

**LIBRARY MINUTES
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
JOPLIN PUBLIC LIBRARY
17 FEBRUARY 2026**

The regular meeting of the Joplin Public Library Board of Trustees was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Board President Mary Gaarder. Board Members Lisa Erickson, Andrea Cullers, Veda Boyd Jones, Jean Coltharp, and Emily Stanley, and Library Director Jeana Gockley were present.

EXCUSED ABSENCES: Heather Van Otterloo and Jennifer Baldwin.

BOARD EDUCATION: Youth Services Librarian Christina Matekel-Gibson provided a brief tour of the Children's Department, as well as staff introductions.

MINUTES: Minutes from the January 2026 regular meeting were reviewed. There was a motion by Dr. Coltharp to approve the minutes as presented, with a second by Ms. Boyd Jones. Motion passed. **5/0**

VOUCHER: January non-salary expenditures in the amount of \$95,169.71 were approved. **(Boyd Jones/Stanley) 5/0**

COMMITTEE REPORTS: None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **March Board Meeting.** The week of the March meeting is spring break for local schools and some members might be absent. After discussion, the Board opted to keep the meeting on its designated date, March 17.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Media Engagement

- Black History Fair
 - On January 28, [KOAM](#) aired a story.
 - On January 29, [The Joplin Globe](#) published a notice.
 - On February 3, Christina Matekel-Gibson talked about it on [KOAM](#) Morning News.
 - On February 7, [KSN](#) aired a story.
- On February 3, Christina Matekel-Gibson and Kelsey Phipps shared about the Next Gen Library Council's Kids Fair event on KSN's Living Well.
- On February 5, Lori Crockett talked about Library resources and services on [KZRG](#).
- On February 5, [KSN](#) aired a story about the Library's Blind Date with a Book promotion.
- Joplin Reads Together
 - On February 10, [The Joplin Globe](#) published an article.
 - On Feb 12, Lori Crockett talked about the selection on [KOAM](#)'s Good Morning Four States.

Programs

- On January 24, despite the cold, snowy weather 19 adults, divided into four teams, turned out for our Puzzle Competition. The winning team, “Piece Out Girls,” finished in 1 hour and 3 minutes.
- The first meeting of the Pokemon Club for elementary age children on January 29 included 51 participants playing the trading card game, showing off their cards, and talking Pokemon with fellow fans.
- The Adult Winter Reading Challenge wrapped up on January 31. Participants completed 5 out of the 15 provided reading categories and received a mug and three tickets for a prize raffle. There were 255 registrants and 166 completions.
- As part of a local promotion, Library staff created a “Blind Date...with a Book” display during the first week of February. Staff chose over a hundred books, wrote fun descriptions for each, and wrapped them up with some swag for a fun surprise for patrons. As a sweet bonus, included in each Blind Date Book was a ticket from B&B Theaters to be used to watch a free movie in March.
- The all ages Black History Fair on February 7 included representatives from several community agencies. There were 130 in attendance.
- The BINGO event on February 10 had 73 attendees.
- Staff members from the Reference Department have been putting out a question each month for the public to participate/interact with. The question for January, “coffee or tea,” had 249 people respond to it.

Building & Grounds

- Satterlee installed the new HVAC compressor on February 12.
- Justin Kelly and I started to work on my 2026 director's goal of developing a multiyear building and maintenance plan so that building-related components can be replaced/purchased on a rotating basis.

Miscellaneous

- Staff from the Circulation Department processed 85 passports during January and 41 of them were for walk-in applicants.
- The Missouri Library Association’s Library Advocacy Day was held in Jefferson City on February 3. Lori Crockett and I represented the Library. In addition, trustee Jenn Baldwin was there representing MASL, SOS Council and the Library. Combined we spoke with five area legislators about library funding and year end statistics.
- According to a report shared by the Missouri State Library, if the new State budget is passed based on Governor Kehoe’s recommendations, the Library’s Athletes & Entertainers (A&E) tax revenue for 2026 will be approximately \$19,360. This is a \$18,434 decrease from last year’s amount, and well below the \$52,337 we had expected because of the anticipated increase in revenue to A&E this year.
- The Library announced its 2026 Joplin Reads Together book on February 9. The Correspondent by Virginia Evans is this year’s selection.

STATISTICS: There was discussion of gate count and checkouts. ILLs are doing well.

STAFF COMMENTS: None.

BOARD COMMENTS: Ms. Boyd Jones reported on the Feb. 9 Friends of the Library Board meeting:

- There have been six membership renewals since the previous meeting.
- January book sales totaled \$936.99; donations are always needed.
- Nearly 50 attendees were present for the Holocaust Remembrance Day event on January 27.
- Mahjong sessions have started up again.
- Joplin Reads Together:
 - “The Correspondent” is available on the book sale shelf for \$22.
 - Dr. Kerry Sachetta will present April 23 on “Orphans, Italian Adoptions, and Finding Your Roots: It’s Complicated” as a Friends event. It will be open to the public.
- The annual Spring for a Book fund-raiser will be held April 12-25.
- The January breakfast at the Elks Lodge raised \$1,262.00 for the Friends group.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were no Public Comments.

The meeting adjourned at 4:57 p.m.

Written by

Administrative Assistant

Approved by

Library Director

The next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Joplin Public Library will be held at 4 p.m. Tuesday, March 17, 2026.