

Board of Trustees of the Upper Sandusky Community Library

Minutes

June 12, 2025

The Upper Sandusky Community Library Board of Trustees convened on Thursday, June 12, at 12:00 p.m. in the Library Board Room with the following members present: Ms. Jenny Romich, Ms. Dianne Grafmiller, Mr. Ben Buckland, Mr. Todd Leightey, and Ms. Ann Kemerley. Ms. Amy Aldridge-Ritchey and Mr. Brian Kimmel were absent. Director Kathleen Whitt and Mr. Brian Hemminger of the *Daily Chief-Union* were also present.

President Jenny Romich asked for public comments. Hearing none, Ms. Romich asked if there were corrections or additions to the distributed minutes of the May meeting. Hearing none, Ms. Romich declared that the minutes stand as distributed.

Next on the agenda was a motion to ratify the payment of the bills. Ms. Romich asked if there were any questions about the bills. Hearing none, the motion was made and seconded to ratify the payment of bills; in a roll call vote, all present approved the bills.

Under old business, Ms. Whitt submitted a draft of the Virtual Board Meetings Policy, according to the guidelines discussed by the Board at the May meeting. After discussing potential changes, such as limits to the number of virtual meetings per year, the motion was made and seconded to adopt the policy as submitted. All present approved the motion. The policy is appended to these minutes.

Under new business, Ms. Whitt submitted a quote from Smith-Boughan to replace the large dehumidifier located in the basement storage room. The unit is about ten years old and has developed an internal leak in the compressor, which cannot be repaired. Maintenance custodian Lynn Gottfried has been checking the humidity in the basement over the past few weeks, and the humidity is running a high without the dehumidifier running. It was asked whether the situation would be fixed without installing a new dehumidifier when the new air conditioning system is installed, which is scheduled to occur this fall. Ms. Whitt will check with Smith-Boughan, who is doing that work, and report back to the Board at the next meeting.

In the Director's Report, Ms. Whitt reported that:

1. Our summer reading program began on May 31 with a donut-day kickoff. This year's theme is "Color Your World," which we are celebrating with colorful displays inside and outside of the library. Activities will be similar to recent years, with elementary school children completing Bingo cards of library-related activities, teens and tweens earning scratch-off tickets to win prizes, and adults completing lists of their reads on special bookmarks. All ages will earn entries for prize drawings including games and toys for the kids and gift baskets (including a Put-in Bay adventure package) for adults. We are also commencing the third year of the 100 Book Club for all ages 5 and up.
2. Youth programming for the summer reading program includes "Touch a Truck," with emergency vehicles, a police car, and snow plow (the fire truck was out on a call!); a Hello Summer cookout and chalk party (which ended up being held indoors, with big sheets of paper for kids to display their creativity); Bring Your Pet to the Library; a paint party with Miss Lisa; a Color StoryWalk® at Stepping Stones Park; crafts with Miss Jill; and a presentation on crystals and gems with Miss Patti.
3. Other June events include a repeat of last summer's popular Amazing Library Race, as well as Common Readers (*Say Nothing*, by Patrick Radder Keefe), Inglorious Bookworms (*Assassin's Apprentice* by Robin Hobb), Craft Party (American flag door hanger), and Lunch Bunch (picnic foods).
4. As discussed at the September 24, 2024, meeting, the Upper Sandusky Rotary Club will install a "Peace Pole" in front of the library. The pole will read "May Peace Prevail on Earth" in four languages significant in the community: English, German, Spanish, and Wyandot. The pole is to be installed on June 12, and dedicated on Sunday, June 22, with Wyandot Chief Billy Friend in attendance.

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5. The Ohio Department of Taxation (ODT) posted the June 2025 Public Library Fund (PLF) distribution of \$49,111,030 – which is \$3.43 million (or + 7.51%) above ODT's original estimate that was issued in July 2024; and \$4.77 million (or + 10.77%) above ODT's updated estimate issued in December 2024. This brings the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 total for the PLF to \$504,594,157. Overall state tax receipts for the month of June came in \$251.1 million (or + 9.8%) above estimates. As the state prepares to close out FY 2025, overall state revenues remain ahead by \$1 billion (or + 4%) as compared to this point in FY 2024. Based on the current language in the pending state budget bill, HB 96, the PLF will be reduced to \$479.7 million on July 1 for FY 2026 – resulting in almost a \$25 million cut in state funding.
6. On June 3, the Ohio Senate Finance Committee introduced their version of the state budget bill, House Bill (HB) 96. Rather than using a percentage of the state's General Revenue Fund (GRF), the Senate's version maintains funding for public libraries as a fixed line-item appropriation. The Senate version also deducts \$10.3 million annually from the PLF to fund statewide services such as: State Library of Ohio; Ohioana Library Association, Regional Library Systems, Ohio Public Library Information Network (OPLIN), and Library for the Blind. This means state funding for public libraries will be reduced to \$479.7 million on July 1 for Fiscal Year 2026. The Senate's version also keeps House-proposed language on materials deemed harmful to juveniles and trustee board term structures. In addition, new language added by the Senate allows county budget commissions to reduce tax collections and eliminates the option for replacement levies, which could further affect local library revenues.

On June 5, OLC's Executive Director Michelle Francis testified before the Senate Finance Committee, raising serious concerns about the Senate's version of the state budget. She explained that the current proposal would further reduce state funding for Ohio's public libraries by more than \$10 million in each year of the biennium. This cut would result from funding multiple state agencies directly from the PLF rather than the GRF. During her testimony, Francis urged lawmakers to make the following changes in the omnibus amendment:

- Fund the Public Library Fund at the level originally proposed in the Executive Budget: \$531.7 million in FY26; and \$549.1 million in FY27.
- Eliminate the \$10.3 million deduction from the PLF for multiple state agencies. These entities should be funded directly from the GRF.
- Remove the provisions related to library materials. We feel parents know what is best for their children and consider this an unfunded mandate.
- Remove the provision allowing the County Budget Commission to undermine the will of local voters.
- Restore the ability of political subdivisions to propose replacement levies.

The Senate Finance Committee is expected to introduce an omnibus amendment on Wednesday, June 11, which will include any final changes to the Senate's version of HB 96. The Senate plans to vote on the budget bill on Thursday, June 12. Following the vote, lawmakers will have two weeks to reconcile the differences between the House and Senate versions of the budget.

7. Memorial/Honor/Donations:

In memory of:

Herbert Hale
Freda Browne
Helen Vogel
Naomi Beard

Donor(s):

Barbara Jane Hale
Mark & Mary Rossel
Karen & Kip Binau
Susy & Brad Frey
Christine & Donald Bruce
Michael & Jennifer Horn
Chris Moses

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Under Items Not on the Agenda, Ms. Whitt said that a patron had asked if she could bring a puppy to story times. She would like to have the dog trained to be read to by children and would like to see how it does in this environment. She would bring it to story times that typically have fewer children and keep it at a distance from the children. Her husband would be available to remove the dog if there are any problems. Board members asked if other libraries had policies for such situations, and if they required certifications or waivers. Ms. Whitt replied that the issue was just brought to her earlier in the day, so she had not yet checked on this, but will do so.

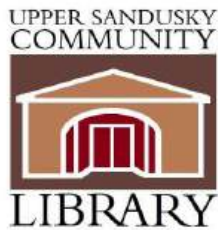
Ms. Romich then informed the Board that, due to additional responsibilities she has assumed, she will not be able to act as president of the board next year, though she intends to continue to serve on the Board.

There were no further Items Not on the Agenda.

Ms. Romich asked whether there were any additional items for discussion. Hearing none, the motion was made and seconded to adjourn; the meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

President

Secretary



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Upper Sandusky Community Library Virtual Meetings Policy

Adopted by the Board of Trustees

Date: June 12, 2025

Definitions

- A. “All-Virtual Meeting” means a Meeting that is to be conducted through the use of video conferencing or similar electronic technology and during which all participating Trustees will attend remotely through use of such technology rather than being assembled in one physical location.
- B. “Emergency” means an unforeseen event or circumstance that would prevent a Trustee from physically attending a scheduled in-person Meeting without undue effort, expense, or risk to the Trustee or others (e.g., unexpected travel for work, adverse weather conditions, illness, etc.).
- C. “Emergency Requiring Immediate Official Action” means an issue or circumstance that requires immediate consideration and/or action by the Library Board of Trustees in regard to an imminent threat to the safety or security of the Library, its staff and/or patrons or to avoid the potential loss of a business opportunity, missing a statutory or other deadline, incurring liability, violating the law, or other material adverse consequences to the Library’s operations or finances.
- D. “Major Non-Routine Expenditure” means \$10,000 or more, or new construction or facilities improvements/expansions.
- E. “Significant Hiring Decision” means salaried staff positions.
- F. “Virtual Meeting” means an All-Virtual Meeting, or any Meeting that is attended by one or more Trustees remotely through use of electronic technology.

Policy

- 1. This policy applies to all meetings of the Board of Trustees of the Library and all meetings of committees and subcommittees of the Board of Trustees. All such meetings are referred to herein as “Meetings”.
- 2. Subject to the exceptions set out below in Section 8, Meetings may be conducted, and Trustees may attend Meetings, through use of video conferencing or similar electronic technology that enables the Trustee(s) to be both seen and heard by members of the public attending the Meeting in-person and/or electronically, as applicable. Use of telephone or other audio-only conferencing technology is not permitted under this policy.
- 3. In regard to an All-Virtual Meeting, the Library must:
 - a. except in the event of an Emergency Requiring Immediate Official Action, notify the public, and media outlets that have requested to receive meeting notices, of the All-Virtual Meeting at least 72 hours in advance. Such notification must identify the time and agenda of the Meeting,

together with the particular electronic technology that will be used to conduct the Meeting and the means by which the public may access it (e.g., a video conferencing link). In the event an All-Virtual Meeting is being convened to address an Emergency Requiring Immediate Official Action, such 72 hours' advance notice is not required and the Library must, instead, immediately provide notice of the Meeting to those media outlets that have requested to receive meeting notices – identifying the time and purpose of the Meeting, together with the particular electronic technology that will be used to conduct the Meeting and the means by which the public may access it (e.g., a video conferencing link);

- b. enable the public to access the All-Virtual Meeting through use of the electronic technology being used to conduct it; and
 - c. provide a means, through use of electronic technology that is widely available to the public, to permit public comment by members of the public attending the Meeting remotely, if the Meeting agenda includes a public comment item.
4. The Library must ensure that the public is able to see and hear the discussions and deliberations of all Trustees participating in a Virtual Meeting, whether a Trustee is participating in-person or remotely.
5. Each Trustee attending a Meeting remotely through use of electronic technology must: (i) have the necessary hardware, software, and Internet connection to enable them to be seen and heard clearly during the Meeting; and (ii) be visible to the public at all times during the Meeting.
6. In regard to any Virtual Meeting for which the public is provided a video conference link or other electronic means of access, the Library must designate an email address or other method of contact the public may use during the Meeting to notify the Board that the conference link or other electronic means of access does not work or that the conferencing technology has failed.
7. The minutes of any Virtual Meeting must record: (i) that the Meeting was conducted in an all-virtual manner or that one or more identified Trustees attended the Meeting remotely through use of electronic technology, as applicable; and (ii) the particular video conferencing or other technology used to conduct or attend the Meeting.
8. All votes taken during a Virtual Meeting must be in the form of a roll-call vote, unless there is a motion for unanimous consent that is not objected to by a Trustee. If a vote is taken by unanimous consent, the Board must indicate to the public how each Trustee voted – including any Trustee who abstained from voting.
9. Any Trustee who intends to attend any scheduled in-person Meeting remotely through use of electronic technology must notify the President of the Library Board of Trustees and the Library Director of same at least 48 hours prior to the Meeting, except in the case of an Emergency - in which event the Trustee is to give such prior notice as is reasonably possible.
10. Meetings may not be conducted, and Trustees may not attend Meetings, through use of video conferencing or similar electronic technology if the Meeting involves:
 - a. a vote to approve a Major Non-Routine Expenditure;
 - b. a vote to approve a Significant Hiring Decision;
 - c. a vote to approve the purchase of real property; or

- d. proposing, approving, or voting on a tax issue or tax increase.
11. If, not less than 48 hours prior to the Meeting, two or more Trustees notify the President of the Library Board of Trustees that an item on the agenda must be acted on only at a Meeting conducted fully in-person – then the Library Board of Trustees will take action on such item only at a Meeting conducted fully in-person and not at a Virtual Meeting.
 12. Meetings may be conducted, and Trustees may attend Meetings, through use of video conferencing or similar electronic technology only after the adoption of this policy by the Library Board of Trustees, and only so long as this policy (or a successor policy) remains in effect.