

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
PIERCE COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM
MEETING MINUTES – MAY 14, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER

Neesha Patel, Vice Chair called to order the regular meeting of the Pierce County Rural Library District Board of Trustees at 3:32 pm. Board members present were Neesha Patel, Pat Jenkins, Ryan Wheaton, and Abby Sloan. Chair Pamela Duncan was excused. The meeting was conducted in person, with the option of virtual attendance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

STAFF PRESENTATION

Staff Experience: Cheree Green, Staff Experience Director, provided an overview of the department's structure, functions, and recent accomplishments. The team oversees the full employment life cycle—from recruitment and onboarding to training, development, and offboarding. Director Green expressed appreciation for the department's professionalism, commitment, and contributions across the organization.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes of April 9, 2025, Regular Meeting
2. Approval of April Payroll, Benefits, and Vouchers
3. 2025 Polaris Support and Licensing Renewal

Trustee Wheaton moved for approval of the consent agenda as presented. Trustee Sloan seconded the motion. Motion carried.

REPORTS

Executive Director Report – Executive Director Gretchen Caserotti expressed appreciation for the team's continued dedication to learning, growth, and public service. Despite ongoing challenges, staff have remained committed, taking on new responsibilities with grace, patience, and compassion. Trustee Patel congratulated the Library on receiving a \$10,000 grant from the American Library Association (ALA) to improve accessibility and services for people with disabilities. Executive Director Caserotti noted that although the grant is intended for one rural location, the Library is exploring ways to scale its impact districtwide to enhance accessibility and support.

Deputy Director Report – Deputy Director Connie Behe shared updates on recent Washington State Library changes and their impact on Pierce County Library. Due to federal funding cuts, several statewide services are being paused or reduced, including uncertainty around in-person services at the Washington Talking Book & Braille Library, a summer pause in proctoring support, and a suspension of certification exam program funding.

The Library is exploring ways to rebuild some services in-house. Director Behe noted that future budget limits may affect resource priorities, and not all libraries may be able to maintain the same access.

Trustee Jenkins inquired about the Library's Ask Us service, including its history and staff training. Director Behe confirmed that employees across various roles and locations are trained to respond to inquiries through Ask Us. This includes broad training in areas such as information services and readers advisory. Director Behe will provide additional information at next month's meeting.

Finance Director Report - March 2025 – Executive Director Caserotti noted this is the first structured quarterly report under the new format, with brief monthly updates and more detailed quarterly reports. 2026 budget planning is underway with the administrative and management teams.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

2025 State Legislative, Federal Executive Orders, and Supreme Court Judicial Case Updates: Executive Director Caserotti noted it is too early to determine the full impact on PCLS. Some training may be affected, though financial implications are still unclear. E-Rate funding may have a direct impact, and services such as the Library for the Blind could face reductions, potentially leaving some populations underserved. Many details remain uncertain.

In response to a question about the IMLS-related lawsuits, Executive Director Caserotti noted the timeline and outcome are unpredictable and the Library does not have direct insight into the status. Trustees were encouraged to follow updates through organizations like EveryLibrary or ALA, which are more involved in advocacy.

Policy Review:

Library Rules of Conduct – Discussion: Customer Experience Director Melissa Munn presented the draft of recommended updates supporting the Library's goal of creating welcoming and trauma-informed spaces. Discussion included age-related language, distinctions between limited and traditional public forums, and considerations related to the trespass and appeals process.

Executive Director Caserotti thanked the Board for their input and noted a revised draft will be presented in June.

Selection of Library Materials –

Trustee Jenkins moved for approval of the Selection of Library Materials policy as presented. Trustee Wheaton seconded the motion. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Technology Systems Outage –

Executive Director Caserotti read aloud the Library's official public statement regarding the issue. She noted the cybersecurity incident is an active investigation, and some details may remain confidential due to legal and security obligations. She highlighted ongoing IT improvements

over the past year—including team reorganization, a new security manager, and an IT roadmap—which positioned the Library to respond effectively. Service restoration reflects the strong leadership and preparation of the IT team.

Director of Information Technology Brian Lee reported that throughout the disruption, the Library maintained core operations and avoided a full shutdown. At its lowest point, system availability dropped to 30% but has since been restored to 67%. The restoration of the Library's catalog is planned for the upcoming weekend, with a full return to 100% of services anticipated within 6–7 weeks of the incident. Director Lee credited the IT team's expertise and commitment, as well as strong vendor coordination and community support, for the swift and effective response. Next steps include completing restoration, reviewing lessons learned, and continuing infrastructure improvements.

Executive Director Caserotti noted the investigation is ongoing, with data mining underway to assess potential exposure. Notifications will follow state guidelines, and the Library will continue to meet all reporting obligations. The Library's minimal data collection reduces risk. Service restoration remains the priority.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/TRUSTEE COMMENTS

Summer Reading is about to begin. Trustees were encouraged to attend, promote, and participate in programs, including a featured author event with fantasy writer Robin Hobb at the Orting branch on June 17, 2025.

The June agenda is being finalized, and July's meeting may be canceled due to limited availability. Trustees were asked to share any absences or agenda items.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:49 pm on motion by Trustee Sloan, seconded by Trustee Wheaton.


Gretchen Caserotti (Jul 7, 2025 17:23 PDT)

Gretchen Caserotti, Secretary


Neesha Patel (Jul 8, 2025 19:31 PDT)

Neesha Patel, Vice Chair