

Rocky River Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
Wednesday, August 6, 2025

The regular meeting of the Board of Rocky River Public Library was held in the Auditorium of the Library on Wednesday, August 6, at 5:30 p.m.

Present: Don Bierut, Jenny Fisher, Stacey Ganor, Ann Gynn, and Matt Knickman

Not Present: Jill James and Cynthia Schafer

Also Present: Peter Matera, (Director), Trent Ross (Deputy Director), Will Costello (Fiscal Officer), and Charlie Frankel (NFP)

1. CALL TO ORDER: President Jenny Fisher called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

2. OATH OF OFFICE: Ms. Fisher welcomed new trustee Don Bierut. Mr. Beirut was sworn in by board member and notary Stacey Ganor.

2. BUSINESS OF THE BOARD

APPROVAL OF JUNE BOARD MEETING MINUTES: Ms. Fisher asked for any changes or corrections to the meeting minutes. Ms. Gynn asked to amend a section of the Director's report to clarify the conversation about "DEI" at the June board meeting. The proposed change: "Ms. Gynn said she strongly supports that the plan be explicit about RRPL being welcoming to all, as that sentiment is needed now more than ever. She suggested reflecting RRPL's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion using language other than the DEI acronym. The three letters can be low-hanging fruit for critics of the library. She said reviewing and potentially addressing their criticism about "DEI" could take away time from the more important work of RRPL staff and board. She said she would ultimately support whatever language leadership chose to illustrate RRPL's commitment". Ms. Fisher made a motion to approve the June Board Meetings as amended, seconded by Ms. Ganor. All trustees voted yes. Motion carried.

FISCAL OFFICER AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT: Ms. Ganor reported on behalf of Ms. Schafer that the Finance committee reviewed recent finance report and chart analysis Mr. Costello provided. Mr. Costello reported we are currently in a similar position to where we were at this time last year in terms of the General Fund. While expenditures have increased, this is largely due to capital spending. He reminded trustees that it is helpful to monitor total cash on hand, as it provides a true comparison of our current financial position versus last year. Continued attention should be paid to increased expenditures and concerns about long-term revenue.

Mr. Costello presented chart analysis based on actual expenditures in comparison to the budget. He commended the Administrative team for their conscientious and responsible work in budgeting. Mr. Costello stated that the materials expenditure has remained relatively consistent but staffing and benefits costs are budgeted 30% higher than 2020. Ms. Ganor inquired about the increase in salaries and benefits and asked if there is benchmark or target for such increases the library should be aiming for. Mr. Costello explained that a substantial COLA a few years ago raised the base salary impacting future increases. Ms. Fisher mentioned the salary survey from a few years ago that also contributed to increases. Trustees may request more detailed breakdown of salaries and benefits at a later date. Mr. Ross noted annual increase remains generally consistent with Ohio local government wage rate growth as reported by the Ohio Department of Job & Family Services, that FTE had remained steady over the years, and there were adjustments to salary structure following the first compensation survey in over a decade.

APPROVAL OF JULY 2025 FINANCIALS: Ms. Ganor made a motion to approve the June 2025 Financials, seconded by Mr. Knickman. All trustees voted yes. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF THE JULY 2025 GIFT REPORT: Mr. Matera reported a gift in memory of Kay Kibbey. Ms. Fisher noted how grateful the board is to accept all donations made to the Library. Mr. Knickman made a motion to approve the July 2025 Gift Report, seconded by Ms. Gynn. All trustees voted yes. Motion carried.

DIRECTORS REPORT: Ms. Fisher thanked Mr. Matera for a very comprehensive Director's report. Mr. Matera reported that Rocky River residents will have the option to choose if they wish to continue to receive Inside View publication in the mail starting with the January 2026 edition. Paper copies of the publication will continue to be available in the Library as well as online but offering patrons a choice to receive it in the mail will decrease substantial printing/mailing costs. Spring and Fall editions will be optional, while the Summer edition will continue to be mailed to all Rocky River residents.

Mr. Matera introduced NFP health insurance broker Charlie Frankel to discuss the proposals for new health insurance for our September 1, 2025 renewal. Mr. Frankel stated historically, insurance increases for groups the library's size have been hit hard. This year, however, the Library is in the rare and fortunate position of a significant decrease in costs to the library and eligible staff, costs will go down, coverage will be better and there is added flexibility to the plan offerings. This will involve changing carriers to Anthem and offering both a standard PPO plan (which is what the library currently offers), with an option to choose an even lower-cost high-deductible plan with a health savings account (HSA). While stability is a priority, renewing with UHC would have been an 8% increase to the library and employees for premiums, and a 10% increase to the employee total out of pocket maximums. Moving to Anthem is at least a 4% decrease in costs, which means less money out of staff paychecks for the same coverage and same deductible on the PPO. Additionally, total out of pocket maximums

with the Anthem PPO or Anthem HSA are reduced by 35%-40%, a large savings for employees who enroll. Savings increase with the HSA option. Mr. Frankel noted a heavy seeding model for HSA works, but the library should not continue to contribute that amount on an annual basis. Mr. Frankel noted educating the staff to this new opportunity is vital, and NFP will provide an account manager to provide information to employees and answer individual questions. He stated this is a unique opportunity to lower costs and improve benefits. Regarding the library's contribution in the HSA, Mr. Bierut, Ms. Ganor, and Ms. Gynn all expressed support for the library's generous contributions and understand the need to incentivize but cautioned that the favorable seeding conditions being offered may not be repeatable. Mr. Frankel noted the cost savings from the current arrangement are a rare opportunity and suggested that staff should take advantage of it for this year. Mr. Matera pointed out that the library has a history of reinvesting savings into staff benefits. In 2022 the board voted in favor of increasing the percentage coverage, suggesting that the library has been proactive in supporting its staff in this way.

APPROVAL OF HEALTH CARE RENEWAL: Ms. Fisher moved to approve the healthcare renewal with Anthem including HSA contributions from the library of \$1,800 for individuals and \$3,600 for family for those who select the HSA option, seconded by Mr. Knickman. The roll was called; the vote resulted as follows:

Roll Call

Mr. Bierut	Yes
Ms. Ganor	Yes
Ms. Gynn	Yes
Ms. Fisher	Yes
Mr. Knickman	Yes
Ms. James	Absent
Ms. Schafer	Absent

APPROVAL OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING POLICY: Mr. Matera noted the policy is based on an Ohio Library Council template which would give trustees the option to attend, participate, and vote virtually when enacted. Trustees discussed adding verbiage to the policy regarding posting to media outlets per a suggestion from Ms. Gynn, but agreed to leave the policy as-is, as the Library already publicly posts all meetings on the website. Ms. Fisher noted that virtual meetings may not be conducted, if the meeting involves a vote to approve a major non-routine expenditure, a vote to approve a significant hiring decision, a vote to approve the purchase of real property, or proposing, approving, or voting on a tax issue or tax increase. Ms. Fisher made a motion to approve the Virtual Meeting Policy, seconded by Ms. Ganor. All trustees voted yes. Motion carried.

REVIEW OF EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK UPDATES: Mr. Matera noted administration plans on reviewing the employee handbook annually based on HR and staff suggestions. Once reviewed by legal team, the updated Employee Handbook will be presented to the trustees for approval at the September board meeting. HR representative Kristine Weber suggested adding a few items that are not included in this version, but they will be in the Employee Handbook included in the September board packet. This includes a workers compensation item that the library will in good faith cover salary for 14 days to cover the gap with workers comp. Mr. Matera reviewed the timeline process of annually reviewing the employee handbook with staff and HR suggestions. Ms. Fisher suggested reaching out to leadership if there are any further questions.

APPROVAL OF THE JULY 2025 PERSONNEL REPORT: Mr. Matera noted several updated job descriptions were included in the August board packet for trustees' information, but they do not require approval. The three positions in place already are: Community Engagement Manager, Curator and Archivist, and Team Lead Outreach. Mr. Knickman made a motion to approve the July Personnel Report, seconded by Mr. Bierut. All trustees voted yes. Motion carried.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Ms. Fisher welcomed new trustee Don Bierut to the team. Ms. Fisher noted 138 new meeting room reservations taken in the first few days of the new school year and commented that RRPL meeting room space is used in such a robust way by the community. She complimented the programming this past month, from The History of the Underground Railroad to the Bubble Lady, she is grateful to the staff who ensure we have diverse and engaging programming. The Hold Pick Up Lockers that will soon be available to the patrons will be a great addition! Special thanks to the Collection Resources department for operating at half staff for quite some time and still doing high quality work.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Building & Grounds: Mr. Knickman noted no report but indicated a new trustee building tour would be scheduled in the coming weeks.

Personnel: Ms. Ganor reported the committee discussed staffing needs in several departments and looking at options to best fill them. Handbook updates and organizational chart (moving Outreach to Adult) were also discussed.

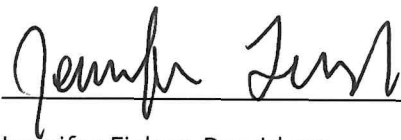
Strategic Task Force: Ms. Gynn noted the August meeting was cancelled. Finance forecasting will be discussed at the September 11 meeting. She attended an updated Ballot Workshop sponsored by OLC. It was a helpful refresher in understanding and community responsibilities in forming levy committees. All trustees are invited to attend the September Strategic Task Force meeting.

3. NEW BUSINESS: Mr. Matera mentioned insurance renewals from Utica would be coming in in the next few weeks. He has already received auto and commercial and is waiting for the umbrella policy quote. In past years the board has had a late August meeting in which the

insurance renewals were approved, but there is not another meeting until September 24. The board approved a PO in January 2025 related to the insurance renewal and asked if the board would be comfortable using the PO approval. Ms. Fisher noted that unless there was an unexpected cost outside what was budgeted, that would be acceptable. The other trustees agreed. Mr. Matera will bring the insurance quotes to the September meeting for review.

Mr. Matera reminded trustees of Pride Fest on August 9.

4. ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Fisher", written over a horizontal line.

Jennifer Fisher, President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Cynthia C. Schafer", written over a horizontal line.

Cynthia Schafer, Secretary