

**Board of Library Trustees Meeting
Tuesday March 3, 2026 at 7:00pm**

The Meeting took place via Zoom.

Meeting Minutes:

Documents used and/or referred to during this meeting include the following: February 2026 Board of Library Trustees Draft Meeting Minutes, FY26 Year to Date Budget Report, FY26 Funds and Grants Spreadsheet, Griffin and Burke Fund Reports, FY26 Hatch Summary, Memo From Director Long listing Donations received in February 2026, Director's Report dated March 3, 2026, Memo re: Staff Day, Memo re: McCall Fund request, Memo re: Hosmer Tools Loan Extension and attached letter and draft Agreement from Art Bridges, Memo re: Grant Information and copy of Marshall Home Fund Grant application and letter re: Novel Idea sculpture proposal. The meeting was recorded by Watertown Cable Access Television and is available for viewing at wcatv.org.

1. **Call to Order.** Present by roll call: Director Long, Assistant Director Maturevitch, Chair Young, Trustee Kokoros, Trustee Murphy-Holroyd, Trustee Peng, Trustee Owens, Trustee Hammonds.
2. **Secretary's Report**
 - A. **Minutes of February 3, 2026 Meeting.** There were no questions or comments. Trustee Kokoros made a motion to approve the minutes, Trustee Owens seconded. The motion passed unanimously by roll call.
3. **Public Forum.** No members of the public spoke during the Public Forum.
4. **Financial Report**
 - A. **FY26 Budget.** Trustee Kokoros reported that year to date expenditures are \$2,239,125.43, encumbrances are \$211,460.47, Available Budget is \$1,704,616 and Percent of Budget used is 59 percent.
 - B. **Burke Fund Report.** Available Budget is \$10,144.92
 - C. **HATCH Financials.** Available Budget is \$12,178.69

Director Long indicated that the library is planning to wrap up book purchasing for this fiscal year by April 15th, so the book budget will be spent down significantly in the next month or so. A motion was made by Trustee Hammonds and seconded by Trustee Murphy-Holroyd to approve the financial report. The motion passed unanimously by roll call.

 - D. **Consideration and Action on Acceptance of Donations.** Trustee Owens made a motion to accept the donations received in February 2026. Motion seconded by Trustee Kokoros. Motion passed unanimously by roll call.
5. **Chair's Report**

6. **Director's Report**

A. **General Updates.** Director Long highlighted updates from her Director's report. She clarified that the wait times mentioned in her report referred to average wait times for e-books, Libby specifically. Average wait times have decreased and are about 33 days for Watertown. There are currently around 4,600 active holds. Director Long appreciated Liz, WFPL's database specialist for working to decrease wait times. Director Long gave further detail about the National Library Legislative Day conference that she attended in Washington DC at the end of February. She attended meetings at both Massachusetts senators' offices as well as representatives Clark and Moulton. She reported that the conference was powerful and eye-opening in terms of the challenges libraries are facing throughout the country.

B. **Discussion.** Director Long updated trustees on discussions with Maurice at the City IT department regarding possibly separating Library IT from City IT. There will be future discussions and she will keep the trustees informed as to what is decided going forward. Trustee Hammonds asked if there was any forecast on the timing and if there is a time of year that would be easier to change over IT. Director Long stated there was no time during the year that would be better to make a change than others because the library is always open and busy. It would take a few days and should not cause significant disruption to the public. It might be good to make the change at the end of the fiscal year for administrative purposes. She stated that the library and city are invested in making sure it is carefully plotted out, the right decision is made and that any change is made with minimal disruption to users. Trustee Hammonds also asked for an update on O'some's reopening. Director Long reported that O'some reopened Monday, March 2nd. She had a brief discussion with Ricci about why they closed. With the construction vehicles on Main St taking up parking spots all day in front of the cafe, O'some has seen a decline in business this year. Ricci is advocating for some of the spots in front of their cafe to be 15-30 minute spots. Trustee Hammonds asked to be kept informed on this and whether O'some could use trustee support in advocating to the city. Trustee Kokoros asked about the Boston Globe access for library users and whether the library can tell and report how many patrons are using this access. Director Long said it was likely possible to get a report, but it is minuteman wide access. Director Maturevich said Minuteman would have this information and we may be able to request it if there's interest. Director Long said that the Boston Public Library has been offering this access for a long time and that it has become more well known in the last few years and there are sometimes wait times now.

7. **Old Business.** None

8. **New Business**

A. **Consideration and Action on Staff Day Request.** Director Long requested that the trustees approve a library closure on Friday, May 15th for a professional development day with permanent staff members. The topic will likely be mental health and a review of the Strategic Plan. Trustee Peng asked how the date was decided and whether a staff day would take place the same day annually. Director Long responded that it is not the same day each year. She consults the calendar and determines which day the most staff are on schedule to be at work and far enough in advance to tell staff to save the date and book people to come and

present. Trustee Hammonds made a motion to approve closing the library on Friday, May 15th for a staff day. Seconded by Trustee Murphy-Holroyd. Motion passed unanimously by roll call.

B. Consideration and Action on McCall Fund Use Request. Director Long asked that the trustees approve that \$3,000 from the McCall Fund be used to purchase books for giveaway through the 1,000 Books before Kindergarten program. She explained that the requested amount is higher than prior years due to a lack of discounts as a result of Baker and Taylor's closing. They had better programs and offers to support the 1000 Books program than Ingram currently does. Trustee Hammonds made a motion to approve the use of \$3,000 from the McCall fund to be used to purchase books for giveaway through the 1,000 books before Kindergarten program. Trustee Owens seconded. Motion passed unanimously by roll call.

C. Consideration and Action on Hosmer Tool Loan. Director Long gave a brief overview on the loan of the Harriet Hosmer portrait and tools to the Heckscher museum which the trustees approved last year. The exhibit at Heckscher is going through September. The Museum has recently asked if the library would be willing to extend the loan of the Hosmer tools for a traveling exhibit to four other museums. The portrait will be sent back to Watertown in September. The tools would travel through March 29, 2029 with several months at each stop. The traveling exhibit will have stops at museums in Chicago, Charlottesville, Cincinnati, and New Britain, CT. Chair Young asked if the vote would be to extend the time of the loan and trustee Hammonds asked if the agreement would be with a different party than Heckscher Museum. The new agreement would be with the company that arranges the transit for the traveling exhibit. Trustee Hammonds asked if the insurance paragraph in the new contract would include the specific value of the tools from the appraisal we had done last year. Director Long responded that the details for the new contract would be finalized by the library and the city and would include the insurance language. Trustee Hammonds asked about the timing for entering the contract and signing authority. Director Long indicated that the museum would like to finalize a contract as soon as possible and that either she, the City Manager and/or the trustee chair would sign. Trustee Owens asked about the process for finalizing the contract and if Director Long will work with the city attorney on it. Director Long replied that she would work with KP Law to finalize the contract if the trustees authorize the extended loan. Director Long added that the draft contract in our packet is a suggested form contract. No details or negotiations have been done yet because the city needs the trustees to approve the loan extension first. Once finalized, the contract will go to the chair for review and signature. Trustee Hammonds commented that she supports approving the extended loan because the exhibit at Heckscher was so well done and well received and the tools will be seen by even more people. Trustee Hammonds made a motion to approve the extended loan of the Hosmer sculpture tools through 2029 as set forth in the memo in our packet. Chair Young seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

D. Marshall Home Fund Grant. Director Long informed the trustees that the library has two separate requests for funds from the Marshall Home Fund. Neither one has a matching requirement. One is to support Project Literacy's tutor training. Project Literacy's request is for \$4,800. The second application is for \$300 to support a drag tea time for Watertown LGBTQIA+

seniors as part of Watertown Pride. It would take place on a different day than the Pride event but is part of the Pride offerings. The event would be intergenerational as they plan to have teens volunteer to help with the program. Chair Young asked if the funds for the literacy training would be used to pay the training facilitators. Director Long replied that the trainings are run by teachers and take place year-round and most of the funds are to pay the teachers. Chair Young asked if a vote was required and Trustee Kokoros stated that we have voted to approve grant applications in the past. Director Long has asked KP Law if we need to vote on each grant application going forward, but indicated that the trustees should vote on this tonight. Trustee Peng made a motion to approve the Marshall Fund grants. Chair Young seconded. Motion passed unanimously by roll call.

E. **A Novel Idea Public Arts Partnership.** Director Long informed the trustees that the Building Committee voted to fund 50% of the cost of a new granite bench to be placed outside the library with the Public Art Fund covering the other half. She will meet with Liz Helfer and Tom Brady to look at concrete placement. The bench will be installed sometime next year. Trustee Owens asked if there was a process to decide what the book titles on the bench will be. Director Long said this is still under discussion. She suggested picking books from past One Book One Watertown selections and possibly a children's book title as well. Chair Peng liked the idea of picking from One Book titles. Chair Hammonds suggested including the first book read by the Spanish book group. Trustee Kokoros suggested a local children's author since so many live in the Boston area and maybe they would come do a reading. Chair Young asked where the bench would be installed. Director Long said it would be along the walking path near Saltonstall Park in front of the Watertown Savings Bank Room. She noted that since it's a public arts submission it will be nice to have it along the walking path. Trustee Hammonds confirmed that no vote is needed since the Building Committee already voted to support the effort.

9. **Requests for Information and Responses.** No requests.

10. **Date of next meeting** April 9, 2026 in the Mastrangelo Room.

11. **Adjournment** Trustee Hammonds made a motion to adjourn, motion seconded by Trustee Peng. The board voted unanimously by roll call to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 pm.