LIBRARY MINUTES
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
JOPLIN PUBLIC LIBRARY
15 SEPTEMBER 2026

The regular meeting of the Joplin Public Library Board of Trustees was called to order at 4:07 p.m. by Board President Mary Gaarder. Board Members Heather Van Otterloo, Veda Boyd Jones, Jennifer Baldwin, Emily Stanley, Jean Coltharp, and Eric Deatherage, and Library Director Jeana Gockley were present.

EXCUSED ABSENCES: Andrea Cullers and Mikh Gunderman.

BOARD EDUCATION: None.

MINUTES: Minutes from the August 2026 regular meeting were reviewed. There was a motion by Dr. Van Otterloo to approve the minutes as presented, with a second by Ms. Stanley. Motion passed. **6/0** Minutes from the August 2026 closed session were reviewed. There was a motion by Dr. Van Otterloo to approve the minutes as presented, with a second by Ms. Stanley. Motion passed. **6/0**

VOUCHER: There were no financial reports to discuss this month.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. **Coffee Shop Committee (Ad Hoc).** Committee Members Ms. Gaarder and Ms. Stanley reported that the RFP has been released. The proposed coffee shop was front page news on the Joplin Globe and has been well-received on social media. The pre-proposal meeting is Sept. 28, and Oct. 26 is the deadline for proposals to be submitted. The Board will vote on the committee's recommendations Nov. 17.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **FY2027 Budget.** Dr. Van Otterloo reviewed the budget for those present and reported that:
    a. **Revenues:** There will be an anticipated 1 percent decrease in tax revenues, plus an anticipated 3 percent decrease in investment revenues. FY27 will be the final year the Library receives a subsidy from the City of Joplin. There will be an anticipated 2 percent decrease in total revenues.
    b. **Expenses.** The Budget and Finance Committee proposes a 3 percent cost of living allowance for all Library employees, putting the Library salary schedule above state minimum wage. The Director will also be awarded a 3 percent COLA in lieu of the 4 percent the Board previously granted. There are fewer furnishing and equipment costs budgeted, and consumables are 2 percent less. The Margaret Hager Book Fund and Joplin Public Library Foundation will help cover the purchase of Library materials for Collection Development.

There was a motion by Ms. Baldwin to accept the proposed FY27 budget as presented, with a second by Ms. Boyd Jones. Motion passed. **6/0**

2. **Director's Goal Setting.** Ms. Gaarder proposed establishing one goal for the Library Director in the coming year: getting a coffee shop off the ground. After Board discussion, Dr. Coltharp made a motion to establish a Director's goal of exploring bringing in a coffee shop, along with the usual "evergreen" goals. Seconded by Dr. Van Otterloo. Motion passed. **6/0**

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Jeana reported that:

Media Engagement

- On September 1, Lori Crockett shared about the Robot Book Club and American Girl program on KSN's Living Well.
- On September 4, KOAM aired a story about Danya Walker's Penguin book collection that is on display at the Library.
- On September 8, KOAM aired a story about the Library's rededication of the "Revering the Phoenix Effect" sculpture.
- Request for Proposal - Coffee Shop Vendor
    - On September 14, KOAM & KOAM News Now aired a stories.
    - On September 15, The Joplin Globe published a story.
    - On September 15, Joplin Business Outlook published a story.

Programs

- The DIY vinyl bowl take home kit, on September 2, was popular, with 110 kits taken.
- Book Bingo on September 8 had 42 attendees.
- A Rededication of the Sculpture & Recognition of Key Vendors at the Library was held on September 8. Twenty were in attendance.

Outreach

- Lori Crockett and Eden Kendall represented the Library at the Community Day at MSSU on August 19.
- The Friends are hosting their annual Trivia Night fundraiser on Saturday, September 26 at 5:30 pm. Flyers are available for distribution. Sponsorship opportunities are still available.

Building & Grounds

- HVAC Update - System 1 - Condenser 1 - Compressor 2 - has failed again. That entire system was fully replaced in February 2025. Compressor 2 failed in July 2025 and again in December 2025. The system is no longer under warranty, so the Library will be responsible for paying for parts and labor. We have requested a quote for replacing the entire System 1.
- The Computer Lab has new signage. "The LAB" is displayed in vinyl lettering on the column near the desk.

Personnel

- Merrick Sloane, Kyla Hicks and Maka Hoffer were hired as new Circulation assistants. Their first day was August 24.
- Karlee Ellick was hired as a new Computer Lab Assistant. Her first day was August 24.

STATISTICS: There were no Statistics to discuss this month.

STAFF COMMENTS: None.

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

- The Sept. 8 meeting included a rededication ceremony for the freshly painted outdoor sculpture, along with public acknowledgement of the vendors whose work has helped beautify and maintain the Library.
- Book sales netted more than $1,400.
- Trivia night is Sept. 26.
- The annual membership meeting is Oct. 15. The owner of Joplin's Carnegie Library building will speak, and two FOL Board members are slated to be replaced.
- New Friends t-shirts are currently for sale.
- The Friends are sponsoring the Oct. 3 Writers Faire at the Library.
- Oct. 6 is the next Friends Board meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were no Public Comments.

The meeting adjourned at 5:08 p.m.

Written by

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Administrative Assistant

Approved by

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Library Director

The next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Joplin Public Library will be held at 4 p.m. Tuesday, October 20, 2026.