

**SCRANTON PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Thursday, August 21, 2025

The Board of Trustees of the Scranton Public Library met in person and virtually on Thursday, August 21, 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

Mr. John Cowder

Ms. Mary Beth D'Andrea

Mr. Joseph X. Garvey

Dr. Daniel Ginsberg

Mr. Jim Henkelman

Atty. Jaime Hailstone

Ms. Linda Koons

Atty. Brian Lenahan

**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:**

Ms. Anita Cola

Mr. William Davis

Dr. Kenneth Mayers

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

**Communications**

**Correspondence:** The library received an anonymous \$10,000 donation.

**Public Comment:** Ms. Hodowanitz complimented Dr. Ginsberg and the Friends on their bus trip to the Franklin Institute last weekend. She enjoyed the trip and looks forward to what the group plans for next year.

**Treasurer / Finance Committee Report:** Atty. Clark reported that the new Finance Committee reporting model will align with the financial statements. Salary expenses have decreased, and although the line items for e-resources, digital support, and the Bookmobile have increased, the overall budget remains on track. The District Library budget was also discussed. Ms. Legate explained that the District's fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30. She is still waiting for State funding. Wells Fargo investments remained stable this month, showing no significant changes.

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

### **Albright Building**

**Mechanical:** The search for funding to initiate the \$12,000 HVAC repairs proposed by GPI Engineers continues. Several grant applications have been submitted. GPI engineers have indicated that the fan coil unit serving the basement level is not functioning. A quote has been requested from Rite Temp to repair the unit. Repairs may not occur until next year due to budget constraints; however, an analysis would provide useful information that could be used for grant applications and determining a schedule for system maintenance. Grant applications have been submitted for the HVAC study. Given that these funds are typically allocated for capital upgrades and there is heavy competition for funding, it is unlikely they will be accepted. The Scranton Area Foundation funds were used for the Spanish Language program, so they cannot be approached for this work. Mr. Thomas recommended to the Finance Committee that SPL fund the HVAC study itself so we can determine what needs to be done and establish a budget that can then be used to seek grant funding.

**Sewer:** Mr. Cowder found the video inspection results unusual for a relatively new installation experiencing significant issues, suspecting a link to Dix Court. Mr. Thomas will request that Roto-Rooter remove the sediment and monitor the situation. During a heavy downpour on August 13th, the northeast downspout at the employee entrance off Dix Court was clogged with plastic bags, but Roto-Rooter cleared it, and it is now functioning properly. No other issues were reported during the rain, including the downspouts on the south side near the Cultural Center.

**Vine Street Commons:** Nothing new to report.

**Fence:** Mr. Henkelman suggested repainting the fence at the rear alleyway. SPL Maintenance will address this while the weather is good.

### **Nancy Kay Holmes Branch Library Upgrade Renovations**

**Roof Leak:** KR Construction repaired the roof leak that developed near the roof vent installed during the renovations.

**Automatic Door:** The issue of the door intermittently not working has occurred again, and KR Construction has been notified to address the problem.

**Fencing:** Mr. Thomas stated that he will pursue a grant for this project and has sent a letter to Leadership Lackawanna regarding potential funding.

**Silkman House:** *Discussed during Old Business.*

### **Children's Library**

There was a discussion regarding the Children's Library. The current space does not represent a modern children's library and requires significant renovations. The City has yet to find an architect to design these necessary improvements. Atty. Clark inquired whether SPL could acquire the building. Mr. Thomas responded that this was not a viable option due to the high costs associated with both acquisition and necessary renovations. Mr. Cowder suggested that if renovations were to take place, there might be an opportunity to create space in the basement for Technical Services in the future.

### **Capital Project List**

The Facilities Committee discussed the need for a capital project list and the availability of unrestricted funds. Ms. Bazzarri suggested prioritizing a list to cover at least through 2026. She noted that the Albright Library borrowed from its endowment for the last renovation and has a balloon payment of about \$250,000 due in 2028. Mr. Cowder has been advocating for a similar endowment fund for the Nancy Kay Holmes Branch Library. He highlighted the building's significant historical value as an early example of Prairie School Architecture, predating Frank Lloyd Wright. He will provide Mr. Thomas with historical information to help justify the endowment. Ms. Bazzarri also reported current budget overages of approximately \$20,000 for the Nancy Kay Holmes project and between \$6,000 and \$8,000 for the Albright Library project. Further discussion followed. The Committee will meet again in November.

**Public Relations Committee Report:** On behalf of Mr. Davis, Mr. Thomas reported that the Bookmobile remains the primary focus of PR efforts, and due to scheduling conflicts, the Bookmobile will be unable to attend this year's La Festa Italiano. The Library is currently seeking a part-time driver for the vehicle. The cookbook fundraiser's deadline for submitting recipes has been extended to the end of September.

**Governance Committee Report:** Atty. Lenahan reported that on August 12, the Committee interviewed three candidates for the two vacant Board seats: Conor Kelly O'Brien, Channel Evans Kears, and Keith Williams. **Action Item:** The Governance Committee recommends the appointment of Channel Evans Kears and Keith Williams as members of the Board of Trustees. Mr. Garvey accepted the motion, which was unanimously approved and passed.

**CEO Report:** Mr. Thomas reported the following updates:

**Bookmobile:** The schedule for visits is filling quickly and a part-time second driver. Parking at the 911 Call Center located in Jessup is going well.

**Keystone Grant Update:** In accordance with the Keystone Grant requirements, Ed Lupico from the Office of Commonwealth Libraries (OCL) will visit the Nancy Kay Holmes Library on September 17 at 2:00 PM to review the ADA renovations that were completed earlier this year.

**District Consultant Report:** Abbey Lukiewski, Statewide Services Advisor for the Bureau of Library Development (BLD), and Bri Crum, Operations and Relationships Advisor, joined the meeting via Zoom. They announced that new sample policies and procedures are now available on the BLD LibGuide under the section for Public Library Operations and Board Governance. This resource aims to support public libraries by providing guidance, best practices, and tools for success in various areas of library operations. A steering committee, made up of professionals from across the state, is currently in place, and a Board of Trustees manual is in development. Ms. Legate reported issues within Wayne County at the federated system level. The District Center reached out to the Wayne County Community Foundation for a grant and successfully secured \$45,000 to hire a consultant. This consultant will conduct a feasibility study focused on the government structure, funding formulas, and service models, and will provide recommendations. A Request for Proposal (RFP) has been submitted and has quickly generated interest from potential applicants.

**New Business:**

**Fundraising Committee:** President Quinn announced the formation of an ad-hoc fundraising committee. This committee will provide guidance to staff on potential fundraising initiatives, which include events, activities, merchandise sales, and grants. If a capital campaign is initiated, the committee will take charge of conducting the campaign. She also reported on behalf of Ms. Cola of a possible future collaborative fundraising event with the Green Ridge Club.

**e-Book Trends:** Mr. McCabe provided an analysis of e-Book trends, presenting projected digital lending data for the years 2026 through 2031. This data was compared to existing trends in physical materials lending. The analysis suggests that overall circulation rates are anticipated to experience an increase in the coming years.

**Old Business:**

**Silkman House:** Lackawanna County has assessed the property's value at \$450,000; therefore, a 3.7% realty transfer tax of \$16,942.82 is owed to complete the transfer of property to The Agency for Community Empowerment (ACE). This cost is usually split between the buyer and seller. Due to the SPL Authority lacking assets to pay this tax, Ms. Salerno, President of the Authority, submitted the following request to Mr. Thomas for the Board of Trustees:

*Scott,*

*In order to complete the transfer of the Silkman House property to ACE there is a Realty Transfer Tax that has to be paid.*

*This cost is usually split between the buyer and seller. As you are aware, the SPL Authority has no assets to use to pay this tax.*

*I am asking the SPL Board of Trustees to fund half of the Realty Transfer Tax which amounts to \$8471.41. ACE will also pay the same amount.*

*Thank you for your consideration and attention to this matter.*

*Anne Salerno  
President- SPL Authority*

**Request from the SPL Authority:**

Mr. Thomas recommends that the Board honor the SPL Authority's request.

**Action Item:** Ms. Bazzarri motioned to approve Ms. Salerno's request for funding of the \$8,471.41 Realty Transfer Tax. Ms. Koons seconded the motion, all were in favor, and it passed. Additionally, this action will conclude SPL's lease agreement for the Silkman House with the Authority.

**Strategic Plan Update:** The Office of Commonwealth Libraries (OCL) is working to create a packaged report of the library's story for donors, funders, and partners.

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

**Book Sale:** The July 19 sidewalk sale generated a total of \$2,536.31. The group has received numerous donations for the next sale and will provide free materials on the last day to teachers, and anyone employed by a nonprofit organization. This offer also extends to those who maintain little free libraries. Additionally, free materials will be given to anyone who helps pack up the leftovers at the end of the sale. The next sale at the Marketplace at Steamtown is scheduled for September 9 through 13. Flyers were given to the Board to distribute.

**PALive:** Board member Mary Anne Abdo has arranged for a spot on PALive on Wednesday, September 3 at 3:00 PM. The segment is usually about 7 minutes long. The Friends will be represented by her, President Jill Cadden and book sale chairperson Barb McGee.

**Bus Trip to the Franklin Institute:** The bus trip to the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia on August 16 went well. Thirty-three patrons attended and seemed to enjoy themselves. Ms. McGee asked if anyone had recommendations for future bus trips to please let her know.

**Good and Welfare:** Dr. Ginsberg presented another aspect of his gerontology study: ectomorphic, mesomorphic, and endomorphic body types. Ms. Bazzarri noted that on August 16, 160 people visited the Bookmobile at the Children's Career Fair hosted by Outreach, the Center for Community Outreach. Ms. Koons shared that a friend's grandson has accepted a position at WBRE/WYOU.

**Adjourn:** Ms. Bazzarri motioned to adjourn; Dr. Ginsberg seconded, and the motion passed. The meeting ended at 5:15 PM.

The next hybrid meeting will be held at the Albright Memorial Library on September 18, 2025, at 3:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Tim McCabe  
Secretary