

SCRANTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Thursday, May 15, 2025

The Board of Trustees of the Scranton Public Library met in person and virtually on Thursday, May 15, 2025, at the Albright Memorial Library. President Quinn called the meeting to order at 3:30 PM.

Present:

Ms. Sharon Quinn,
President

Ms. Karen Bazzarri,
Vice-President

Atty. Pat Clark
Treasurer

Mr. Tim McCabe,
Secretary

Dr. George Aulisio

Ms. Daysi Carreto

Ms. Anita Cola

Mr. John Cowder

Ms. Mary Beth D'Andrea

Mr. Joseph X. Garvey

Dr. Daniel Ginsberg

Ms. Linda Koons

Atty. Brian Lenahan

Dr. Kenneth Mayers

Also:

Mr. Scott Thomas,
Chief Executive Officer

Ms. Jenny Shoener,
Assistant to the CEO

Ms. Michele Legate,
District Consultant

Ms. Barbara McGee,
*Friends of the
Scranton Public Library Liaison*

Public Comment:

Ms. Joan Hodowanitz

Absent:

Mr. William Davis

Atty. Jaime Hailstone

Mr. Jim Henkelman

Ms. Glynis Johns

April Consent Agenda Items: Ms. Quinn asked if anyone had questions regarding the April Consent Agenda items. **Action Item:** Mr. Garvey moved to accept the April Board Meeting Minutes, the Treasurer's Report, the Statistical Report, and the CEO Report as presented. Ms. Cola seconded the motion, which passed.

Communications

Correspondence: None.

Public Comment: Ms. Hodowanitz was very pleased with the attendance at the Rick Steves lecture. She requested that recommendations for future speakers be sent to Mr. Thomas.

Treasurer / Finance Committee Report: Atty. Clark reported that revenue is higher than expected due to the State Aid operating allocation. However, expenditures in the Building and Grounds line items have exceeded the year-to-date budget by nearly \$9,900. This increase is attributed to necessary boiler, elevator, sump pump, and plumbing repairs. Additionally, the decline in investments reflects current market conditions. The deficit in the NKH fund results from pre- and post-project expenses, including engineering costs, marketing, and event costs. State reimbursement is still pending.

Facilities Committee Report: Mr. Cowder reported the following building updates-

Albright Building

Mechanical: On May 1st, GPI Engineering submitted a \$12,500 proposal to investigate the system. Discussions focused on immediate needs and the potential to delay work for 3-5 years. Scott was advised to conduct the study quickly and seek funding for the analysis.

Sewer: Mr. Thomas believes the rear sewer repairs at the Scranton Cultural Center cannot begin until their renovations are completed later this year due to scaffolding. Mr. Cowder suggested that GPI Engineers meet with Mr. Keating to discuss the sewer line's scope and investigate the backflow, as the line's settlement should not be a significant issue. The City may also need to be engaged if Dix Court is involved. The meeting is pending.

Executive Office: Giant Floor installed new 24x24 carpet tiles on April 26th, which included moving furniture and removing the old carpet, for \$6,750.00.

Vine Street Commons: Mr. McCabe has indicated that Lackawanna College has taken the lead in arranging a meeting with the City's engineer, Tom Reilly, to discuss the concept. Mr. Thomas will follow up.

Nancy Kay Holmes Branch Library Upgrade Renovations

Automatic Door: The new handicap exit door latch can only be opened with the automatic button, as confirmed by KR Construction. Manual opening from the outside is not possible. Scott Thomas has approved the use of the door only with the automatic button, which can be locked from the inside at night.

Fencing: Mr. Cowder is seeking a quote for a 37-foot, 4-foot high picket fence along Wyoming Avenue to enhance safety for children during activities in the back court area. He received a \$6,200 proposal from Tom King Construction, Inc., but it did not match his specifications. Mr. Cowder has contacted Tom King for a revised proposal.

Silkman House

Jim Wanscz, Executive Director of the Agency for Community Empowerment of NEPA (ACE), has proposed the acquisition of the Silkman House. The proposal would allow its current use for four months while the Scranton Public Library plans to relocate the Technical Services Department. A special meeting with the Scranton Public Library Authority board is scheduled for May 19th to discuss the proposal.

Public Relations Committee Report: Mr. Thomas announced that the primary focus is on Swingin' on Vine, with WNEP scheduled to visit on May 19 to record a segment about the event. Next month, attention will shift to NEPA Gives and a call for recipe submissions for the library's fundraising cookbook project.

Governance Committee Report: Atty. Lenahan reminded the Board of the request for new membership recommendations. The Committee's guidelines for "Good & Welfare" were presented. Common announcements may include the following:

1. Community events or activities that may interest Board members.
2. News items pertaining to SPL or libraries in general.
3. Personal milestones, accomplishments, or challenges of Board members, families, or friends.

Speakers should avoid discussing religious topics, political issues, or gossip. Each Board member will have a time limit of three minutes per meeting.

The Committee report also discussed Board member Glynis Johns and engagement challenges. Mr. Thomas reported that he spoke with Ms. Johns, who acknowledged the issue and said it was due to the demands of running her non-profit. There was consensus that, if a renewed commitment to engagement was not demonstrated by the June meeting, the Board would consider invoking Section 5.03 of the Bylaws.

CEO Report: Mr. Thomas reported the following updates:

Saturday Hours for NKH: The branch will now be open from 9 AM to 3 PM on Saturdays. A banner announcing the new hours has been purchased.

Bookmobile: The storage at the Taylor Municipal Building is still being negotiated. The manufacturer delayed vehicle delivery until the end of June.

Strategic Plan: Monthly updates will be given.

“Dear Appropriator,” Letters: Mr. Thomas provided information about the American Library Association's #FundLibraries campaign, aimed at the House and Senate Appropriations Committees. He urged the Board to send letters to their representatives.

District Consultant Report: Ms. Legate shared an informative presentation on purchasing eBooks and eAudiobooks for the Northeast Library District. The presentation gave an overview of the Libby and Hoopla platforms, pricing, funding, usage, and sustainability.

New Business:

Resolution for Silkman House: The following resolution was presented:

The Scranton Public Library has determined that the Silkman House is no longer a cost-effective or efficient location for the Tech Services operation and lacks the resources to restore and maintain the historic building. Therefore, they are seeking a new location for this operation and, once a suitable location is found, will officially notify the Scranton Public Library Authority of our intent to terminate the lease, cease operations at the site, and vacate the building. The library will instruct Scott Thomas, as the liaison with SPLA, to provide administrative support as needed for the property's disposition. The library strongly encourages the Authority to find a new owner or secure a successor tenant with the commitment and resources to properly preserve the historic Silkman House.

Action Item: Mr. Garvey moved to adopt the resolution as written. Ms. Koons seconded, and the motion passed.

Old Business:

Non-Profit Status: Mr. Thomas determined that SPL was never properly incorporated with the State. Articles of Incorporation were filed and have been approved. We will not have to submit an Annual Report until 2026.

Friends of the Scranton Public Library Report: Ms. McGee reported the following updates-

Board Members: Ann Robinson, a board member since 2013, resigned for health reasons. The group welcomed four new members in December and received three more applications this month. They now have twenty board members and have amended their bylaws to raise the maximum from twenty-three to twenty-five.

Letter to PA Representatives: Friends board members Joe Schneider and Jill Cadden wrote to Pennsylvania Representatives to express their support for public libraries and oppose President Trump's Executive Order to defund the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

Swingin' on Vine: The Friends have sponsored Swingin' on Vine with \$500 and donated a raffle basket. New board member Joe Schneider has also contributed a raffle basket.

Book Sale: The sidewalk book sale is this Saturday, weather permitting. They'll confirm by Friday afternoon. The sale runs from 10 AM to 3:30 PM. Upcoming sales are on June 21 and July 19, both at the same times.

Bus Trip to the Franklin Institute: The bus trip to the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia on August 18 has twenty-three participants already.

Cooper's Soup Coupons: A few Cooper's soup coupons are available. The group will wait to promote the sales until fall, when it is soup weather again.

Tour: Ms. Shoener has kindly agreed to host a tour of Albright for the Friends' Board on June 5. The tour will include introductions to the staff and visits to each department.

Good and Welfare: Dr. Ginsberg mentioned that he and his wife were recently involved in a car accident. Although it was a traumatic experience and they spent hours at the hospital, they fortunately did not suffer any serious injuries.

Adjourn: Mr. McCabe motioned to adjourn; Dr. Mayers seconded, and the motion passed. The meeting ended at 5:01 PM.

The next hybrid meeting will be held at the Albright Memorial Library on June 26, 2025, at 3:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Tim McCabe
Secretary