



City of Muscatine

LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Wednesday, April 15, 2026

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, other members present were Scott Comstock, Mary Odell, Nora Dwyer, Stacy Beatty, Kraig Reed, and Diana Boeding. Gradert and Truitt had excused absences. Staff members present were Bobby Fiedler, Molly Garrett, and Greg Benefiel.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Odell moved the agenda be approved as submitted. Seconded by Dwyer. All ayes; motion carried.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Beatty moved to approve the minutes of the March 25, 2026 Board meeting. Seconded by Reed.

Dwyer, speaking in reference to Section 7A of the agenda, asked that the paragraph referencing Kaufmann end after the House Majority Leader.

Fiedler asked Dwyer if her husband was the president or vice president of the Community Foundation, and Dwyer answered president.

Vote on minutes as amended — All ayes; motion carried.

4. RATIFY BILLS FOR PAYMENT

Odell moved to ratify the bills for April 8, 2026. Seconded by Comstock.

Fiedler stated the reason for all the staff reimbursements was due to a fraudulent charge, which necessitated the re-issuance of the library's credit card. He explained the fraudulent charge.

Fiedler, speaking in reference to the trust funds, stated they were all in great shape. He noted that the Trust Fund is higher because of the donations being received for the Summer Reading Program.

Vote — All ayes; motion carried.

5. RECEIVE COMMUNICATION

6. COMMUNICATIONS - CITIZENS

7. STAFF LIAISON

Benefiel stated that Rachel Scholze has left the library and would now be in a standby position. He stated that Jenny Howell would be moving up to reference. He noted she would do great in that position, and the part-time position in the Children's Department could be filled.

Fiedler stated Jenny would be a good fit for the reference position. He noted that a number of applications have been received for the position in the Children's Department.

8. FRIENDS' REPORT

Fiedler stated he was sure that everyone had heard about the passing of Pat Grimm, who was a member of the Friends Board. He stated a lot of nice comments were left on the Facebook page. He noted that a Celebration of Life would take place at a later time, and he would notify the Board when he knows more. He ended by saying that Pat was a great guy and would be missed.

Loconsole stated he would get a sympathy card and bring it to the May meeting for signatures.

Fiedler stated the golf tournament fundraiser is this weekend at the library. He thanked everyone who sponsored a hole. He stated that everything was ready and that numerous donations had been received. He also stated that downtown businesses made some nice contributions as well.

Fiedler stated the Friends printer located at the library would be replaced with a basic model.

Loconsole invited everyone to join in the fun on Saturday. He stated the event was great last year, and it is a fun way to get people into the library.

Boeding pointed out that the event is for all ages.

9. DIRECTORS' REPORT

Reconsideration Request:

Fiedler stated he had received a written reconsideration request for a DVD entitled "Strawberry Shortcake and the Beast of the Berry Bog". He explained what the complaint was about the DVD and that the patron felt it had more of an adult theme. He stated it was moved to the adult collection, and explained why.

Loconsole asked if the request was public information, and Fiedler stated it would only become public if it was brought before the Board.

Loconsole stated these types of requests are not uncommon, but he felt it was interesting that it involved a DVD.

Comstock asked when the DVD was released, and Fiedler stated it was released in 2023.

Comstock then asked if the DVD saw a lot of activity, and Garrett stated it had been checked out four times.

Boeding asked Fiedler if he had to watch the DVD to understand the issue, and he answered yes.

There was further discussion on this issue.

Odell asked if the person had filed the appropriate paperwork and then asked Fiedler if he had responded back to them.

Fiedler stated the appropriate paperwork had been filed and that he had contacted the person who filed the request.

Boeding asked if the patron understood that she could contact the Board if she was not happy with the library's decision, and Fiedler answered yes. He then stated he did attempt to contact the patron.

Fiedler noted that the request was for relabeling; however, the decision was made to include it with the adult collection.

2nd Session of 91st General Assembly:

Fiedler provided an update on the legislative situation. He stated there has been no movement since the last amendment was filed. He stated that at this point, legislators are focusing on the property tax issue. He stated the date for making the final decision on the amendment is April 21, 2026.

FY2026/2027 Budget Update/Timeline:

Fiedler stated the City Council will hold a public hearing on April 21, 2016, which is when the vote to adopt the budget will take place. He stated the county's public hearing was on April 13, 2026, and that he and Dwyer attended that meeting. He stated he had given some prepared remarks and shared with them the information he had included in the budget packet. He stated the county had cut all the libraries in the county by 40%. He stated the bright spot in all this is that they cannot make any further cuts to the funds for the library. He pointed out that the county is apparently having budget issues as well.

Fiedler stated the City Council did approve the purchase of the HVAC unit for the library at a cost of \$254,000. He stated the low bid was from Crawford, and it would take six to eight months before installation because it has to be built to the library's specifications.

Fiedler stated that while attending a conference at the Burlington library earlier this month, he learned that the city does not pay for their library's building issues nor do they provide custodial services.

Loconsole stated he hoped City Council appreciated the fact that the bid had come in lower than expected.

Dwyer, speaking in reference to the county's public hearing, encouraged everyone to listen to what Fiedler had to say. She thanked him for his

presentation.

Loconsole stated he feels the library should appropriately notify people about what the library is dealing with at this time, and Fiedler stated he would let the Board know his plans later in the meeting.

Boeding asked if other libraries were in attendance, and Fiedler answered no.

Beatty stated she was frustrated by the lack of communication, noting the Board had no idea of what was going to happen.

Fiedler stated he had reached out to the county about a month ago and never received a response. He noted they were not very transparent.

Dwyer stated it seems like the county does not have a good communication and budget process.

There was further discussion on this issue, which also included the Art Center.

Reference Position:

Fiedler stated that as noted earlier in the meeting, Jenny Howell would be moving up to the reference position, which would give the library an opportunity for more desk coverage in the Children's Department.

Patio Update:

Fiedler stated things are moving fast due to the \$150,000 donation that was received recently. He stated that he and Loconsole met with Lindsay at the HNI Foundation, and they will be reviewing our request for funds for the project.

Loconsole stated we let Lindsay know that the Foundation was the first potential partner to be contacted, and she appreciated that fact.

Dwyer asked Fiedler if he shared the fact that we had received the \$150,000 donation, and he stated it was shared during the meeting and in the application.

Loconsole stated that Lindsay shared that the Foundation's priority was education and that she felt this project falls into that category.

Fiedler stated the estimated timeline for completion is early summer of next year, which would coincide with the library's 125-year anniversary.

There was further discussion on this issue.

Burlington Public Library Training Day Recap:

Fiedler talked about the day which Reed had also attended. He stated their library is in a nice location. He then gave a brief overview of what took place throughout the day.

Reed stated it was very informative.

Global Education at the Stanley Center Inclusive Dialogue Series:

Fiedler stated that Jarrett J. Krosoczka, author of "Hey Kiddo", gave a great presentation at the Merrill a couple of weeks ago. He stated the presentation was fantastic. He noted that Becca had attended the event as well, noting the book was the April Book Club selection.

10. BOARD TRAINING

11. OLD BUSINESS

12. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Request to Approve Changing May 2026 Library Board of Trustees Meeting to May 13, 2026 at 4:30 p.m.

Loconsole read the request as submitted.

Fiedler explained why the meeting date was being changed.

Odell moved the request be approved as submitted. Seconded by Comstock. All ayes; motion carried.

- B. Review of Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget Planning Document to be Voted on at the May 13, 2026 Library Board of Trustees Meeting

Loconsole read the request as submitted.

Fiedler provided an overview of the budget planning update that was included in the Board packet. He stated that the document was shared with the City Administrator, City Council, and County Board of Supervisors. He stated he was now in the process of letting staff know who would be impacted and would be sharing the information at the All Staff meeting on Friday as well. He noted the last step in the process would be notifying the public of changes that would occur at the library.

Fiedler stated the library is looking at a \$104,000 cut to the upcoming fiscal year budget. He stated he had included information in the Board packet showing budget activity for the library over the past 20 years. He then explained how the budget shortfall would be met.

Fiedler stated that the library offers services to its patrons and further stated that his staff are also a service in his mind. He stated they are the most important service that the library provides. He stated he was going to do whatever he could to not eliminate any of his staff. He stated he would rather reduce hours than eliminate positions.

Fiedler stated another impact of this budget cut would be the closing of the library on Sunday and closing at 8:00 p.m. on Monday through Thursday, which would begin July 1, 2026. He noted the library has to be opened at least 50 hours and six days a week in order to remain at the highest tier for library funding. He then talked about reductions in other areas of the library.

There was discussion on how this information would be shared with the public once the Board approves the budget at next month's meeting.

Dwyer asked if there would be any value to the Board making some type of statement that comes from the Board itself. She stated she thought it might go over better with the public.

Fiedler stated it would be challenging because there is no one mouthpiece for the library to use. He stated that we do have the newsletter and Facebook.

Beatty asked if the Board could include their names to whatever is provided to the public, and Fiedler answered yes.

Loconsole stated he feels that a letter co-signed by the Board would be a great idea.

Beatty stated she feels people would be more apt to ask questions if they recognized names.

Boeding stated the communication to the public needs to be straightforward and easy to digest, and Fiedler agreed.

Odell stated that we need to let the public know in a way that they do not feel blindsided.

Beatty told Fiedler that she appreciated how he had been brainstorming since February.

Boeding pointed out that most libraries are closed on Sundays.

Beatty stated that closing on Sunday would be difficult for the public.

Loconsole stated the library is loved and well used. He stated he feels that people are already primed for disappointment after reading all the other discussions that have taken place over budget cuts. He then stated he felt a statement should be sent to the county from the Board, which would be based on facts and reality.

Boeding stated we need to keep all of this information so that it will be available next year.

Odell stated we need to provide talking points to staff to help them with questions the public might have.

Loconsole stated the patio project would have to be addressed and the public told it would be funded completely through donations.

Loconsole stated he feels the County needs to hear from the Board.

Fiedler agreed with Loconsole. He stated we were complacent. He stated the funding was always there and then it was not.

Loconsole stated he would work with Fiedler on putting together a statement to be sent out after May 13, 2026.

Comstock asked Fiedler felt the reduction in hours could lead to resignation by some of the employees, and Fiedler stated he did not think so.

Odell pointed out that the benefits would not change with the reduced hours.

There was further discussion on this issue.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Loconsole congratulated Beatty on being named principal of Jefferson School.

Beatty moved the meeting be adjourned at 5:50 p.m. Seconded by Reed. All

ayes; motion carried.

14. NEXT MEETING

A. May 13, 2026