



Minutes of the Regular Meeting of
The Board of Trustees
Webster Groves Public Library
November 19th, 2025

The meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Webster Groves Public Library was held at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, November 19th. President Anita Radcliffe presided, and Library Director Madison Morris kept the minutes. Also present: Trustees Fred Toelle, Leanne Waugh, Ed Scholl, Janey Worthington, Lea Ann Coates, Jenine Harris, Sherry Taylor, Dana Cooley and City Council Liaison David Franklin.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Public Comment

None

Minutes of the October 15, 2025 Meeting

Ms. Worthington moved to approve the minutes with an amendment to remove the redundant sentence under Building and Grounds and the duplicate listing of Mr. Scholl attending. Ms. Taylor seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the minutes were approved.

Minutes of the November 3, 2025 Zoom Meeting

Ms. Worthington moved to approve the minutes. Dr. Harris seconded. All were in favor, and the minutes were approved.

Correspondence

None

President's Report

Ms. Radcliff reported that the food drive with Webster–Rock Hill Ministries is still ongoing and that the Wish Trees for Epworth are up in the Library for anyone who would like to donate. She also noted that the Board typically provides a ham for the Library's staff development day, which will be held on Wednesday, December 10.

Librarian's Report

Ms. Morris reported that the Children's Room has new furniture, a new play kitchen, updated computer tables, and other improvements funded by the Friends of the Library. She also noted that space has been created in the Reading Room on the main level for book, board game, and puzzle displays. Ms. Morris stated that the Library recently received two grants: one from the Missouri Library Association for Yoto players and Wonderbooks, and another from the State Library and the Institute of Museum and Library

Services for computer replacement. She also reported that the Library will have a late opening on December 6 due to Santas on the Loose.

Advanced Planning

Dr. Harris reported that the committee met in October and that she is working on preparing a document outlining progress toward each strategic planning goal.

Building and Grounds

Ms. Waugh stated that HVAC quotes would be discussed later in the meeting.

Finance

Mr. Scholl reported that the Library was approximately \$2,000 under budget for the month of October; however, year-to-date the Library is over budget by more than \$20,000, primarily due to HVAC expenses. To date, the Library has spent 37% of the annual budget.

Mr. Scholl also reported that tax revenue collected so far this year is lower than the amount collected at this point last year. The Library expects to receive the majority of the remaining tax revenue by the end of January 2026.

Ms. Morris requested authorization from the Board to transfer the bulk of tax revenue received in December and January into the Library's reserve investment account.

Ms. Worthington moved to authorize Ms. Morris to transfer whatever amount she deems appropriate from the checking account to the investment account as tax funds are received. Ms. Waugh seconded. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

Ms. Cooley moved to approve the financial report. Dr. Harris seconded. All were in favor and the report was approved.

Human Resources

Ms. Cooley reported that the committee, in coordination with the Policy Committee, has spent the past several months reviewing both the Vacation Policy and the Employee Handbook. Both documents are now ready for Board review and action.

Ms. Morris outlined the major changes proposed for the Vacation Policy. The new policy:

- Allows employees to earn vacation time during their first year of employment, whereas previously no vacation time was granted in the first year.
- Permits carryover of up to two weeks of unused vacation, compared to the previous policy, which allowed no carryover.
- Transitions the policy from a lump-sum model to a true accrual-based system, replacing the prior approach in which the written policy referenced accruals but was administered as lump-sum allotments. Ms. Morris noted that this shift to genuine accruals will make future vacation payouts, such as in cases of separation or retirement, simpler and more consistent

Dr. Harris moved to approve the vacation policy. Mr. Scholl seconded. All were in favor, and the policy was approved.

Policy

None.

Friends Report

Ms. Taylor reported that the Friends held a successful book sale in October and conducted their annual meeting at the beginning of November, featuring presenters from the Repertory Theatre. She noted that both she and Ms. Radcliffe attended the Friends Board meeting last week, where they provided a brief update on the bond initiative. She stated that the Friends would have future questions about their role if the bond initiative moved forward.

City Hall

Mr. Franklin reported that efforts are underway to increase community engagement regarding both Performance Park and Ivory Crockett Park. Additional community engagement sessions are forthcoming. The City is also exploring new revenue streams, including:

- A ½-cent fire protection sales tax increase, and
- An economic development sales tax of up to 1 cent.

These two options are currently under discussion, and a decision is expected by the end of January regarding whether or not they will be placed on the ballot.

Old Business

HVAC

The Board reviewed quotes from Corrigan Company, Unique Heating & Cooling, Vogel Heating & Cooling, and Hoffman Brothers.

Ms. Waugh stated that after extensive discussion, the Building and Grounds Committee recommended proceeding with a full HVAC system replacement, opting to use Mitsubishi equipment rather than Daikin equipment.

Ongoing issues with the existing Daikin units were noted, and it was observed that when problems arise, the Library often incurs charges from both its regular HVAC contractor and TMI for Daikin-specific diagnostics, resulting in significantly higher repair costs.

Based on equipment preference and project scope, the selection was narrowed to Corrigan Company and Hoffman Brothers.

It was noted that both companies were thorough in answering questions, reviewing the building, and communicating with Ms. Morris. The Board discussed differences in cost, labor warranties, project timelines, and the inclusion of hail guards.

Ms. Worthington moved to accept the Mitsubishi bid from Hoffman Brothers, including the labor warranty and hail guard amendments. Dr. Harris seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Bond Issue – Stifel presentation

Following the presentation from Stifel, the Board discussed whether a bond issue is the most appropriate funding option. Concerns were raised regarding the partial expiration of the temporary tax rate approved in 2009 and the potential impact on the Library's operating budget. It was noted that while a bond could address many of the Library's current and anticipated capital needs—including HVAC and roof replacement, updated carpeting and paint, additional study rooms, more efficient staff workspaces, wiring upgrades, and improved cell service in the lower level—it would not resolve potential operating budget challenges anticipated in 2029. This led to discussion that a tax levy may be a more suitable option. The Board also discussed whether April 2026 is the appropriate timing, noting that the City of Webster Groves may also pursue tax increases during that period.

The Board further discussed that a tax levy requires approval by a simple majority of voters, while a bond issue requires a four-sevenths majority. Discussion also included the potential cost to Webster Groves households under each option. There was additional discussion regarding the senior tax freeze and its potential impact on tax revenues both now and in the future.

Overall, the Board agreed that additional information is needed before moving forward. The Board asked Ms. Morris to work with Stifel to provide information on what pursuing a tax levy would entail, including the levy amount required to support the Library's operating and capital needs and the estimated cost to an average Webster Groves household. This information will be compared with bond financing options so that the Board may evaluate the relative costs, benefits, and implications of each approach.

Mr. Franklin stated that he would communicate with the *Webster-Kirkwood Times* regarding the potential levy.

New Business

Vacation Policy

See Human Resources

Employee Handbook

It was decided to table the Employee Handbook review until January 2026.

Ms. Waugh moved to table this discussion until the January meeting. Mr. Toelle seconded. All were in favor, and the Employee Handbook was tabled.

December Meeting

There was discussion regarding the Board's usual practice of not meeting in December. However, given the ongoing conversations about the bond initiative or potential tax levy and the short turnaround required should the Board wish to place it on the April ballot, members agreed that a December meeting was necessary. The meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 17th at 6:00 p.m.

Adjournment

Ms. Cooley moved to adjourn, Dr. Harris seconded. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 9:03.