

Fort Dodge Public Library Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes

September 22, 2025

I. Call to order/Roll Call

President Merrily Dixon called to order the regular meeting of the Fort Dodge Public Library Board of Trustees at 3:35 p.m. on September 22, 2025 at the Fort Dodge Public Library.

The following persons were present: Rita Schmidt (Director), Heidi Ingram (Staff), Jim Kramer, Merrily Dixon, Deb Kelleher and Brittney Hindman.

II. Approval of Agenda

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Kelleher and seconded by Hindman. Motion carried.

III. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the August meeting minutes was made by Hindman and seconded by Kramer. Motion carried.

IV. Comments/Questions from the Public

V. Bills and Financial Reports

- a) Kelleher moved payments in the amount of \$1,226.88 to be approved in the Gift and Memorial Accounts. Kramer seconded. Motion carried.
- b) Hindman moved payments in the amount of \$5,502.86 be approved in the City Funds Accounts. Kelleher seconded. Motion carried.

VI. Communications/Board Education

Webster County Trustee Training is October 8th from 6:30-8:00 at the Badger Library. Kramer, Dixon, Kelleher and Hindman stated they would attend and Rita will RSVP.

There is also an online training offered by Des Moines on October 22nd. Rita will forward the information to the board members.

VII. Committee Reports

Friends of the Library book sale is in November. Members can get in free on Monday. Non-members can pay \$5. There are currently 174 members and 26 volunteers. They are making money and have raised prices just a bit. Brown Bag Briefings start October 2nd.

VIII. Director's Report

Programming/Services

- The Fort Dodge Area Quilters first quilt is on display. Have had a lot of patrons stop to admire it. They will be displaying a different quilt each month through December across from the Circulation Desk.
- Tuesday storytime is full with 25 children (plus parents) and a waitlist. Wednesday afternoon storytime still has openings.
- First graders from Duncombe Elementary school will be visiting the Library on October 3rd.
- Anastasia held our first crafternoon with no attendees but has several more scheduled for this fall. Starting a new program, especially for teens can be a challenge but with more time and promotion hopefully attendance will grow.

- Pascale is planning to continue to host adult board game nights.
- Author Betty Brandt Passick will be here Monday, October 6th from 12:00-1:00 p.m. to discuss her historical novel Gangster in our Midst.
- The fall citywide staff meeting is scheduled for Thursday morning, October 2nd. This year, each department head has been asked to give a brief two-minute presentation. Rita plans to briefly highlight the space audit, outline some of our remodeling plans and also share the monetary savings our library provides to our patrons.
- New Adventure Pass Options-Blue Zoo Aquarium and Brenton Skating plaza for the winter.

Budget

- The transition to our new Amazon accounts under the City is nearly complete. The final step is to pay off all outstanding invoices on the current account. Once complete Rita's account will be transferred as well.
- The City's attorney confirmed that the board can transfer the gift and memorial account and the credit card accounts to a different bank without council approval. Rita will reach out to some local banks to explore our options.
- Budget planning for FY27 is underway. Our initial proposal is due to the city manager in December and we are currently scheduled to present the FY27 Budget to the council on Monday, January 26th.
- Direct state aid checks will be sent via direct deposit.

Personnel

- Jessica Coon, one of our full-time Library Assistant IIs, accepted a position as a grant writer with the City's Development Services department and began her new role on September 2nd. To fill her position, we promoted our part-time Library Assistant II Shaina Sheeder to full-time. Shaina started in her new role September 15th.
- We are currently recruiting for a new part-time LALI to replace Shaina. We received more than 50 applicants so far. Rita plans to select three candidates and hold interviews soon.

State Library

Rita has begun work on the FY25 annual report. Some questions have been removed or revised so this year's report will look a bit different from FY24.

IX. Old Business

- a) Space Audit Presentation-Jim asked what the plan/timeline is. The possibility of requesting RFPs from architects was also discussed. Rita will reach out to Maryann Mori, the consultant and also to Louise at the West Des Moines Library.

X. New Business

- a) The photocopier lease is up in November. Rita has obtained two proposals for similar machines. Our current company Access bid \$302.28 for 2,000 black and white copies and 2,600 color copies monthly. The cost of overage would be .006 for black and white and .036 for color. The other company Gordon Flesch bid \$326.29 for 2,000 black and white copies and 2,500 color copies monthly. The overage would be .0085 for black and white and .046 for color. Access would be the best solution and Rita recommended signing a new lease with Access. Kramer made the motion to accept the Access bid and Kelleher seconded. Motion carried.
- b) Our current strategic plan ends in December 2025. Rita has reached out to Maryann Mori to discuss how we can meet the accreditation requirement for a current plan when we reapply in February 2026. She advised we need a new plan in place and suggested three possibilities:

- Update and extend the existing plan by one year. (Rita recommends this option and will meet with Pascale and Anastasia to discuss.)
- Create a short-term (1-2 year) plan to bridge gap until we can develop a more comprehensive plan.
- Develop a new 3-5-year strategic plan before March 1, 2026.

XI. Adjournment

Kramer moved a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Hindman. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.