MINUTES OF THE CHURCHILL COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

155 N. Taylor St., Fallon, NV 89406
June 26, 2025

Call to Order:

The regular meeting of the Library Board of Trustees was called to order at 3:00 PM on June 26, 2025.

Pledge of Allegiance:

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the board and public.

Public Comment:

Chair Rowe asked if there was any public comment but there was none.

Roll call of members:

PRESENT: Trustee Jessica Rowe, Chair
Trustee Ryan Swirczek, Vice-Chair
Trustee Sari Koehler, Secretary, via telephone
Trustee Dr. Sue Segura
Trustee Mattie Serna
Commissioner Myles Getto
Deputy Clerk of the Board, Pamela D. Moore

ABSENT: N/A

Verification of the Posting of the Agenda:

It was verified by Pamela D. Moore, Deputy Clerk of the Board, that the Agenda for this meeting was posted on the 20th day of June, 2025, between the hours of 3:00 and 5:00 PM at all of the locations listed on the Agenda, in accordance with NRS 241.

Consideration and possible action re: Approval of Agenda as submitted or revised:

Trustee Ryan Swirczek made a motion to approve the Agenda as submitted. Trustee Mattie Serna seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Consideration and possible action re: Approval of Minutes of the meeting held on:

A- May 22, 2025.
FISCAL IMPACT:
EXPLANATION OF IMPACT:
FUNDING SOURCE:
ACTION REQUESTED:

Trustee Ryan Swirczek made a motion to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on

May 22, 2025 as presented. Trustee Mattie Serna seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

<u>Library Board of Trustees' Report</u>:

Chair Rowe opened the Library Board of Trustees report with reflections on a difficult week, noting that more would be discussed later in the meeting. She commended the library staff for their professionalism, calm demeanor, and commitment to serving the public during this time. Their clear communication and teamwork has been especially appreciated and deserving of recognition.

She also highlighted progress on the Library's Strategic Plan. Following its approval at the previous meeting, staff had effectively aligned public survey input with the plan's core focal points. This alignment translated into specific actions, demonstrating a deliberate and thoughtful strategy that Chair Rowe felt accurately reflected the community's needs and values.

Trustee Koehler added to the report by updating the board on the Churchill Library Association (CLA) meeting. She mentioned that the Books, Bites, and Beverages event would be postponed. She also praised the recent summer reading kickoff event, which she attended with her son. The event was well-executed, with staff and volunteers doing a remarkable job. A highlight for her son was getting to explore a police car, with an officer who offered an engaging and informative tour. Though her daughter couldn't attend, the experience left a strong positive impression.

Chair Rowe thanked Trustee Koehler for her comments and emphasized how popular the summer reading program has been. She acknowledged the considerable effort behind the event and how well it was received by participants.

<u>Library Director's Report</u>:

A- The Library Director or staff will provide an update on staffing, statistics, calendar, and other matters pertaining to Library functions.

The Library Director will provide an update on staffing, statistics, calendar, and other matters pertaining to Library functions.

FISCAL IMPACT: N/A

EXPLANATION OF IMPACT: N/A

FUNDING SOURCE: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: None; Informational Only

Chair Rowe introduced the next agenda item, the Director's Report, noting that it would be delivered by Jay Hodnett, the library's Child Services Librarian, joining remotely.

Ms. Hodnett began by reporting on the recent summer reading kickoff event, previously mentioned by Trustee Koehler. Approximately 130 people attended, making it a very successful program. She shared that the summer reading program had 420 signups so far, exceeding last year's total of 401. About 70 participants had not yet picked up their registration bags but they would be receiving reminder notifications, meaning that over three-quarters were considered active readers.

Ms. Hodnett also updated the board on digital lending through Hoopla. Usage costs were around $1,700 for the month, keeping the library comfortably under its $2,000 monthly cap. Importantly, checkout rates remained steady, suggesting patrons were still actively borrowing despite any behind-the-scenes budget controls. This consistency was seen as a very positive sign.

She also flagged $120 which needs to be spent before the end of the fiscal year. A purchase, previously approved by former Director Cathy Thorsen, is ready to be processed and the associated charge of $120 would appear under Collection Development, then this will conclude the money from the state.

Chair Rowe thanked Ms. Hodnett for the report and confirmed that no board action was required since the expenditure had prior supervisory approval. She noted that Ms. Hodnett may be involved later in the meeting and asked if there were any questions—none were raised.

Ms. Hodnett added one final point regarding the Books, Bites, and Beverages event, which had recently been postponed. She reminded the board that early closure of the library had previously been approved to allow for event setup. With the event now rescheduled, she suggested the board consider whether to retain that early closure for the new event date or use the time for professional development or simply revert to regular hours.

Chair Rowe responded that she was comfortable allowing the early closure to remain tied to the new event date. She welcomed other perspectives but trustees agreed the approach made sense. She also noted that professional development would be a valuable alternative and, if proposed, could be brought forward in a separate motion.

Set date and time of regular/special Library Board meeting.:

The Special Board Meeting will be held on July 11, 2025 at 3:00 PM to appoint a new Interim Library Board Director.

The next regularly scheduled board meeting will be held July 24, 2025 at 3:00 PM.

New Business:

A- Consideration and possible action re: Approval of the monthly Budget Reports for May 2025.

The monthly Budget Reports for May 2025 will be presented for the board's consideration and approval.
FISCAL IMPACT: N/A
EXPLANATION OF IMPACT: N/A
FUNDING SOURCE: N/A
ACTION REQUESTED: Accept

Trustee Mattie Serna made a motion to approve the Budget Reports as presented. Trustee Ryan Swirczek seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

B- Consideration and possible action re: Approval of the Library Gift Fund Report for May 2025.

The Library Gift Fund Report for May 2025 is provided for the board's consideration and approval.
FISCAL IMPACT: N/A
EXPLANATION OF IMPACT: N/A
FUNDING SOURCE: N/A
ACTION REQUESTED: Accept

Trustee Ryan Swirczek made a motion to approve the Library Gift Fund Report as presented. Trustee Sari Koehler seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

C- Consideration and possible action re: Approval of the amended Churchill County Library Patron Registration Application.

The board will be presented with an amended Churchill County Library Patron Registration Application for consideration and approval. The amendment is to add a provision that patrons will be automatically added to the Library's newsletter.
FISCAL IMPACT: N/A
EXPLANATION OF IMPACT: N/A
FUNDING SOURCE: N/A
ACTION REQUESTED: Accept

Ms. Hodnett, Child Services Librarian, presented resent changes and offered insight into the reasons behind the update. Ms. Hodnett explained that the primary addition was a new disclosure informing patrons that the library may contact them via email and, when necessary, through printed mail. This update reflects the library's long-standing intent to build better communication with its patrons. The goal, she said, is to expand the email list to ensure patrons receive welcome messages, relevant updates and information about library services. Ms. Hodnett emphasized that patrons could unsubscribe from these communications at any time. Additionally, the library would use physical mail as a backup communication method, particularly for notices about fines or overdue materials, ensuring important messages reach all patrons regardless of their digital access.

The board found the changes clear, practical, and aligned with improved service goals.

Trustee Mattie Serna made a motion to approve the amended Churchill County Library Patron Registration Application as presented. Trustee Ryan Swirczek seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

D- Consideration and possible action re: Notice of the resignation of the Churchill County Library Director and discussion and possible action regarding the appointment of an Interim Director for the Churchill County Library.

Pursuant to NRS 379.025, the Churchill County Library Board of Trustees appoints/hires, evaluates the performance of and, if necessary, dismisses the Churchill County Library Director. The Board of Trustees may elect to appoint an Interim Director while searching for an applicant to fill the library Director position on a permanent basis.
FISCAL IMPACT: N/A
EXPLANATION OF IMPACT: N/A
FUNDING SOURCE: N/A
ACTION REQUESTED: Accept

Chair Jessica Rowe introduced the agenda item regarding the resignation of Library Director Cathy Thorsen and the need for an appointment of an Interim Director. She explained that, with Ms. Thorsen's resignation, effective immediately as of June 19, the board needed to discuss a plan to move forward and determine whether to seek someone internally or open the role to the community.

Human Resources Manager Kim Brontsema confirmed that the resignation had been formally submitted and that HR had no internal county employees immediately available to step into the interim position. She emphasized that the next step was for the board to decide how they wanted to proceed with filling the vacancy.

Chair Rowe said she was aware that, in similar situations in the past, the county had tried to fill the position internally or through known contacts. She noted that the goal should be to support library staff and ensure operations remained stable during the leadership transition. She asked HR what is needed from the board and invited discussion from the rest of the trustees on how to move forward.

County Manager Joe Sanford explained that the Library Board, rather than the county, had the authority to appoint an interim or permanent Library Director. He said the board could choose multiple approaches, including opening the position to the public, recruiting someone already familiar with the county or library operations, or considering existing library staff. He added that HR was available to assist with any process the board chose.

Trustee Serna offered the suggestion of reaching out to school district librarians, noting that they may have more availability during the summer months. She thought that might be a good pool of experienced professionals to draw from for a temporary appointment.

Chair Rowe agreed that the board could take action quickly if they received interest from qualified individuals. She said the board would likely need to hold a special meeting to interview candidates and make a decision. Trustee Swirczek suggested advertising for the Interim Director position and Chair Rowe followed by asking for the board's preference on whether to formally post the position or do something less formal, like soliciting letters of interest.

Mr. Sanford responded that the board could choose to post the position for a short time—about a week—and hold a special meeting the following week to evaluate applicants. He said it would be helpful to gather letters of interest, potentially with resumes, and include a request for applicants to share their expectations regarding compensation.

Chair Rowe confirmed that a letter of interest would suffice and suggested the process be kept informal and quick. Trustee Swirczek asked if HR would filter the letters before presenting candidates to the board, and Ms. Brontsema confirmed that HR could review the submissions and bring the top two or three forward.

Trustee Koehler voiced concern about pulling someone from the existing library staff, when they are already short-staffed. Chair Rowe acknowledged this but said internal applicants would be allowed to judge for themselves whether they could take on the role.

Trustee Segura said she wanted the Interim Director to be a paid position, not a volunteer one. She believed compensation would ensure accountability and professionalism. Trustee Swirczek agreed, saying he wanted someone who would be dependable and present every day, not just volunteering on a casual basis. Chair Rowe added that, if someone wanted to volunteer, that was their choice but the board would prioritize selecting the most qualified person for the job, regardless of whether they expected compensation.

There was general agreement that the interim position would not require all of the qualifications of a permanent Director, like a Master's in Library Science but should focus on strong supervisory and organizational skills. Chair Rowe suggested the board narrow the job description to the essential duties needed during this transitional period.

The board concluded that the open call for letters of interest would be issued by Friday and would remain open for one week. Interested applicants would submit their letters (with optional resumes) to HR, who would then vet the submissions and present a shortlist of two or three candidates at a special board meeting the following week. The call would include a section asking candidates to state their expected compensation and the board would finalize the interim job expectations before the call was posted.

The discussion wrapped with a clear consensus on process and timeline and the board expressed a commitment to maintaining smooth library operations while identifying strong leadership support for the staff and community.

Trustee Sari Koehler made a motion to post an open call for an Interim Director with a modified application and letter of interest, which includes whether the applicant is requesting compensation and what that would be; to run the open call from June 27th until July 7th; utilizing the current job description, recognizing that an Interim Director would not need to do all aspects of that job description; to make a selection and to establish compensation at the special meeting to be held on July 11th at 3:00 PM. Trustee Ryan Swirczek seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

E- Consideration and possible action re: Discussion, direction, and approval of the next steps for appointing/hiring the Churchill County Library Director.

The current Library Director resigned effective June 19, 2025. Pursuant to NRS 379.025, the Churchill County Library Board of Trustees appoints/hires, evaluates the performance of and, if necessary, dismisses the Churchill County Library Director. The Board of Trustees may discuss and approve the next steps for hiring a Library Director.
FISCAL IMPACT: N/A
EXPLANATION OF IMPACT: N/A
FUNDING SOURCE: N/A
ACTION REQUESTED: Accept

Chair Jessica Rowe introduced the discussion regarding the process for hiring a permanent Library Director. She framed the conversation by noting the need for consideration and action on how to proceed, emphasizing that the county would begin a national search for the position with the same urgency and structure as was used in the previous hiring cycle. She called on Ms. Brontsema to confirm the general approach and timeline.

Ms. Brontsema agreed, outlining a plan that would begin with posting the position the following week and keeping it open for approximately three weeks to allow for a solid pool of applicants. She said HR would handle the initial pre-screening process, identify top candidates and then present those to the trustees for interviews. She anticipated interviews would follow about a week later, depending on candidate availability. Ms. Brontsema also acknowledged that some trustees might not have been involved in the previous cycle and offered a brief summary of how that process unfolded.

Chair Rowe confirmed that most current board members had been involved in the last round of interviews, aside from Trustee Maddie, who had joined afterward. She emphasized that the search would be national in scope, utilizing online platforms and communication resources traditionally used by HR. She asked for confirmation that those platforms would be utilized again. Ms. Brontsema responded that job postings would be placed on national hiring platforms such as Indeed and Career Finder and locally in newspapers, if desired. She also mentioned the option of using professional library associations, such as the International Library Association, although she was unsure how many candidates had come from those sources previously. Chair Rowe responded that while she couldn't recall where past candidates came from, she believed the suggested platforms were appropriate. She raised the question of how long the search should remain open, stating that while she wanted to move quickly, she also didn't want to compromise the quality of the applicant pool by rushing the process. She indicated a willingness to extend the search, if needed, and asked for input from the board.

Trustee Segura agreed with Chair Rowe, preferring a longer window to ensure a stronger applicant pool. She recalled that the last posting had remained open for either four or six weeks. Ms. Brontsema clarified that it had been open for four weeks and felt that duration was likely the best balance, warning against a posting that lingered too long and might lose momentum.

Trustee Swirczek also agreed that four weeks was a good window, adding that it felt like a full, reasonable month. Trustee Koehler echoed Chair Rowe's earlier remarks, saying she also wanted the process to be both timely and effective. She supported the four-week window but was open to extending it, if necessary. Chair Rowe noted that four weeks, or roughly 30 days, was a standard time frame and suggested using language like "open until filled" to provide flexibility without having to take the posting down prematurely.

The board then turned to the job description itself. Chair Rowe proposed using the revised version from the last hiring cycle, noting that it had been updated to reflect the library's current values and was still relevant. She asked whether anyone had concerns or questions about the description. Trustee Segura agreed that the job description was still appropriate and that a four-week posting was sufficient and Trustee Swirczek concurred. Trustee Koehler admitted she had not yet seen the description but trusted the board's judgment and requested a copy for review. Chair Rowe acknowledged Trustee Koehler's situation, being out of town and promised to send the document along. Administrative staff confirmed they would also ensure Trustee Koehler received the description.

Chair Rowe then described the vetting process from the last Director search. At that time, former Interim Director Carol Lloyd and CLA representative Zip Upham reviewed applicants and presented five finalists to the board. She noted that since the board was currently without an Interim Director, they were down one set of eyes for the vetting stage. She suggested that, if Zip Upham from the Churchill Library Association (CLA) was willing to participate again, and if a new Interim Director was in place by that time, the board could replicate that structure. She asked whether anyone had alternative suggestions.

Trustee Swirczek said he supported repeating the same vetting process and recommended allowing HR to follow the same procedures as before. Chair Rowe agreed, noting that, if the board moved quickly to appoint an Interim Director, they would have that third vetting participant alongside HR and CLA. If that didn't happen in time, she said, the board could reassess during the upcoming special meeting. The goal was to maintain the structure used previously, which had proven effective.

She summarized the agreed-upon process: the board would post the job listing early the following week using the current, previously updated job description. The search would remain open for four weeks, with flexibility to extend if needed. HR, along with Mr. Upham and the new Interim Director (if in place), would vet the applicants and present a list of qualified finalists. The board would then conduct final interviews. Chair Rowe emphasized that this structure preserved the board's ability to thoroughly evaluate candidates without prematurely exposing them to open meetings and unnecessary complications.

Ms. Brontsema confirmed she would reach out to Mr. Upham and Diane (another likely participant) to begin forming the review panel closer to the interview phase.

Trustee Ryan Swirczek made a motion to post the position as soon as possible by conducting a national search, as the county has done before, utilizing the traditional online hiring places and local newspapers; to run the posting for a period of 30 days or 4 weeks; to utilize the current job description; to authorize HR Manager Kim Brontsema, Diane Wargo or the Interim Director, and Zip Upham (from the Churchill Library

Association) to conduct the pre-screening of the applicants, to vet the candidates, and to make a recommendation to the board of the top candidates for interviews at a future meeting. Trustee Sue Segura seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

F- Consideration and possible action re: Update on Library schedule and hours, including possible action to ensure the Library maintains the current schedule and hours or possible action to reduce or modify the library hours and schedule.
The current Library Director resigned effective June 19, 2025. As there is a reduced number of staff at the Library, the Board of Trustees may review the current library hours and take action to modify the hours to accommodate the current staffing levels, if desired.
FISCAL IMPACT: N/A
EXPLANATION OF IMPACT: N/A
FUNDING SOURCE: N/A
ACTION REQUESTED: Accept

During the meeting, Chair Rowe began with the potential changes of the library's operating hours, noting that recent staff reductions necessitated a review of open days to balance strong service with staff safety. She explained that she had asked former Library Director Cathy Thorsen to evaluate the current staffing model and offer recommendations that would help ensure two people were always present in the building, a safety and operational standard the board adheres to.

Ms. Hodnett explained that, with the current staffing levels, Monday posed the biggest challenge: only one full-time person was scheduled and the part-time support arrived later in the day. This made the beginning of Monday potentially unsafe and unsustainable. She suggested that the board consider either closing on Mondays, closing on Saturdays, or reducing hours on one of those days to ensure there would always be at least two staff members on-site.

Chair Rowe then clarified for the board that the library is currently open six days a week and their standard policy is to have two people always present for safety and support. She emphasized that this isn't just about customer service but ensuring staff can step away for breaks without compromising library operations. Ms. Hodnett stated that it doesn't necessarily need to be two full-time employees, just two people in general, but Mondays remained problematic under the current configuration.

Chair Rowe asked whether a half-day Monday closure might be a reasonable compromise while they worked to onboard an Interim Director and fill current staff vacancies. Ms. Hodnett responded that, while both Mondays and Saturdays tended to be quieter, she believed Saturdays were more important to keep because they served a demographic, such as working families and school-aged children that couldn't typically visit during weekdays. She also mentioned that strategic plan survey results indicated a public desire for more non-weekday access, reinforcing the value of remaining open on Saturdays.

Trustee Swirczek asked when the part-time employee worked on Mondays and Ms. Hodnett clarified they worked from 1 to 6 p.m. However, she added that since they were down a page (another part-time position), this person's hours might need to be spread out during the week, reducing their Monday availability. Trustee Swirczek asked whether staying open only Monday afternoons might be a viable solution, and Ms. Hodnett agreed it could be.

Trustee Koehler raised concern about whether a reduction in hours would affect the ability of full-time employees to meet their 40-hour weekly schedules and whether part-time staff would still get their full complement of hours. Ms. Hodnett replied that was a question best directed to the county but noted that library staff were generally not allowed to work alone in the building unless there was a special case. She floated the idea that a staff member could potentially use the closed hours for internal work and then open the library once the second person arrived.

Chair Rowe asked about the possibility of offering overtime to full-time staff as a temporary measure to help cover the gaps. Ms. Hodnett thought this might be possible but said it would depend on county policy. Chair Rowe then outlined her understanding that the current week had been manageable only because the staffing transition hadn't fully taken effect, yet. Starting Monday, however, something needed to change to keep the building safely staffed. She expressed a preference for a Monday morning half-day closure rather than an afternoon one, pointing out that the library also serves as a cooling center and tends to get more foot traffic during hotter parts of the day. She suggested they authorize a temporary morning closure for the next three or four weeks, giving the board time to hire an Interim Director.

Trustee Swirczek countered that, from a scheduling standpoint, it would be simpler not to put a hard end date on the temporary hours adjustment. If they didn't hire an Interim Director within that window, they'd have to revisit the issue with limited flexibility. Chair Rowe acknowledged his concern but preferred having a deadline to reinforce the idea that the closure was temporary. They ultimately compromised on revisiting the issue at the next regular board meeting on the 24th, giving library staff four weeks of leeway and time for the board to evaluate progress.

Mr. Sanford entered the discussion to address questions that had been raised. He clarified that the board had the authority to approve overtime for library staff, given that savings from unfilled positions could likely support it. He also emphasized that, while there was no legal requirement for two staff members to be present at the library, it was strongly recommended for both staff and public safety. Chair Rowe asked whether a vetted volunteer, such as a county employee, could be used to meet the two-person requirement. Mr. Sanford confirmed that, legally, this would be acceptable, provided the volunteer passed any necessary background checks. Chair Rowe confirmed that there was a vetted county employee willing to help cover Monday mornings and that staff were also likely to take advantage of overtime if it were available. Ms. Hodnett agreed, saying she believed they could stay open using one or both of those methods and that a formal closure might not be necessary if those options proved sufficient.

Mr. Sanford advised the board to include language in their motion allowing staff the authority to close Monday mornings if neither the overtime nor volunteer options worked out, this would avoid the need for a last-minute special meeting. Chair Rowe thanked him for the advice and crafted a motion that provided the library staff with three flexible tools: offer overtime, use a vetted county volunteer, or close the library on Monday mornings if the first two options fell through. The motion also specified that the authorization would last through the next board meeting on the 24th, at which point the situation would be re-evaluated.

Trustee Koehler formally made the motion, which was then clarified by Chair Rowe to emphasize that staff had the autonomy to use whichever solution best met their needs. With all parties in agreement, the motion was seconded and passed, giving the library the necessary flexibility to manage staffing shortfalls while preserving service and safety.

Trustee Sari Koehler made a motion that staff will have the option of overtime or to have a volunteer from the county or somebody who has been vetted for public safety to come in and help cover the hours on Monday mornings and, if neither of those two options work, to authorize the closing of the Library on Monday mornings. Trustee Ryan Swirczek seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Public Comment:

Chair Rowe asked if there was any public comment.

Mr. Upham, speaking as both a resident of Fallon and the president of the Churchill Library Association (CLA), addressed the Board of Trustees to express appreciation for their work on the library's Strategic Plan. He acknowledged that the resignation of the Library Director, who would have been responsible for executing the plan, was unfortunate, but emphasized that having the plan in place now provides a solid foundation for the incoming Director. He believes it will help guide new leadership by clearly outlining expectations and priorities.

He also shared an update from the CLA regarding their planned fundraiser, "Books, Bites, and Beverages," originally scheduled for August 8. Due to recent changes in library leadership and some internal uncertainty, the event has been postponed indefinitely. Ideally, the CLA would like to reschedule it for the fall, before the holiday season. However, if the hiring process and staffing situation remain unsettled, he said it would be acceptable to skip the event this year. From a communications and community outreach standpoint, Mr. Upham suggested that the best-case scenario would be to use the event as a way to introduce the new Library Director to the community once the hire is finalized. He expressed CLA's continued support and willingness to work with the board in that process.

Chair Rowe thanked Mr. Upham for his comments and agreed that the strategic planning process has been healthy and helpful. She said the plan clearly outlines the goals of the library, the board, and the community, which will serve as a useful communication tool for both internal and external audiences, including candidates applying for the Director position. She also appreciated the thoughtful update on the fundraiser and said the plan to reschedule it sounded very reasonable.

Mr. Upham closed by reiterating his eagerness to assist with the job search moving forward.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 4:56 PM.

Approved: Jessica Rowe
Jessica Rowe, Trustee, Chair

Approved:
Ryan Swirczek, Trustee, Vice-Chair

Approved: Sari Koehler
Sari Koehler, Trustee, Secretary

Approved: Dr. Sue Segura
Dr. Sue Segura, Trustee

Approved:
Mattie Serna, Trustee

ATTEST:
Linda Rothery, Clerk/Treasurer

Pamela D Moore
Pamela D. Moore, Deputy Clerk of the Board