



City of Muscatine

LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Wednesday, September 17, 2025

The Library Board of Trustees meets on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 4:30 p.m. in the Library Conference Room

Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Tony Loconsole called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. In addition to Loconsole, also present were Scott Comstock (Zoom), Steve Truitt, Nora Dwyer, Kraig Reed, Diana Gradert, Diana Boeding, Stacy Beatty, and Mary Odell. Also present were Bobby Fiedler, Molly Garrett, and Greg Benefiel.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Odell moved to approve the agenda as submitted. Seconded by Dwyer.

Loconsole stated that Emerson Taylor would be making his presentation following Item #7.

Vote - All ayes. Agenda approved with noted change.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Truitt moved to approve the Board minutes for August 20, 2025. Seconded by Reed.

Gradert noted that under Call to Order, Stacy Boeding should read Stacy Beatty.

Vote - All ayes. Minutes approved as corrected.

4. RATIFY BILLS FOR PAYMENT

Fiedler, speaking in reference to the bills for August 22, 2025, gave an

explanation of the entries found on Page #1 pertaining to the Mission Square and the RiverShare entries. He gave an explanation of the LS&S entry found on Page #3, and stated that under the Trust, there was an entry to Bolton & Menk showing a payment for the patio design project. He stated another bill was received from Bolton & Menk for \$2,000. He stated payments to Bolton & Menk would not exceed \$15,000.

Fiedler, speaking in reference to the bills for September 5, 2025, stated there is an entry on Page #1 for the Muscatine Symphony Orchestra, which is for an ad in their program. He stated there is another entry on Page #2 from the orchestra, which is a program fee.

Fiedler gave an overview of the Trust Funds. He stated the General Fund is where it needs to be. He stated the Trust Fund is in good shape, noting that interest payments are received from time to time.

Fiedler stated he recently talked to Finance Director Nancy Lueck about the Computer Rollover Fund. He stated that she is confident the money leftover from last year's budget would be rolled over into the Computer Rollover Fund. He noted the cap for this fund is \$50,000.

Dwyer moved to ratify the bills for August 22, 2025 and September 5, 2025. All ayes; motion carried.

5. RECEIVE COMMUNICATION

6. COMMUNICATIONS - CITIZENS

7. STAFF LIAISON

Benefiel stated staff is looking forward to the in-service day in November.

Emerson Taylor handed out copies of the Summer Reading Program Snapshot, the program schedule for 2025/2026, and a bookmark.

Loconsole asked if this information could be sent to Scott Comstock, and Taylor answered yes.

Taylor went over the Snapshot, which showed increases between this year and last year. Taylor stated that in comparison, participation by children/teens increased by 26% and adult participation by 138%. He stated there was an increase in minutes read by children/teens of 94%, and adult books read were up by 489%. He stated he felt the adult increase was due to restructuring of the program as well as the raffle prizes. He noted there were some great raffle prizes, and he listed some of them.

Taylor stated that corporate sponsors as well as community donors were listed

on the Snapshot sheet. He then highlighted the following:

- * 4,414 engaged patrons
- * 86 summer programs
- * 930 table crafts
- * 700 scavenger hunts
- * 1,000+ free books given out

Boeding asked how the sponsorship money was used.

Taylor stated it was used to purchase supplies and pay for the various programs and shows. He noted that some of the shows were so well attended that it was necessary to have two shows.

Taylor stated that this year the department was able to focus on in-house activities.

There was discussion about working with the school district to draw more students into the library.

Taylor stated it is important to draw families into the library so they can learn what is available to them. He stated the library has been doing a lot more community outreach. He then listed the activities that the library has been involved with in its effort to make people aware of what the library has to offer. He noted the library is also advertising the Spanish collection it has.

Taylor stated this year there were a lot more teens enrolled, and next year the teens will have a separate program with its own raffle prizes.

Fiedler stated that seeing these numbers really shows how the Children's Department is adding value to the community.

Odell asked if there was any way to see if there was an increase in library cards issued, and Fiedler stated he could supply that information.

Dwyer suggested sharing this information with the school board and connecting with them.

Loconsole stated he felt this information should be shared during budget discussions.

Loconsole stated he feels the library should hone in on the teens. He stated we need to make the library cool and continue to involve young people so that they

can think fondly of it. He stated he appreciates that the library takes care of our young people. In addition, he stated he would like to see this information shared with the City Council.

Taylor stated he saw a lot of people coming back into the library, and he further stated that having the teenagers participate this summer was nostalgic.

Gradert asked how sponsorship monies were obtained, and he stated that the library staff contacted them individually. He stated that for the smaller contributions, Outreach Coordinator Janna Brackey knocked on the doors of the businesses. He stated getting the donations was a huge help.

Taylor stated the second sheet he handed out is the blown-up version of the monthly calendar that will be on the 5x7 monthly calendar magnets that have been ordered. It includes activities for the whole season. He gave an overview of some of the activities included on the calendar. He noted there are some fun new programs.

Taylor stated that he and Becca would be at the homecoming parade on Thursday and would be handing out bookmarks and stickers.

There was discussion concerning the library's YouTube channel.

Fiedler stated he cannot say enough about the Children's Department team.

8. FRIENDS' REPORT

Fiedler stated the Friends book sale would be October 24-26, 2025, and would follow last year's format. He then stated their annual report had been submitted to the printer for design work.

9. DIRECTORS' REPORT

Staff In-Service Itinerary:

Fiedler stated the staff in-service day, if approved by the Board, would be November 14, 2025. He stated activities would remain local and would include tours related to the library and city functions.

He stated lunch would be at the Pearl City Station. He asked if the Board would like to purchase lunch for the staff or just come for a visit. He stated he would leave the choice up to the Board. He then went over the day's itinerary.

Recent Programming/Outreach:

He stated that the library has been participating in a lot of different events. He stated the new Outreach Coordinator's position has helped a lot. He stated

recent activities included the Big Blue Block party, the 2nd Summer Concert, which was canceled and rescheduled to October 12, 2025 at 4:00 p.m., and HNI's Hope Walk. He stated that Janna Brackey, the Outreach Coordinator, attended these events.

Garrett showed pictures of the activities.

City Council New Schedule:

Fiedler shared news about the restructuring of the City Council meetings, which will now be held on the second and third Tuesdays of the month beginning at 5:30 p.m. He stated the restructuring would not affect the Board in any way, but it may change when bills are signed. He stated in-depth meetings would be held on an as-needed basis. He noted these changes would begin in October. He stated department heads would start giving three to four minute presentations at the meetings.

Polaris 7.8 LEAP Upgrade:

Fiedler stated the Polaris upgrade was completed last night and would now allow the library to move forward with integrating MessageBee, which would allow notices to be sent to patrons.

10. BOARD TRAINING

- A. Summer Reading Recap/Fall Programming Presentation by Emerson Taylor

This item was moved and followed Item #7.

11. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Request to Approve Designating Oscar Grossheim Digitized Photograph Collection as "Open Source" Under the Creative Commons Draft Language

Loconsole read the request as submitted.

Beatty moved to approve the request. Seconded by Comstock.

Fiedler stated this action would allow the library to remove barriers for the public to get images of the Grossheim collection. He stated the library would maintain its copyright to the collection. He stated this action is in line with the library's Strategic Plan.

Comstock recommended a link be included on the website to make it easier for patrons to find the Grossheim collection.

Vote - All ayes; motion carried.

12. NEW BUSINESS

A. Request to Approve Library Closure on November 14–15, 2025 for Annual Staff In-Service Day and Carpet Cleaning (Building & Grounds)

Loconsole read the request as submitted.

Odell moved to approve the request. Seconded by Gradert.

Fiedler stated Building & Grounds would actually be cleaning the carpets on November 14, 2025, and the library would remain closed Saturday, November 15, 2025 to allow them to dry.

There was discussion on the cost of the luncheon and contributions by the Board.

Loconsole asked Board members to reach out to Fiedler if they would be interested in making a donation.

Fiedler stated the library could let the Board know the cost.

Vote - All ayes; motion carried.

B. Request to Approve Final Patio Design for Bolton & Menk

Loconsole read the request as submitted.

Fiedler gave a presentation on the final patio design as presented by Bolton & Menk. He stated two plans were submitted with costs of \$289,000 and \$242,000. He stated that overall, he was very happy with the more expensive plan, noting it would utilize the space well. He stated if this design is approved, it would allow the library to move forward with fundraising. He noted the project could be completed in either the first or second quarter of 2027 based on the procurement of materials.

Fiedler stated the library has the opportunity to apply for a T-Mobile grant award of up to \$50,000, which is done on a quarterly basis. He stated this project meets a lot of the required criteria. He stated the Community Foundation has the grant application ready to go. He noted the library would also look at other local organizations and private donors.

Boeding asked about the back gate, and Fiedler stated it was only an egress gate. He stated that if someone leaves, they will not be able to come back in through

that gate.

Beatty asked if there would be opportunities for donor names to be displayed.

Trutt noted the plan does include a modular donor wall.

Odell asked who would be taking the lead for the fundraising effort.

Fiedler stated the library would work with the Community Foundation. He stated that he and Tony would probably be the point people for the library, and the Friends group would also be involved.

There was discussion concerning the fundraising process.

Fiedler stated the Trust has about \$170,000 and Friends has about \$95,000, which would indicate during the fundraising process that the library could show that it does have the funds to pay for the project.

Dwyer asked if we should approve the most expensive design plan.

Fiedler stated that once the design study is approved, the Steering Committee could pick and choose which items it feels are not necessary. He stated it would be easier to remove items as opposed to adding them.

Fiedler stated if the Board chose not to move forward at this time, the project could be done later.

Beatty asked if people could reserve the space.

Fiedler stated that has been a topic of discussion.

Boeding talked about what she liked about the plan.

Loconsole stated that usability was the important point during this whole process. He stated the area has a lot of potential, and this project is very exciting. He stated it is an extension of the library, noting that the fence would help make people feel safe.

Fiedler stated the patio would be monitored.

Fiedler stated the goal of the proposed patio project is to make sure it is multi-functional.

Odell stated she felt the costlier design should be approved because items can always be removed.

Boeding stated she feels the patio will be beautiful.

Beatty moved to accept the design as submitted pending available funding. Seconded by Dwyer.

Boeding thanked the Steering Committee for their work on this process.

Vote - All ayes; motion carried.

Fiedler thanked the committee for all of their work.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Gradert moved the meeting be adjourned at 5:40 p.m. Seconded by Boeding. All ayes; motion carried.

14. NEXT MEETING

A. October 15, 2025