



LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, January 21st 2026

6:00 P.M.

DOWNTOWN RENO LIBRARY 301 S. Center St, Reno NV 89501

Library Trustees:

Ann Silver, Chair

Lea Moser, Vice Chair

Gianna Jacks, Trustee

Tami Ruf, Trustee

Marie Rodriguez, Trustee

0) Salute to the Flag led by Trustee Ruf.

1) Roll Call [Non-Action Item]

- Present: Chair Silver, Vice Chair Moser, Trustee Jacks, Trustee Ruf, Trustee Rodriguez.
- Land acknowledgement read by Vice Chair Moser.

2) Public Comment –Three Minute Time Limit Per Person [Non-Action Item]

- Janice Brown-Silveira: Praised library's ESL programs and multilingual materials. Emphasized the library's role in welcoming non-English speakers.
- Mitchell Brown-Silveira: Noted the education qualification listed in the library director job description and urged the board to hire a library director with a Master's in Library Science and not an MBA. Stressed the need for a director who will advocate for library services over cost-cutting.
- Sean Sullivan: Supported hiring a qualified library director with a library degree. Advocated for inclusive programming such as Drag Queen Story Hour.
- Eitane Barton: Strongly recommended hiring a director with an MLS degree. Cited ALA standards and the importance of specialized skills.
- Krysta Flannagan: Echoed earlier statements regarding library director qualifications. Cited Nevada statutes. Noted that libraries are not for profit and therefore do not require a director with an MBA.
- Cate Salim: Shared details from public records requests regarding the Chair and Vice Chair's participation in the recruitment process. Questioned Chair and Vice Chair's involvement in setting director qualifications and if all trustees were aware of the changes made.
- William Puchard: Voiced concerns about board transparency, political influence, and past controversies. Requested board accountability.
- Sandee Tibbett: Questioned the cancellation of the December meeting and cited reasons why it should have occurred. Expressed disappointment in perceived lack

of transparency and claimed Debi Stears was appointed acting director without input.

- Jean Griffith: Cited ALA recommendations for library director qualifications and opposed the current job description's mention of an MBA. Stressed the library's public service mission and urged the board to follow ALA recommendations.
- Alanna Fitzgerald: Praised library services and strategic plan goals. Urged the board to continue to focus on diversity, community needs, and to keep the libraries as welcoming spaces to everyone.
- Janet Butcher: Mentioned article that stated Debi Stears as Acting Director and questioned transparency of that decision. Questioned how meeting minutes are composed. Urged board to hire a director with no affiliation with ALA and a strong business background.

3) Board Comment [Non-Action Item] – Limited to Announcements, Strategic Plan Activity, Updates or Issues Proposed for Future Agendas and/or Workshops

- Vice Chair Moser thanked public commenters and acknowledged their request for a library director with an MLS degree; noted she will take that into consideration during application review and interviews. Asked if the public should have been able to give input on the appointment of an Acting Director.
- Chair Silver noted she was not aware of Debi Stears being appointed Acting Director.
- Assistant County Manager Dave Solaro clarified that Debi Stears was not appointed Acting Director but has been given out of class pay to take on the daily duties left by the vacancy. He emphasized that her title has not changed; she is helping the library system stay afloat.
- Vice Chair Moser and Chair Silver thanked Debi for stepping forward.
- Chair Silver reiterated the board's commitment to transparency and confirmed there have been no discussions of privatization. Praised library staff for their resilience.

- Trustee Rodriguez questioned if creation of the strategic plan would be on a future agenda. Trustees agreed to add a preliminary discussion to a future agenda while awaiting the new director.

4) Approval of Minutes from the Library Board meeting on November 19th, 2025 [For Possible Action]

- Trustee Ruf questioned if Vice Chair Moser had really been absent from the November 19th meeting as stated in the minutes. The absence was confirmed.
- On motion by Vice Chair Moser, seconded by Trustee Ruf, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, the meeting minutes from November 19, 2025 were approved.

5) General Business

a) Update by Washoe County Human Resources on the recruitment process for the Washoe County Library System Director. [For Information Only]

- HR Division Director for Talent Management Julie Paholke shared that HR is a month ahead of schedule in the recruitment process. The recruitment was open November to January. 21 applications were received and have been narrowed down to 12 candidates. HR is working with the recruiting firm, CPS, to conduct candidate evaluations. Public interviews of finalists will occur during a special meeting, the agenda of which include candidate names and materials.
- Trustee Rodriguez asked for clarification regarding who would be involved in narrowing down the candidates. Noted that Chair and Vice Chair cannot serve as representatives of the library board per the bylaws.
- Paholke clarified that all decisions were made based on best practices and that HR took a large role even though the Chair and Vice Chair were involved in the process.
- Vice Chair Moser invited her fellow trustees to reach out to herself and Chair Silver for additional information about the candidates. Mentioned that CPS

interviewed branch managers and members of administration for their feedback. Noted the CPS consultant has library director experience. Thanked HR and CPS.

- Trustee Ruf mentioned the CPS consultant will be available to help the new director adjust to their position and guide them in the first month. Chair Silver shared her admiration for the consultant's experience and her appreciation for County HR.

b) Presentation by Adrienne Santiago, Executive Director, Northern Nevada Literacy Council on the High School Equivalency and English as a Second Language classes to be conducted at three (3) library locations: Sierra View, Sparks, and Northwest. Classes are free at no cost to the library system. Rooms will be reserved in accordance with the Library meeting Room Policy. [For Information Only]

- Executive Director of NNLC, Adrian Santiago, outlined the free programs her organization offers and the impact they have on the community. Shared history of NNLC activities at the library and her hope that branches will be available for scheduling. Shared that volunteers are welcome.
- Vice Chair Moser thanked Santiago for her presentation and Chair Silver for supporting NNLC. Emphasized the importance of NNLC's mission.
- Chair Silver thanked branch managers for their cooperation with the program.
- Vice Chair Moser questioned if an MOU was on file for the program. Santiago explained that an MOU had been created in the past but due to federal budget cuts, NNLC had to pull back their programming and the MOU was not extended. The funding is now available and NNLC is ready to restart the partnership.

c) Review and possible approval of the proposed calendar year 2026 library schedule as reviewed, discussed, and crated through the Fiscal year 2027 (July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027) budget setting exercise performed by the Library Board of Trustees in August, September, and October 2026. [For Possible Action]

- Assistant County Manager Dave Solaro presented a revised schedule based on the approved "ideal schedule" from October with minor adjustments for the

Northwest, Sierra View, Senior Center, and Verdi branches. Explained that library managers were involved in these decisions.

- Chair Silver questioned why Downtown Reno will be closed on Sundays. Solaro explained that the weekends pose challenges due to the unavailability of Court Control to assist with difficult patrons. Chair Silver emphasized the iconic nature of the Downtown branch and its place in the revitalization of Reno.
- Trustee Rodriguez noted the Sierra View and Sparks branches may serve as alternatives for weekend patrons. Questioned if Downtown Reno will be open for special events. Solaro stated it might.
- Solaro further clarified that the size of the Downtown Reno library creates issues with patron and staff safety and requires sufficient staff numbers to monitor all floors adequately. A new director can review these hours and make changes as needed.
- Trustee Jacks asked for clarification regarding the hours and if the board was being asked to approve an early change to the hours. Solaro confirmed; request for early adoption plus a few minor changes. Trustee Jacks noted her interest in the correlation between open hours and security needs. Mentioned that the hours can be discussed in the future with a new director and changes made as needed.
- Chair Silver expressed her disappointment that the iconic setting of the Downtown library would be closed during the weekend but noted her understanding of the importance of staff and patron safety. Hopes this can be addressed in the future with a new director and the weekend hours can be altered.
- On motion by Trustee Rodriguez, seconded by Trustee Ruf, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, early adoption and changes to the 2026 library schedule were approved.

6) Public Comment – Three Minute Time Limit Per Person [Non-Action Item]

- Cate Salim: Praised NNLC partnership. Noted the powerful impact libraries make on individuals and communities.
- Sean Sullivan: Supported keeping Downtown Reno Library open on weekends. Reiterated support for Drag Queen Story Hour.

7) Staff Announcements [Non-Action Item]

- Collection Development Manager Debi Stears thanked the board for their approval of the hour changes and noted that she also hopes the Downtown branch will be open on weekends in the future with the guidance of a new director. Emphasized the necessity of staff and patron safety and reiterated the difficulties of fulfilling security needs on the weekends.
- Stears shared the progress made in filling vacancies; 3 Business Technologist IIs, 2 Librarians, 4 Library Assistant IIIs and 12 Library Assistant IIs. Emphasized how these filled positions positively impact the library and its direction going forward. Acknowledged the work of branch managers and thanked the board.
- Chair Silver reiterated that Stears is not Acting Director and thanked her for her efforts. Mentioned that the library budget was heard at the BCC but not yet approved. Noted that trustees are all volunteers. Shared that is a privilege to serve on the library board and work with Solaro and the library staff. Encouraged the public to attend and give comment.
- Downtown Reno Branch Manager Kristen Ryan thanked the board for their approval of the hours. Echoed Trustee Jack's comments about the change not being permanent and that she will look to a new strategic plan for guidance about weekend hours. Noted how difficult the situation was to make. Shared a positive interaction she had with a patron who mentioned how well the library was functioning despite being understaffed; the patron felt there had been no reduction in service. Ryan thanked all library staff. Announced 60th anniversary celebration plans.

- Vice Chair Moser noted that other states have separate county and city libraries and suggested the City of Reno could share budget and security. Chair Silver noted that may be difficult.
- Chair Silver thanked Kristen Ryan and the library for accommodating the board and public attendees.

8) Adjournment

- Chair Silver adjourned the meeting at 7:47pm.