

**Rocky River Public Library****Board of Trustees Meeting****Wednesday, October 29, 2025**

The regular meeting of the Board of Rocky River Public Library was held in the Auditorium of the Library on Wednesday, October 29, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.

Present: Don Bierut, Stacey Ganor, Ann Gynn, Deborah Huff, Matt Knickman, and Cynthia Schafer

Not Present: Jenny Fisher

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

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** Vice-President Ann Gynn called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

**2. OATH OF OFFICE:** Ms. Gynn welcomed new trustee Deborah Huff. Ms. Huff was sworn in by board member and notary Stacey Ganor.

**3. BUSINESS OF THE BOARD**

**a) APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER BOARD MEETING MINUTES:** Ms. Gynn asked for any changes or corrections to the meeting minutes. Ms. Ganor made a motion to approve the September Board Meetings Minutes seconded by Mr. Knickman. All trustees voted yes. Motion carried.

**FISCAL OFFICER AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT:** Mr. Costello included a new item, a chart, of the General Fund only with a breakdown by percentage of expenditures. Revenue is higher due mainly to gifts from Emily Bishop. Month and YTD numbers are close to last year, which is good because we broke even last year. Little activity in the Capital Fund. Mr. Costello will meet with Brian Carter from Fifth/Third to discuss strategies for maximizing returns as rates are going down. They will also discuss 2026 cash flow needs as bigger items like the HVAC system need upgrading.

**APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 2025 FINANCIALS:** Ms. Schafer made a motion to approve the September 2025 Financials, seconded by Mr. Bierut. All trustees voted yes. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 2025 GIFT REPORT** No gifts were reported for September 2025. Mr. Knickman made a motion to approve the September 2025 Gift Report seconded by Mr. Bierut. All trustees voted yes. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION 05-25 REQUESTING ADVANCES OF FUNDS FROM THE COUNTY FISCAL OFFICE:** Mr. Costello explained that this procedural resolution is sent to request instead of waiting for the real estate tax revenue to arrive in the usual cycle,

we receive advance payments of that money. Ms. Ganor moved to approve Resolution 05-2025, seconded by Mr. Knickman. The roll was called; the vote resulted as follows:

**Roll Call**

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

**DIRECTORS REPORT:** Mr. Matera noted the library has taken steps to increase support for food assistance in the community. With federal aid expected to end on the 1st and the holidays approaching, the library is promoting its role as a donation drop-off site for the Rocky River Assistance Program. Adult Services Department is compiling a list of local food distribution sites and other community resources. At Monday's county budget commission meeting, library directors and fiscal officers were briefed on numerous state-level bills related to property taxes. Mike Chambers, the county fiscal officer, explained that 8-12 bills are currently in discussion, including House Bill 137, which recently passed out of committee. HB 137 would give public entities the authority to decide whether they can place a levy on the ballot, though it still requires approval from both the House and Senate. There is growing pressure to reduce or eliminate property taxes in Ohio. Chambers noted that a simple message like "eliminate property taxes" could gain traction, even though property taxes generate \$24 billion annually to fund essential public services—libraries, schools, municipalities, police, fire, and more. No current bills clearly address how the state would replace that revenue. There is another repair related to the existing HVAC system. This one is estimated at about \$7,200 involving condensation dripping from the coils and leaking through the condensate pan. Although the system is still operational, this repair is another example of the recurring and high-cost maintenance we're experiencing with this aging equipment. There's no immediate urgency and Mr. Matera will discuss timing with Greg Jackson, and schedule the repair toward the end of winter, ahead of next cooling season. Mr. Matera discussed reviewing and totaling past repair costs to better assess the long-term value of continued maintenance versus replacement. The public version of the Strategic Plan will be released next week. Jacob Marquis and Rob Isom are currently assembling the pamphlet and expect it to be finalized shortly. It will be announced in an eBlast, featured in upcoming Inside View, and posted on social media and the website. Paper

copies will be available in the lobby. Staff have devoted significant time in recruitment over the past few months. Although the personnel report for this month reflects only one new hire, it does not capture the extensive work involved in screening and interviewing candidates. The team has been actively working to fill eight to ten open positions. At this point, all positions have been filled or are in the process of being filled except for the Youth Librarian role, which remains open. Mr. Bierut asked where positions are posted. Mr. Matera replied most postings go through ADP, which connects with Indeed and ZipRecruiter, but library-specific roles also appear on NEO and OLC. An HR Generalist has been hired, with a start date of November 17. The organization will maintain its relationship with Connected HR during a transition and overlap period to ensure proper handoff of responsibilities. The length of that overlap—particularly whether it extends into December—will be determined based on need. The new HR Generalist brings strong experience with ADP, along with fresh ideas for internal communication and staff engagement. She is mission-driven and expressed a strong desire to work in an organization with a purpose beyond herself. Her interview was excellent, and leadership is enthusiastic about her joining the team. More details will be shared at next month's meeting once onboarding is complete.

**APPROVAL OF COWAN ACCESSION:** Mr. Ross noted that the items we wish to add are already in our collection; however, Greg Hatch would like to use these duplicates to take out of the building for educational purposes or programs and would feel more confident if they are not the sole representation. Mr. Knickman made a motion to approve the Cowan Accession seconded by Ms. Ganor. All trustees voted yes. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF UPDATED NETWORK POLICY:** Mr. Matera noted the proposed change to the network policy is minor and intended to add clarity. Our current policy references restrictions on viewing materials that may be harmful to minors, but the language is vague especially given recent discussions in the state budget regarding materials related to sexual orientation or gender identity. To address this the policy, it is updated to cite the relevant section of the Ohio Revised Code that defines "harmful to juveniles." No other revisions to the network policy are being made. Mr. Bierut made a motion to approve the Updated Network Policy seconded by Ms. Huff. All trustees voted yes. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF UPDATED COMPENSATION POLICY** Mr. Matera noted that the compensation policy is up for review and approval, following Amy Petrus' assistance with the recent compensation study. He explained that the compensation guidelines represent a fairly complete draft of how the library intends to implement concepts from the new compensation policy. The guidelines also incorporate elements of the current compensation policy, along with many of Amy's recommendations. They are not fully

complete; however, Mr. Matera wanted the Board to see how the results of the study are being integrated into the library's approach to compensation in practice. Ms. Ganor asked about the phrase "Employees shall not expect a pay change until it is approved by the director or the board in writing" yet the board is only responsible for the director and the fiscal officer, neither of which are covered by the pay ranges. After discussion it was clarified that this infers to the board approving monthly personnel reports including pay adjustments, and salary and pay rates that are approved at the end of each year. Ms. Schafer suggested modifying phrasing in the Analysis and Reconsideration portion of the policy regarding the timeline of compensation review, to make it clear that it is the board's intention is to follow a regular cycle of review, but recognizing there may be extenuating circumstances in which the board is not able to do this. The trustees agreed to change the phrasing. Ms. Ganor made a motion to approve the Updated Compensation Policy with modified language, seconded by Ms. Schafer. All trustees voted yes. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF 2026 BOARD MEETING SCHEDULES:** Mr. Bierut made a motion to approve the 2026 Board Meeting Schedules seconded by Ms. Schafer. All trustees voted yes. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF 2026 LIBRARY CLOSING DATES:** Mr. Knickman made a motion to approve the 2026 Library Closing Dates seconded by Mr. Knickman. All trustees voted yes. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF OCTOBER PERSONNEL REPORT:** Mr. Matera noted one new appointment, Katherine Nussbaum in Circulation. Charlie Fletcher, a shelver is also taking on general substitute duties. Mr. Bierut suggested keeping a limited connection with Connected HR while the new HR Generalist starts. Ms. Ganor made a motion to approve the October Personnel Report seconded by Ms. Huff. All trustees voted yes. Motion carried.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT:** Ms. Gynn thanked everyone who participated in Staff Day and acknowledged the hard work that goes on behind the scenes every day at the Library. She thanked staff for collaborating so quickly to make with food drive drop-off and sharing information about other resources available to our fellow community members. The board members briefly discussed other ways in which the library could assist the community.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Building & Grounds:** No Report.

**Personnel:** Ms. Ganor reported that the committee discussed ongoing recruitment efforts. The Ohio Library Council convention will be held in Cleveland later this month, and the Foundation donated funding to allow 22 staff members to attend. The committee also discussed the possibility of retooling the hierarchy in the Circulation

Department in 2026. The Personnel Committee will send surveys to relevant staff members to assist with the performance reviews for the Director and the Fiscal Officer.

**Strategic Task Force:** No meetings for the rest of the year.

**4. NEW BUSINESS:** Mr. Matera noted the Library Surplus Auction was held on October 25. A great deal of old technology and furniture was cleared out. Thanks to Greg Jackson and Krista Carte for organizing, and the Friends of RRPL for handling all payments from the public. Ms. Gynn reminded trustees of the upcoming 2026 budget reviews on November 5<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 pm. All trustees are encouraged to attend.

**5. ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:24 p.m.



Jennifer Fisher, President



Cynthia Schafer, Secretary