WASHOE COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM

LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, September 17th, 2025

5:30 P.M.

SPARKS LIBRARY 1125 12th Street, Sparks, NV 89431

0) Salute to the Flag led by audience volunteer, Cate Salim.
1) Roll Call [Non-Action Item]
    - Present: Vice Chair Moser, Trustee Rodriguez, Trustee Jacks.
    - Trustee Ruf was absent. Chair Silver joined at 6pm.
2) Public Comment – Three Minute Time Limit Per Person [Non-Action Item]
    - Heather Cook: Verdi elementary school librarian. Advocated for keeping the Verdi library open and shared the importance of the library for the Verdi community.

    - Toni Poloni: Emphasized the importance of board leadership and urged the board to support librarians. Highlighted the importance of homebound services.

    - Cate Salim: Expressed concerns over the absence of budget discussions and highlighted the need to fill vacant positions. Spoke against the possibility of closing partnerships and shared concerns that branches that rent space like Sierra View and North Valleys could be next.

    - Krysta Flanagan: Shared support for a robust library budget and emphasized the importance of library partnerships. Thanked Vice Chair Moser and Chair Silver.

    - Drew Ribar: Claimed to be on a political ban list and expressed frustration for being unable to attend pride. Questioned Washoe County officials and librarians for their alleged complacency.

        - Vice Chair Moser tried to redirect Ribar when he addressed the audience instead of the board. Ribar refused and VC Moser called for a 5 minute recess. Ribar continued to repeat his comments.

    - Sandee Tibbett: Questioned why branches had been closed without board approval. Cited NRS statutes. Urged the board to delay closures until they can hold a vote.

3) Board Comment [Non-Action Item] – Limited to Announcements, Strategic Plan Activity, Updates or Issues Proposed for Future Agendas and/or Workshops
    - Trustee Jacks encouraged homeschool families to utilize the library. Shared her appreciation for her fellow Trustees and Vice Chair Moser.
    - Vice Chair Moser acknowledged public comment concerning Verdi. Expressed her surprise at branch closures and stated that these closures did not come before the board. Shared that she spoke with Chair Hill on the issue and the desire to staff libraries while the funding is available. Expressed interest in learning more about providing public transportation to and in Verdi.

4) Approval of Meeting Minutes
    - Approval of Minutes from the Library Board meeting on August 20, 2025 [For Possible Action].

- On motion by Trustee Rodriguez, seconded by Trustee Jacks, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, the meeting minutes from August 20, 2025 were approved.

5) New Business
   - Discussion between the Library Board of Trustees and the Office of the County Manager providing an overview of the information provided to Assistant County Manager Solaro by individual Trustees for operating locations, times, and days of the Library system for fiscal year 2027 (July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027) and possible direction to the Office of the County Manager staff related to Budget needs for the Washoe County Library System. [For Possible Action]
     - Assistant County Manager David Solaro addressed branch closures and reiterated that these closures were based on low staffing levels and had been discussed at the August 20th meeting. He shared a map of library coverage and stated that although staffing issues have closed a couple of libraries, there are plenty of branches the public can utilize. He shared his understanding of the board's concerns and apologized for the inconvenience. Shared a graph showing Reno's population growth versus library staff numbers.
     - Solaro presented three operating hour models for Fiscal Year 2027: Options A, B, and C. Solaro emphasized that operational hours need to meet community needs in the area.
     - Chair Silver joined the meeting at 6pm and apologized for her lateness. Asked Solaro if the 8 hour work day included lunch. Solaro clarified the 8 hours did not include lunch.
     - Solaro shared in depth information for each option and shared the concerns related to each, such as the issue of late hours during Incline winter, and reduced availability of story time with later opening hours.
     - Chair Silver asked about the book vending machine. Solaro clarified that it is not self-check but a real vending machine that allows patrons to check out available books. Vending machines are located in Incline Village, Cold Springs, and Sun Valley.
     - Solaro explained that these options were all created by capturing the sentiment of the board via comments shared with him by trustees. He shared that with all three options Duncan/Traner, Gerlach, and Verdi are not considered full-service libraries. There may be discussions with the Washoe County School District about staffing some of these locations. Solaro clarified that the board's ideal operational hours can be pieces of each option presented.
     - Solaro asked that the board decide which schedule they recommend. He will work with staff to create a staffing model to be shared at the October 1st meeting based on the board's approved option.

- Chair Silver asked about the expansion fund and the money left within it. Solaro clarified that there is about 3.5 million left in the budget but that those funds will be used by the end of FY26. He further explained his reluctance to fill library positions until a budget is decided, to prevent future layoffs of newly hired employees.
- Trustee Jacks asked if any of the information the board sent Solaro would be available for the public. Solaro replied that he is currently focused on operating hours and that the information trustees shared was more operational in nature and will be considered later.
- Trustee Rodriguez asked if the library hours will take affect prior to FY27. Solaro replied in the negative. Trustee Rodriguez asked for clarification regarding the closures. Solaro confirmed that the temporary closures were due to staffing and not the budget. Trustee Rodriguez asked if employees are allowed to work four, ten hour days. Solaro replied that they can.
- Chair Silver shared her support for Option A and the extension of hours to accommodate working people who wish to visit the library in the evening and on weekends.
- Vice Chair Moser questioned why library closures went without the board's approval. Solaro reiterated that he'd shared the possibility of closures due to low staffing at the August 20th meeting. He shared again his desire to wait to fill vacant positions until a budget is decided so as to avoid future layoffs. He apologized for not notifying the board or BCC about these closures. VC Moser asked that future closures be considered with an emergency meeting. Solaro replied that emergency meetings would require proper notice due to Open Meeting Law, and it would not be in the library's best interest to have to wait for emergency closure approval.
- Chair Silver stated that the expansion funds could be used over a period time and help to fund positions. Solaro reminded the board that the library's yearly budget is 18 million dollars, and that the 3 million in the expansion fund would be mostly used up for the book budget. He also clarified that the FY26 budget was built to use up the expansion funds by June 30th, 2026. The base library budget would revert back to 12 million, meaning additional funding would need to be secured to keep the same staffing levels.
- Chair Silver questioned the use of self-check. Solaro shared that self-check stations allow for efficiencies. Chair Silver suggested staff could be utilized in other areas if self-check is exclusively used. She questioned why she was directed to self-check when there are librarians on duty.
- Vice Chair Moser questioned why library branches were built if staffing was low. Asked if after-hours meeting rooms are free of charge. Solaro confirmed they are free and available by reservation. VC Moser asked if

staff must be present. Solaro answered that not all locations have exterior access and staff are required to close the building in those locations. Shared which library branches have drive up windows (Spanish Springs, Northwest, South Valleys).

- Vice Chair Moser asked about partnership libraries. Solaro shared the new scenarios for Duncan/Traner and Verdi. Gerlach is already staffed for 2 hours a week as part of a contract with the Washoe County School District.
- Solaro clarified the changes in bookmobile hours as a possible solution to the reduction in partnerships.
- Vice Chair Moser asked about revenue generating possibilities. Solaro shared that these possibilities would take staff time and that all funds would go to the general fund and not be allocated to the library directly.
- Trustees discussed which options they preferred. Trustee Rodriguez suggested they look at the options and vote at a different date. Solaro shared that their choice isn't set in stone and that he'd hoped to have an approved budget at the October 15th meeting. Trustee Rodriguez asked if the option they choose can still be changed if they find there is a need. Solaro confirmed.
- Trustee Jacks suggested branches be open 8 hours a day for 7 days a week. Requested labor costs for this branch model.
- Chair Silver emphasized to the public that the option they vote on is not set in stone and may still be changed.
- On motion by Vice Chair Moser, seconded by Chair Silver, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, the board approved Option A with the caveat that further analysis would be made.
- Solaro shared that the library's collections budget needs to be allocated at 10% of the general library budget due to population growth. The last time it was at 10% was in 2007. Solaro shared that this target amount was decided based on input from Collections Development Manager Debi Stears. Vice Chair Moser shared her support for Stears' recommendation and Trustee Rodriguez shared her appreciation of a robust catalog.
- On motion by Vice Chair Moser, seconded by Chair Silver, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, the collections budget was set at 10%.

6) Public Comment – Three Minute Time Limit Per Person [Non-Action Item]
   - Heather Cook: Reiterated the importance of keeping the Verdi library open. Cited Verdi's growing population and unique partnership with the Nevada Department of Wildlife and the Washoe County School District. Recommended the library be open on Wednesday afternoons to coincide with the school's early release day.
   - Val Wade: Urged the board to use data provided by librarians, and emphasized the need for staff-led decisions.

- Virginia Larmore: Thanked the board for a productive meeting, and Solaro for listening to public, board, and staff concerns. Emphasized the importance of respectful discourse.
- Drew Ribar: Reiterated his concerns about political bias and alleged blacklisting.
- Pete Bansen: Thanked board members for replying to his emailed public comment. Urged the board to consult library staff and emphasized the importance of their expertise when it comes to deciding operational hours.

7) Staff Announcements [Non-Action Item]
    - Trustee Moser suggested forming an advisory group with trustees and library staff for ongoing input. Trustees shared that they will speak with librarians about Option A and work as a team.
8) Adjournment
    - Chair Silver adjourned the meeting at 7:18pm.