 - The Friends last met on April 4, 2026.
 - The Friends sponsored “Bingo for Books” at the end of National Library Week on Saturday, April 25th. Ten enthusiastic attendees (plus four volunteers who also played) all went

home with lots of book prizes. One family group really cleaned up, needing bags to carry home their new books.

- The Spring Book Sale is scheduled for; 6/11 from 5pm to 6pm for members only, 6pm to 7pm for the general public; 6/12 from 10am to 3pm; and 6/13 from 9am to -3pm.
- The Friends will be collecting donated books on four consecutive Saturdays, May 16, 23, 30, and June 6 from 12pm to 2pm.
- The Friends' next meeting is June 6th; 9:15am in the Library Director's office.

Old Business

- o There is no old business to discuss.

New Business (Announcements and Questions)

- o Our last meeting of the year—June—we usually bring food to celebrate the conclusion of the year. The group agrees to bring food for the concluding meeting.

Adjournment

- o The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 PM on a motion by *Donna Richards* and seconded by Suzanne Frechette. All in attendance were in favor.
- o Our next meeting is **Wednesday, June 10, 2026. All trustees should bring a treat.**



TRUSTEE - Library Goal-Based Director TRUSTEE bylaws1104
Trustee Meeting notification MAY 2026.pdf Report - May 8, 2026.docx 2026 (3) - CLEAN COPY 4.2026 revised 3.2021.docx

MINUTES APPROVED: 6/10/2026 by the PML Board of trustees