

Pollard Memorial Board of Trustees – Meeting Minutes

Date:

- o The meeting took place on Wednesday, June 10, 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 5:36 pm.

Attendance

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

Acceptance of / Amendment to Agenda

- o The agenda for *June 10th* was unanimously approved on a motion by Donna Richards, seconded by Judy Davidson.

Prior Meeting Minutes Approval

- o The meeting minutes from *May 13, 2026* were unanimously accepted with no revisions on a motion by Ellen Anstey and seconded by Donna Richards. There was one abstention.

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 Next Steps

- o Using AI, Richards reviewed the latest version of the by-laws to compare against other MA libraries for completeness. A.I. complimented our draft and said we were fairly comprehensive overall compared to peer examples. AI recommended we add or update several areas, but because by Charter we follow a Plan E form of government , some of the recommendations may not apply to us (There are only 3 other libraries operating under this form in the Commonwealth.)
- o Chris O'Connor will be asked to review the last revision and the format revisions, to make recommendations. She will send her revision to the library director who will submit to the Legal Department for an AI review (special legal edition), and they will return it to us with their opinion. If O'Connor is not available, the Trustees will work through this with the legal department on their own.

Advocacy - Updates

- o No report at this time.

Update from Strategic Plan Task Groups

- o Culture (Judy Davidson / Courtney McSparron)
 - Committee met on 6/5 and developed questions for a staff survey. The survey will be rolled out 7/5 with an expected completion 7/17.

None of the other committees listed below met during this period.

- 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)

Reports

Chairperson's Report

- o Titiana Tambi has submitted her resignation effectively after this meeting as she is moving to Dracut. We thanked her for her contributions to the board and wished her well. Hopefully she will be able to stay connected to us through the Friends or Foundation.
- o On June 2, 2026 Director Cooley defended the Library budget at the City Council meeting, which can be reviewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n43gyis4jcg> - time to start review for the library is 2:07:10.
- o Cooley also recommends if time permits to watch City Manager Golden's comments on Inside Lowell - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bbeGPKL0Ls0&t=1143s>.
- o The Board agreed to attach the packet prepared for the 4.21.26 City Council meeting to the minutes of this meeting when they are posted, in order to further public access to this information.

- o Richards forwarded the beautifully written email from Community Librarian, Mia Graceffa, in support of Cooley's recent activities to support the library, to members of the board (Email is included at end of these minutes).
- o Richards also forwarded a facebook post about the library from a local supporter. Richards wrote: "I forwarded *The Weekend Jen* link to see *Day 1 - Hometown Tourist in Lowell, MA*. It was so great to see and hear from a young adult in support of libraries, and particularly PML. Jen also recommends getting a library card !!"
<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/18yZKCzHdw/?mibextid=wwXlfr>
- o A webinar about library's ROI (Return on Investment) is free and will take place on July 15th @ 2pm, to be offered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. [Webinar: Return on Investment \(ROI\): Beyond What Your Library is Worth](#). Cooley used ROI information in her presentation to the City Council.
- o The Massachusetts Library Association requested that those interested contact members of the **House Ways & Means Committee** and encourage them to approve [H.3595](#), An Act Addressing Challenges Facing Public Libraries and Digital Resource Collections, **before the formal session ends on July 31**.
 - [H.3595](#) is important because it will create a **special legislative commission** of people from the Library Community, Publishing world, and digital distributors (like OverDrive) to open dialogue among libraries, publishers, content providers and legislators to examine the high cost of digital titles available to libraries, the inability of libraries to be able to own digital copies of titles for preservation or any other purpose, limitations places on the number of digital copies of titles a library can purchase and the limitations on loan periods for digital titles.
 - Local Commonwealth representative Rodney Elliott is a member of the HWM committee.
- o Richards attended the online presentation hosted by the Massachusetts Municipal Association on **Public Libraries: Community Hubs for Civic Engagement**. She felt it confirmed that our library is doing this work and more to engage with the community. Janelle Abreau (Lawrence PL) was the most relevant speaker as Lowell and Lawrence aren't dissimilar in diversity, they are just smaller. They did have some pretty cool pods and offer health services.
- o In a discussion about our library's attention to the needs of disabled readers, the Lions Association and its work with materials for the blind was mentioned. (Brady McCarron is Chair of that group, which does buy large print books for the library.) Cooley recommends that the Library and the local association for the blind meet to insure books are needed and the blind community will use the materials. PML has talking books, low vision computers, but no braille copies. If there is interest, PML could host a deposit collection of braille materials from the Perkins Library for the Blind. In July, PML will be hosting the Lowell Commission for the Disabled (lay people run it, but it usually has one city administrator). They oversee distribution of the funds from fines for parking in handicapped areas that all go to this Commission.

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 During this time, none of these committees have met.

Director's Report

- o Bridget Cooley prepared the Director's Report dated June 6, 2026, which was distributed to trustees via email prior to the meeting. Specific discussion arose around numerous issues including:
- Kitty Sharborough, Associate Director, is teaching Basic English class on Wed. that will continue through the summer. In Fall, Conversation Classes and Cafes will be offered.
 - The Book Mobile staff are finalizing stops for the summer schedule. Several stops have been confirmed.
 - The library's summer programming has lots of competition this time of year, but numbers are still very good. They are using improved registration software.
 - Murals are going up in YA area on Friday. The Grantor for furniture is willing to support a temporary mural, also for this area.
 - The chiller has been installed and still has to be adjusted.
 - Cooley discussed the adjustments that have been made at the end of the financial year. The increased electric bill was discussed at some length. There were many questions about how the bill is monitored and charged.
 - Cooley discussed the changes in staffing—positions opening, etc.
 - There were questions about the bi-centennial book launch; there is also a bi-centennial drone show being planned.

Grants

- o There were no grants to discuss.

PML Foundation (Donna Richards)

- o Donna Richards provided the following PML Foundation Report.
- The PMLF met on May 20, 2026 for the regular meeting and May 28, 2026 for the annual meeting.
 - At the regular meeting they received reports from each Committee.
 - At the annual meeting the newly appointed members, Meredith Mooney and Mary McCabe, were introduced and the slate of officers, Kerry Jenness, Chair, Linda Kilbride, Vice Chair, Richard Hubbell, Treasurer, and Belinda Juran, Clerk were voted in. The Finance Committee reported on the status of the FY2026 BUDGET PLAN – where they were with expenses AND meeting the fundraising goal.
 - The PMLF does not meet over the summer and will resume in September. The next regular PMLF meeting is scheduled for September 16, 2026 at 8:30am.

Friends of the PML (Helen Littlefield)

- o Helen Littlefield provided the following Friends Liaison Report.
 - The Spring Book Sale was 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' next meeting is 8/1/26 at 9:15 am in the Library Director's office.

Old Business

- o There was no old business to discuss.

New Business (Announcements and Questions)

- o There was no new business to discuss.

Adjournment

- o The meeting was adjourned at 6:57 PM on a motion by Donna Richards and seconded by Helen Littlefield. All in attendance were in favor.
- o The next meeting is **September 9, 2026**.

THESE MINUTES HAVE BEEN APPROVED by the PML Board of Trustees 9/9/26

NOTES:

2) KUDOS to Bridget Cooley for her leadership

FRIDAY, JUNE 5, 2026 email from Mia Graceffa

Dear friends and colleagues,



Today happens to be Bridget's birthday, and it feels like the perfect opportunity to recognize something many of us have witnessed over the past year.

Now, Bridget would probably be horrified that I'm drawing this much attention to her, but some things are too important not to say out loud.

Nine months ago, when difficult budget conversations first began, Bridget and Kitty introduced the idea of "One Library, One Staff." At the time, some of us saw it as cross-training and learning new responsibilities. Looking back, it was much more than that. It was a vision for how we could work together, support one another, and strengthen the library in the face of uncertainty.

As the budget crisis unfolded, Bridget led with remarkable foresight, determination, and care. While many of us were understandably focused on our own jobs, departments, and concerns, she was looking at the entire organization, thinking months ahead, building contingency plans, advocating for staff, and searching for every possible way to preserve positions and services for our community.

While many of us were trying to understand what was happening from week to week, Bridget seemed to be playing chess three moves ahead of everyone else. Looking back now, it's clear that what felt like change for the sake of change was actually thoughtful preparation for what was coming.

Those efforts were not easy. They required difficult conversations, creative problem-solving, flexibility, and a tremendous amount of trust from staff across the organization. Many people stepped up, took on new responsibilities, learned new skills, and worked outside their traditional roles. Bridget asked us to think beyond individual departments and embrace the idea that we are one library working toward a common goal.

And as if navigating a citywide budget crisis wasn't enough, libraries everywhere—including ours—were also facing uncertainty surrounding federal library funding and the impact it could have on electronic resources and services. Through it all, Bridget somehow managed the delicate balance of being honest about the challenges while also keeping everyone from spiraling into panic. She never sugarcoated reality, but she also never let fear drive the conversation. As always, she was already working on solutions before most of us had finished worrying about the problem.

The results of that work speak for themselves. While this has been an extraordinarily difficult year for the City and for many municipal employees, our library emerged stronger because of thoughtful planning, collaboration, and leadership. Positions were preserved, services were protected, and the library remains well-positioned to serve our community because Bridget never stopped looking for solutions.

Looking back, maybe we shouldn't be surprised. If your profession revolves around helping people find answers to difficult questions, troubleshoot problems, and connect people with the resources they need, a budget crisis is probably just a very stressful reference question. This year reminded many of us that libraries do far more than lend books and answer questions. They are filled with planners, problem-solvers, and public servants. And Bridget, as usual, had already started working on the answer before the rest of us had finished asking the question.

Most importantly, throughout this process, she never lost sight of the people involved. She advocated tirelessly for her staff, supported us through uncertainty, and carried responsibilities that most of us never fully saw.

I suspect most of us have found ourselves saying some version of "I should ask Bridget," whether the question was about library operations, municipal finance, technology, policy, career advice, or life in general. Need an answer? She has it. Need a solution? She's already thought of three. Trust me.

Libraries are full of incredible resources, but somehow the best one works in the Director's Office.

Happy Birthday, Bridget. Thank you for your leadership, your wisdom, your persistence, and for somehow always finding a solution when the rest of us are still trying to figure out what the problem is.

Your #1 fan,

Mia 

Mia Graceffa Community Planning Librarian

The Trustees asked that the Library Director include an informational packet that was shared with City Council at the 4/21/26 meeting where the Library Director reviewed highlights of the 2025 Calendar year. Those notes are listed below.

Overall Library Stats for 2025

Strengthen Core Services

Circulation and Materials Usage

- 4,590 residents registered for new library cards in 2025.
- Library users checked 118,771 physical items, 56,251 digital items, and 12,361 Hoopla items totaling 187,383 total items, which is an increase of 14.7% over 2024.
- Of the physical items circulated, borrowers took out 1,932 audiobooks, 1,076 magazines, 15,271 DVD and Blu-Rays, 1,318 CDs, 96,489 books and 685 other items, including technology resources and video games (newly added in 2025).
- Last year, the library purchased over 9,100 books, DVDs, CDs, etc. Our newest materials are Lauchpads (electronic learning tools for families), Vox and Wonderbooks (that allow for reading and listening skills to be intertwined), Nintendo Switch games, decodable language literacy books for children, and so much more!
- Over 115 patrons took out more than 560 seed packets to create their own gardens in 2025.
- Lowell cardholders completed 17,394 sessions of the Lowell Sun and other Access World newspapers with their library card. This is a 454% increase over 2024.
- Since January 1, 2025, the library has purchased 400 items in languages other than English and more than 250 items for learning English for non-English speakers.
- Library patrons borrowed 1,092 museum passes last year with the most popular sites being the New England Aquarium, Zoo New England, and the Museum of Science, many of which were sponsored by the Friends of the Pollard Memorial Library.
- Library patrons completed over 7,500 ABCMouse learning exercises in 2025 for free. In FY2025 (most recent statistics available), Lowell residents had more than 47,500 sessions on the Pebble Go electronic learning resource and over 7,600 uses of Encyclopedia Britannica.

Building Usage & Services

- Over 141,000 visitors (duplicated) came into the library in 2025, which averages to approximately 498 visitors a day.
- The library was able to fulfill 2,089 study and meeting room reservations for more than 5,000 users.
- The Library collaborates with over 120 community partners (nonprofits, businesses, action groups, etc.) as well as many city departments including the Health Department, Senior Center, Veterans Affairs, Recreation, Sustainability, Planning & Development, Elections, and more!
- Over 12,500 computer sessions were provided to library patrons.
- 9,073 documents were sent by Library patrons to our publicly accessible print stations with over 28,200 pages printed.
- The Library was open 3,084 hours in 2025 with nearly 800 hours available after 5 pm. Library staff answered more than 37,600 questions for patrons, with approximately 1/3 being related to using technology either personal or in the library.

- More than 500 little free pantry food items were taken by community members in 2025. We've also ensured that anyone facing food insecurity have received resources where they can obtain food and also how to cook and shop on a budget. We are grateful to the library patrons and the Lowell High School National Honor Society who are regularly donating items to keep it filled.
- 2025 programming included 39 off-site programs at local businesses and nonprofits as well as 112 which were held at the Senior Center.
- We offered 195 programs for children ages 0-11 with more than 6,913 participants. Our teen staff offered 91 programs in 2025 benefiting 794 teens. Our adults and all ages programming totaled 497 opportunities, benefitting 3,101 adults, 100 of which include special one-on-one learning sessions for technology.

Communicate & Connect

- The Library's bookmobile made 365 stops in 2025, signing up 830 residents for library cards with nearly 1,900 items checked out. They also provided information and other services to over 17,400 residents. The bookmobile held stops at various locations including Lowell Housing Authority sites, senior living facilities, Abisi Adult Education and other adult literacy program sites around the city, the Senior Center, International Institute, healthcare and rehabilitation facilities, UMass Lowell, local nonprofits, Kids Week and Playcation activities, various parks, Recreation Camp programs, Dutton Street Market days, school family literacy events, community events like school resource fairs, Muddy Paws 5K, YMCA Healthy Kids event, Boys & Girls Club Literacy Day, Lowell Pride, Tyler Park Concerts, Lowell Folk Fest, Celebration of Democracy event, Mill City Grows Harvest Fair, the Lowell Symphony Orchestra and Lowell Philharmonic concerts, Trunk or Treat events, and many more.
- Besides the bookmobile, library staff offered over 71 additional outreach visits, storytimes and tours to an additional 3,720 residents. These were offered to local schools, family nights at schools, local preschools, literacy week events, summer enrichment programs, the Recreation Department's Tiny Tots program, and adult learners at the Abisi.

Organizational Excellence

- Thirteen staff members have represented Lowell on 15 consortium, state, or regional committees that are focused on library services, programming, teen services, technology, early childhood, legislative issues, local history, and much more. Of those, we have staff serving as chairs or co-chairs of those committees.
- In 2025, 20 staff completed more than 150 webinars or class sessions focused on improving professional development to enhance their library skills. Front-line staff were also able to participate in additional internal customer service training and communication skills building sessions.



Strategic Plan FY2025 - FY2029

VISION

Enriching lives and connecting our community through opportunities to explore, learn, and grow.

MISSION

We are a vital hub of learning in the City of Lowell and serve as a connector for our diverse community by providing equitable access to information, technology, and space needed to support lifelong learning.



COMMUNICATE AND CONNECT

Celebrate community diversity by strategically communicating and connecting people with library services.

OBJECTIVES

- 1.1 Develop a community engagement and communication plan to articulate the value of the library for the entire community
- 1.2 Implement, evaluate, and adjust the outreach plan
- 1.3 Create a partner plan by assessing current partnerships and discussing opportunities for deepening joint work and expansion to new partners
- 1.4 Regularly communicate with and engage City officials and other stakeholders



STRENGTHEN CORE SERVICES

Connect people to information literacy, resources, and programs for exploration, learning, and growth in welcoming spaces.

OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 Increase understanding and usage of library services for all patrons
- 2.2 Increase access and remove language barriers of non-English speakers through signage, library information, programs, and collections
- 2.3 Study ways to reach more patrons through home delivery services
- 2.4 Implement a system for evaluation of programs and services to support data driven decision making
- 2.5 Holistically consider the use of library spaces and create a phased plan to update and renovate



ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Cultivate a strong, supportive organizational culture dedicated to continuous improvement to increase job satisfaction and ensure excellent patron experience.

OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 Engage regularly in ongoing dialogue about what it means to be a patron-centered library and use data to make changes and improvements
- 3.2 Continue to implement customer service standards and evaluate staff success in achieving these standards
- 3.3 Expand efforts to fulfill community needs by working with other departments within the City and throughout the library
- 3.4 Create professional development plans for each staff member
- 3.5 Find ways for staff members to connect with each other across library departments for better understanding of roles and responsibilities

Estimated ROI for the Library Usage CY2025

Value of Library Services

Input Your Use	Library Services	Value of Services
38277	Adult Books Borrowed	\$ 842094.00
6971	Young Adult Borrowed	\$ 83652.00
51291	Children Books Borrowed	\$ 410328.00
1932	Audiobooks Borrowed	\$ 52164.00
685	Interlibrary Loan Requests	\$ 17125.00
68600	eBooks/Audiobooks Downloaded	\$ 686000.00
1076	Magazines Borrowed	\$ 5380.00
15271	Movies Borrowed	\$ 274878.00
1318	CDs Borrowed	\$ 17134.00
1092	Museum Passes Borrowed	\$ 21840.00
852	Newspaper Use in Library	\$ 7659.48
3133	Meeting Room Use per Hour	\$ 78325.00
3101	Adult Programs and Classes Attended	\$ 46515.00
7707	Children's Programs Attended	\$ 92484.00
12500	Computer Use per hour (i.e. Internet, MS Word, etc.)	\$ 125000.00
37600	Reference Questions Asked	\$ 733200.00
Calculate The Value of Your Library Use Clear Form		\$ 3493778.4

Source: <https://www.maine.gov/msl/services/calculator.htm>

This is a tool that is provided for library users and libraries to use to estimate Return on Investment. There are other services and opportunities that are not included in this calculator, but it is a tool that can show the demonstrated need for the community.

Circulation Comparison First Quarter 2025 vs. 2026 – increase of 3,699 more borrowed items in 2026

	2025 Physical	2025 Overdrive	2025 Hoopla	2025 Totals	2026 Physical	2026 Overdrive	2026 Hoopla	2026 Totals
January	8,320	4,795	933	14,048	9,097	5,112	1,252	15,461
February	8,370	4,429	875	13,674	8,637	4,386	1,143	14,166
March	9,730	4,831	915	15,476	10,861	5,138	1,271	17,270
Totals	26,420	14,055	2,723	43,198	28,595	14,636	3,666	46,897

Recent Patron Testimonials/Feedback

From: Jasmine Rondeau <jratcliff2209@gmail.com>

Sent: Saturday, April 4, 2026 6:06 PM

To: Molly Hancock <mhancock@lowelllibrary.org>

Subject: Baby yoga

Hello,

I just wanted to express my gratitude for the baby yoga program that the library sponsors me and my little one enjoy it so much. It's so nice to have it over zoom

-Jasmine Rondeau

From: Halli Goldsmith <halligolds@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, April 14, 2026 3:14 PM

To: Molly Hancock <mhancock@lowelllibrary.org>

Subject: Baby yoga

I just wanted to take a moment to thank you and the library for offering the Sweet Pea baby yoga class virtually! It was wonderful this morning and I will definitely be attending again.

Halli Trinker

From: Christine Fernald <cferald@lowelllibrary.org>

Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2026 11:34 AM

Subject: Quote from a patron

Hello,

I first met Miriam Rahim when she and her husband attended an Adult Craft Night, when Gwen was running the program. Miriam was pregnant with her first child, at the time. Soon after her daughter was born, Miriam and Fatima attended any and all story times. Miriam's husband is a medical doctor at Lahey Hospital.

Unfortunately, this amazingly beautiful family will be moving to Canada at the end of April.

Miriam and Fatima attended today's Family Story time and we said our good byes. Claire was covering the break, at the Children's Desk.

As Miriam was leaving, she shared the following words: "The story times got her through post-partum. She (Miriam) is the mother she is because of the library."

These words instantly made my heart smile.

Christine

2/19/26

Dear Lowell Library

Thank you so much
for always helping me
get books and DVDs.

You are always
so very kind and I

so much appreciate
your help and time.

You are all so
dedicated and you
deserve many GOLD STARS
Thank all for all your
Help and time.

Kate Barrow

From: Amanda Rocha <arocha2020@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, April 16, 2026 9:22 AM

To: Bridget Cooley <bcooley@lowelllibrary.org>

Subject: Re: Library Testimonial

Here's my statement:

"As a lifelong Lowell resident I have seen the foundational benefits Pollard Memorial Library has provided to our city, and how it had evolved over my lifetime. Pollard is seen as a welcoming meeting place, a hub for research, a place for creatives to try new hobbies and everything in between. I have participated in the ESOL program as an English Tutor and loved that opportunity to extend a helping hand. As a nanny, I have brought all the children I care for to the library to experience all it has to offer in those early years. I have attended countless craft nights and other clubs and have witnessed them turn from small groups to every event reaching wait list. Pollard has provided me with skills, community, and access to knowledge. This library is continuing to grow its audience every year and has kept up with the new interests and needs of the community."

-Amanda Rocha

Dear Council members,

I'm writing this letter in support of the library. I've been a resident of Lowell and patron of the library for more than 20 years. The current offerings for reading and audio material, community programming and community engagement have surpassed those of previous years.

I'm an avid reader, and the library has saved me hundreds (probably thousands) of dollars by having bestsellers, nonfiction and staff recommendations readily available. In addition, the library passes enable me and my family to patronize local theaters, museums and aquariums that make these family outings much more accessible.

I've also been so impressed with the community programming the library is offering. I've learned about AI prompts, how to start a business and how to crochet. Recently, the library has offered workshops taught by local artists. I believe this is a great partnership that allows artists to connect with residents and to teach their craft. I've taken two of these workshops, learned a lot and had great fun. I'm always checking the events calendar to see what's coming up next.

Finally, I'm a member of an active local community group. The library has been a phenomenal partner with us: we've held our events at the library-free of charge to us, the community group-and free to the community. This is significant, as we would not be able to hold our events or attract community members to attend our events, were it not for the library.

The library provides all of these important services to the community. I cannot overstate how valuable the library, its services and staff, are to residents.

Sincerely,

Christine E. Wilkins - 240 Jackson St. #606, Lowell, MA 01852

David and Kunthy Sorensen
9 Harrison St
Lowell, MA 01852

Director Cooley and Lowell City Council,

The Pollard Memorial Library has been a wonderful force for good in our family's life. We first moved to Lowell in the fall of 2020. With two young children and few ties to the community, moving in when so many pandemic-related restrictions were in place was difficult. We soon found the library's virtual Mother Goose on the Loose and Family Storytime programming. This was a wonderful development for our young children who were able to learn and actively participate with other children and adults despite all the restrictions designed to keep people safe from COVID-19. As our children have grown and new ones have come along, we have continued to love these programs.

We have also loved the various craft and STEM programs the library puts on for older children. Our children are always excited when they hear there's a Crafternoon, Lego Club, or Little Makers and love the variety of experiences they have at the library. There's always something going on at the library (and that goes double for school vacation weeks!) which keeps our family coming back over and over. Whenever we meet other parents, we always recommend highly the wonderful activities the library puts on for children.

The library has also connected us with the community. Kunthy regularly attends the adult craft evenings, meeting other artists and learning new crafts. As a stay-at-home mom, these craft nights have become a key opportunity for her to step away from the children for a minute and have some time to herself. This past fall, one of her friends from the craft nights was able to lend her a book on amigurumi that helped her start this new style of crochet work. That connection would not have been possible without the Pollard Library. We have also participated in several community events, especially for the Khmer community. The library has been a common connection point for us that has incorporated us more fully into the city and the community and making Lowell our home, not just the place that we live.

Of course, the biggest point of a library is to be a library, and we have taken full advantage of that. We check out so many books that sometimes the librarians get weary when we come in—they know we will likely be bringing back several bags of book to check in! Our children have been able to read so many wonderful stories through all the books that we have checked out. They have read books about people from different cultures, learning about their different traditions. They have learned about planets, geography, and all sorts of animals. While reading came naturally to our oldest, the Decodables series of books were invaluable tools for teaching our son how to read. And all along, we've discovered our own books but also had expert guidance from the Pollard Memorial librarians, recommending new books and series that our children have loved. And our children have especially loved participating in the Summer Reading Programs to work towards specific goals and rewards.

David finished his PhD program last fall, and that has meant he has been looking for the next move in his career, which may take us away from Lowell. As we've looked forward to that next step, one thing that we have been dreading would be saying goodbye to the Pollard Memorial Library. It truly is a wonderful treasure that we have been so lucky to benefit from. If we do end up moving, it will be one of the things we miss the most, and if we are able to stay for longer, you can count on us visiting the library over and over as long as we are in Lowell. As far as we are concerned, putting funds towards the library is one of the best returns on investment one could make.

Sincerely,
David and Kunthy Sorensen

Subject: Lowell City Library

Date: Apr 13, 2026 at 9:13:20 PM

To: 978 joe33217@gmail.com

My name is George Peirce and I'm 78 years old and have been going to the Lowell City Library since I was 15 years old.

I was raised by a single parent and left school after the sixth grade to get a job to help my mother with finances.

Over the years, the Lowell City Library has been a form of education and information for me by providing newspapers, magazines, books and DVDs.

It's also been a good source for requesting non stocked books from other libraries that I've requested over the years.

My wife recently passed and the staff at the library have been like a second family to me.

They have been very caring and supportive, without them I'd been lost.

Overall the library has been more than an information center for me, the service, staff and resources it's provided have made me feel that I have a friendly location in Lowell.

Kind of an home away from home.

I really appreciate all the work their staff have provided to me over the years.

Sincerely,

George Peirce

Provided by JP

Sent from my iPhone

Hello,

Thank you for giving community the opportunity to share feedback. Please feel free to use the testimonial below if it's helpful.

The Pollard Memorial Library is incredibly important to me and to our community because it is so much more than a place to borrow books—it is a place to make new friends, experience new ideas, and solve problems in an ever more complicated environment.

For me personally, the library has always been a reliable and welcoming space where I can learn new skills, research important topics, and enjoy quiet time to read and think. But recently I have also found new access to resources that many people may not otherwise have, including family history, help locating lost records, new ways to think outside the box when hitting a dead end, and knowledgeable staff who are always willing to help.

Libraries strengthen communities by giving people free access to knowledge, technology, and lifelong learning. In a time when many people feel isolated or overwhelmed, the library remains a trusted, welcoming place where people can grow, connect, and feel supported.

I believe our library is one of the most valuable resources our community has, and it deserves continued support and appreciation.

Thank you for everything the library does for our community.

Best regards,

Amber Johnson

From: Pollard Memorial Library <allen@pixellente.com>

Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2026 10:09 AM

To: Bridget Cooley <bcooley@lowelllibrary.org>

Subject: Staff Shout-Out

Shout-Out
to:: Entire Staff

Reason for Shout-Out: Thank you so much for all the work you do! I am so proud and grateful to be part of a community that is so kind and generous. I do not know what our community would do without a safe place to learn, grow, engage, and build community. Thank you so much and keep up the great work!

Shout-Out
from:: A Grateful Patron