

Record of Proceedings

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

OF THE

BOULDER PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

Held: Tuesday, November 19, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at the Boulder Public Library, 1001 Arapahoe Avenue, Boulder, Colorado.

The meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Boulder Public Library District was called and held as shown above in accordance with the statutes of the State of Colorado. The following Trustees, having confirmed their qualifications to serve on the Board, were in attendance:

Doug Hamilton
Benita Duran
Tom Cosgrove
Sylvia Wirba
Cara O'Brien
Andy Saylor
Sam Fuqua

Also present were Kim J. Seter, Esq. from Seter & Vander Wall, P.C.; David Farnan, Director of the Boulder Public Library; Jennifer Phares, Deputy Director of the Boulder Public Library; Celia Seaton, Executive Assistant of the Boulder Public Library; Sydney McCoy, Public Services Director of the Boulder Public Library; Maria Tormos, Communications Manager of the Boulder Public Library; Juan Jimenez, BoulderReads Literacy Manager of the Boulder Public Library; Susanna Perez, Outreach Manager of the Boulder Public Library; and Chris Barge, Executive Director of the Boulder Public Library Foundation.

Members of the public present: Celeste Landry and Adnan Chernoff

Person preparing summary: Celia Seaton

Type of Meeting: Regular

Agenda Item 1: Call to Order and Declaration of Quorum

Hamilton called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. noting that enough appointed trustees were present to create a quorum authorized to act on behalf of the District.

Agenda Item 2: Public Comment

Celeste Landry, a Library Commissioner from 2010 until 2014, referenced her February 2022 letter to the editor in the *Daily Camera* which spoke in support of creating a library district. As she reiterated, “If the library were funded adequately then the commission would not have considered library districting as a financial solution.”

She recalled the library hours extending until 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday during her time on commission. As the library now closes at 7 p.m., she has observed lower attendance in her discussion group that uses a library meeting room. She noticed that other libraries in the area stay open later in the evening; Lafayette Public Library is open until 8 p.m. Monday through Thursday. She feels that the Boulder library system should be a model for the neighboring communities and urged consideration of a later closing time of 9 p.m.

Hamilton reported hearing patron feedback desiring later hours for the makerspace. He relayed the library’s plan to open at 9 a.m. instead of 10 a.m. on Fridays, starting January 3, 2025. The Canyon Theater is available for after-hours events on Thursdays and Saturdays until 10 p.m. Fuqua “would love to test later hours for the makerspace facilities.”

Duran appreciated her comments. She suggested additional consideration around removing some of the library’s holiday closures.

Farnan thanked Landry for her input. In his observation, a smaller portion of patrons visit the library in the evening as compared to the rush of the morning hours; visits after 6 PM can dwindle to a “trickle.” However, he recognized that Landry’s perspective was from a patron who is already in the building and wishes to stay later. This could be investigated, along with a review of the associated costs for extended security contract hours and increased staffing levels.

Farnan noted that the holiday schedule will be brought to the board for approval. BPLD currently recognizes twelve holidays, which Farnan observed as common practice throughout the area. To minimize expense, Fuqua suggested scheduling the later hours at a branch with a smaller footprint (e.g., the NoBo Library). Hamilton placed this on the plan to consider further next year.

Agenda Item 3: Consider Approval of Minutes of October 15, 2024

Following motion from Trustee Duran and second from Trustee Hamilton, these minutes were approved unanimously.

Agenda Item 4: 2025 Recommended Operating and Capital Budget

a. Staff Presentation

Phares incorporated the board’s feedback into [this presentation, which was previewed at the October meeting](#). She reviewed accomplishments from 2024 which were achieved with board support and fulfilled promises made in the library district ballot measure: restored library service hours, activation of the Canyon Theater, expanded makerspace access, opening of the NoBo Library, and reopening of Carnegie Library and Main Library Café. The Café is now staffed in-house and consistently managed. The library hired over 70 new staff, started to address the

most critical deferred maintenance items, and began implementation of the Outreach Strategic Plan. Phares highlighted 2025 goals: open Gunbarrel Library, survey community, increase safety on grounds and tackle more deferred maintenance items, and strengthen community outreach alongside new literacy programs. She reviewed the four strategic priorities as outlined during the last meeting in October: data-driven decision-making, workplace culture-building, strengthening and growth of community connections, and improving the safety and function of the facilities and spaces.

Phares presented a pie chart depicting 2025 Operating and Capital Budget Sources that total \$27.1M. The unappropriated fund balance is estimated at \$5,650,000. \$3.1M has been designated by the board for future capital needs. Phares then reviewed how staff calculated the estimated total fund balance by year's end of 2024.

Another pie chart indicated 2025 Operating and Capital Budget Uses. The next graph drilled into details regarding the 2025 Personnel Costs Breakdown. Not including capital, personnel costs represent 66% of the total operating budget. The slides which followed covered the 2025 total employee compensation along with highlighted increase to FTE with standard employees.

The next slide reviewed costs for the new Gunbarrel library branch. Staff recommended allocations for associated personnel, equipment, repairs, renovations, materials collection, as well as outreach and marketing for a celebratory grand opening.

The Literacy & Outreach Department personnel grows by 42% with five new positions including a temporary citizenship class coordinator. New 2025 initiatives include ESL and Spanish literacy classes, Spanish conversation groups, and two additional multi-cultural events at the libraries.

Phares next presented the scope of cost estimates for taking care of deferred maintenance at Main, George Reynolds, and the Carnegie libraries. These were listed under categories of immediate; short term; and mechanical, electrical and plumbing (MEP) elements. She noted recent improvements such as roof and ceiling repair for a notorious leak in the north building at Main – though perhaps not always glamorous, these fixes are long-awaited and much appreciated.

Once prepared, the three-tiered estimate for Carnegie design improvements will be presented to the board.

b. Public Hearing

Adrian Chernoff presented the board with an overview of his story-telling platform, Ojje Interactive Books, which uses “Artificial Intelligence (AI) curated storytelling” in both Spanish and English and personalized for various age levels. In response to Duran’s inquiry, Chernoff has not yet partnered with any schools in the area, though he has introduced the product. He feels the library would be a “great place to activate.” Juan Jiminez provided his information for follow-up.

Barge commended the “inspiring conversation” regarding what he considers “the most transformational budget” for the library in this generation. He sees the staff and board as “excellent stewards of the big bet that the community placed on this library,” and appreciated

the “rapid clip” of work. He noted that the Boulder Library Foundation is a “proud partner” in these efforts.

Duran asked whether there was another resource in the area for people seeking citizen class instruction; she also wondered about potential federal funding sources. Locally, the [Intercambio Language School](#) has provided instruction for decades. In the past, grant monies from BLF paid Intercambio to hold citizen classes at the library. The instructor has now been classified as a temporary library employee to bring the program in-house. Jiminez noted that the library’s program is free and in-person while the one offered by Intercambio charges a fee and is hosted online. Jiminez explained that his research indicated that the library’s current program is too small to work with government grants. Additionally, Farnan has observed a heavy load of expected reporting in return for such grants.

Regarding grant monies expected from the Boulder Library Foundation, Sayler observed \$125,000 noted in the proposed grant budget as compared to \$250,000 that he understood BLF to be setting aside. He confirmed that this figure could be adjusted if additional proposals are submitted. Barge reported that BLF has made space in its budget for up to \$250,000 in library grants which would be approved in February.

Cosgrove inquired about allocations to explore solutions for the safety issues around the Main Library underbelly. Farnan replied that this was highlighted as a potential capital expense. Following this theme, Farnan noted that the city is currently drawing up [plans for 2026 Civic Area improvements, inviting the community to provide feedback on design options](#). He emphasized that ongoing maintenance will be a vital component alongside any capital improvements that are made.

Farnan noted that staff can explore extending hours, but the library has experienced a decline in public usage since the pandemic. Nationally, this drop has been trending since 2012. Circulation numbers continue to rise despite lower physical visits. Observing this shift, “we are living in a different world,” and the library seeks to employ novel modalities to bring programs and services to the community through outreach. As he emphasized, “the outreach plan is not new;” it was on the Library Master Plan in 2007 and again in 2018 but had never received proper funding. With the formation of the district, the plan was launched; next year it is set to be doubled. In Farnan’s view, the trustees will have to weigh options to invest resources in either longer hours or staff who can effectively engage and market the available opportunities.

Outreach is often performed after the official closure hours of the library and can engage communities otherwise underserved. Susanna and Outreach Coordinator Christina Garcia represented the library at an Immigration Resource Fair held the previous week after the library closure hours; they reached 150 people. Garcia is engaging families this evening at an event for Boulder Valley School District. Strategically staffing this type of outreach can result in the strongest impact for the community, generating the library’s presence outside its physical walls.

An internal pay equity survey will be completed this year and implemented in 2026; Phares does not anticipate substantial adjustments.

O'Brien praised the "really good work" that went into this budget presentation. Hamilton agreed: "Amazing."

c. **Board of Trustees to consider a resolution to approve the 2025 operating and capital budget and certify the mill levy**

Hamilton introduced and moved for adoption of the resolution as published on page 24 of the [packet](#), approving the fiscal year 2025 budget as presented as well as the certification of the mill levy. Duran seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 5: Draft BPLD Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

a. **Brief overview and input from the Board of Trustees on the first draft**

Responding to Hamilton's request, Phares compiled this draft to assist in planning for future allocations. The format stylistically mirrors the City of Boulder's CIP documents. Phares included the policy information that provides foundational understanding alongside this plan. She categorized some of the different capital costs, incorporating graphics to represent work at the different facilities as expected over the next several years. She welcomed input and feedback from the board.

The group discussed keeping abreast of the [Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan](#) as the city and county solicit input for updates to this guiding document. Duran attended a meeting on this topic held earlier in the month at The Dairy. As she noted, it is important to know and understand future development and growth as the library, city, and county share mutual impacts.

Fuqua considered the timeline for a new Meadows library branch alongside concern for the cost of Carnegie Library improvements. Farnan expects to bring the three tiers for Carnegie repair and improvement to the board within the first quarter of 2025. Staff agreed with Fuqua's recommendation to strategically relocate some of the more sensitive items in the Carnegie archives to a new Meadows site for modernized storage with environmental control.

Duran confirmed that this plan would be shared with City of Boulder representatives. Hamilton expressed the importance of taking good care of the buildings, but also indicated that ownership must be transferred to justify more significant investment. City of Boulder staff had recommended that the buildings be transferred, though the council vote had resulted in a split. Farnan recalled that the ownership of assets can be revisited and renegotiated in 2027 per the intergovernmental agreement.

Agenda Item 6: Director Updates

a. **Gunbarrel Automated Material Handler (AMH) – Board approval sought on the quote and Sole Source Justification**

Farnan indicated this item as presented in the [packet](#). Saylor confirmed that the same material handling system (Lyngsoe) is in use at the other libraries.

Hamilton moved to approve the sole source purchase of the Lyngsoe system for the new Gunbarrel Library location at a cost of \$231,731. Cosgrove seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

b. **DRAFT BPLD Compensation Philosophy**

Farnan expects this item, as presented in the [packet](#), will be helpful for prospective employees as well as the public.

c. **Highlights from the 2024 staff benefits survey**

Staff agreed to Saylor's recommendation that this survey be done earlier in the year to better guide decisions around benefit choices. The more formal class and compensation study will be formally conducted every two years.

Duran was surprised that only 75% of staff were signed up for the benefits; as the intention was to create an attractive package, she had expected a higher membership rate. O'Brien wondered how this rate fared against that of other organizations.

Noting the low participation indicated by the survey results, Hamilton would prefer at least 80% feedback to provide more valid statistics for evaluation: "if people aren't happy, they need to participate."

Farnan indicated that the charitable funds received annually by the Warner Trust may be directed through the administration of the Boulder Library Foundation in the future.

By the end of the month, staff hope to receive the mechanical and electrical drawings for planned facility work at the Gunbarrel Library site; these will be presented to the board at the December meeting.

After negotiations between Fransen Pittman and the city (who owns the building), the contractor has opted out and the completion work will be transitioned to a different group. Due to permitting timelines and construction delays, Farnan expects the opening of the NoBo Library playground will be pushed ahead to a date in spring 2025.

Agenda Item 7: Trustee Matters

Cosgrove attended the Drag Queen Storytime held at Main Library this past Saturday. Observing the 50-70 volunteers known as the Parasol Patrol, he recommended writing a letter of appreciation for the group's "awesome" support in conducting a safe and fun event. Farnan agreed that this would be a nice gesture, Parasol Patrol has been a familiar presence at library events for many years now. Cosgrove

agreed to draft this letter and Farnan will look into inviting a Parasol Patrol representative to a future trustee meeting.

Agenda Item 8: Legal Counsel Updates

Setzer noted that the legal team will certify the mill levy for the District to the County Commissioners of Boulder County and make the certified and approved budget a part of public records.

Agenda Item 9: Adjournment

With no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at about 8:06 p.m.


Sylvia Wirba (Jan 6, 2025 11:04 MST)

Attestation







11.19.24 BoT Minutes Regular for signature

Final Audit Report

2025-01-06

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Created: | 2025-01-06 |
| By: | Celia Seaton (seatonc@boulderlibrary.org) |
| Status: | Signed |
| Transaction ID: | CBJCHBCAABAASFIRZHCu_BphGWCXMf8C9JDiyT5B_D41 |

"11.19.24 BoT Minutes Regular for signature" History

-  Document created by Celia Seaton (seatonc@boulderlibrary.org)
2025-01-06 - 4:20:28 PM GMT
-  Document emailed to wirbas@boulderlibrary.org for signature
2025-01-06 - 4:33:01 PM GMT
-  Email viewed by wirbas@boulderlibrary.org
2025-01-06 - 6:03:53 PM GMT
-  Signer wirbas@boulderlibrary.org entered name at signing as Sylvia Wirba
2025-01-06 - 6:04:54 PM GMT
-  Document e-signed by Sylvia Wirba (wirbas@boulderlibrary.org)
Signature Date: 2025-01-06 - 6:04:56 PM GMT - Time Source: server
-  Agreement completed.
2025-01-06 - 6:04:56 PM GMT