

**LIBRARY MINUTES
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
JOPLIN PUBLIC LIBRARY
21 APRIL 2026**

The regular meeting of the Joplin Public Library Board of Trustees was called to order at 4:03 p.m. by Board President Mary Gaarder. Board Members Andrea Cullers, Veda Boyd Jones, Jean Coltharp, Emily Stanley, Heather Van Otterloo, Jennifer Baldwin, and Mikh Gunderman, and Library Director Jeana Gockley were present.

EXCUSED ABSENCES: Lisa Erickson.

BOARD EDUCATION: None.

MINUTES: Minutes from the March 2026 regular meeting were reviewed. There was a motion by Dr. Coltharp to approve the minutes as presented, with a second by Dr. Gunderman. Motion passed. 7/0

VOUCHER: March non-salary expenditures in the amount of \$43,623.16 were approved. **(Boyd Jones/Van Otterloo)** 7/0

COMMITTEE REPORTS: None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **New Service Offering.** The Board President has proposed adding a coffee shop to the Library. Ms. Gaarder contacted the owners of Joplin Avenue Coffee Co., while Jeana researched other libraries' experiences with coffee shops. Board Members had questions about RFPs, previous intentions for the space in question, insurance coverage, liability issues, and contacting a lawyer about contracts. There was a motion by Dr. Gunderman to create an ad hoc committee to further explore adding a coffee shop to the Library, with a second by Ms. Stanley. Ms. Stanley and Dr. Cullers volunteered to serve on the committee, with Ms. Gaarder as ex officio.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Media Engagement

- On March 18, [KSN](#)'s Living Well visited the Library to learn about Spring Break activities.
- On March 20, [KODE](#) shared about the Library's CloudLibrary resource.
- Joplin Reads Together
 - On March 19, a billboard went up at 20th & Rangeline to promote the community reading event.
 - On March 24, The Joplin Globe featured an editorial about the initiative.
 - On April 7, Lori Crockett shared about it on [KSN](#)'s Living Well.
 - On April 9, Lori Crockett shared about it on [KODE](#)'s Good Morning Four States.

- Social Media - The Library has had several popular posts in March/April - April Fools' Day, Book Swap, C2C Correspondent reading, Plant swap, Spring Break Calendar.

Programs

- Spring break programming for teens was hopping at the Library. Art Night (planned by the Next Gen Library Council) had 35 attendees, Adopt an Air Plant had 22 attendees, Movie Night had 14 attendees and Video Gaming had 10 attendees.
- Programming related to Joplin Reads Together kicked off at the beginning of April. Chat & Craft on April 1 had 20 attendees, Plant Swap on April 4 had 60 attendees and the Dear Listener event at Joplin Avenue Coffee Co had 21 attendees.

Building & Grounds

- Satterlee Plumbing & HVAC replaced six expansion valves on April 14.
- Total Communications performed our yearly fire panel test on April 14.

Legislation

- On April 7, Jasper and Newton County voters passed SB3. This means the Library will lose some of our property tax revenue because a 5% limit of growth will be placed on residential property in Jasper and Newton County. According to preliminary calculations, this will reduce the Library's revenue next year by up to \$57,000. Before the measure was placed on the ballot, a lawsuit was filed in an effort to have the legislation declared unconstitutional. It has not yet made its way through the courts.
- HB 2012, which is the bill that addresses state funding for libraries, passed from the House to the Senate at the end of March. It went to the Senate Appropriations Committee and was voted "do pass" on April 15. As part of the bill A&E funding has not been restored to the \$4.5 million originally requested and remains at the reduced \$1.6 million.

STATISTICS: March 2026 gate count was up compared with March 2025. Checkouts are trending downward, but wi-fi usage is strong, as are programming numbers.

STAFF COMMENTS: None.

BOARD COMMENTS: Ms. Boyd Jones reported on the April 7 Friends of the Library Board meeting:

- There have been four membership renewals.
- Book sales in March netted \$1,327.
- The Joplin Reads Together author visit will be an interview, with local news personality Gary Bandy asking the questions.
- Spring for a Book is happening until April 25. Thus far, \$1,250 has been raised for the Lucky Day collection.
- A Friends membership event will take place at the annual meeting.
- The Friends Board will meet again May 12.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were no Public Comments.

Ms. Gaarder announced that in her absence, Board Vice-President Emily Stanley will officiate at the May 19 Library Board meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 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, May 19, 2026.