

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
PIERCE COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM
MEETING MINUTES – AUGUST 13, 2025**



CALL TO ORDER

Chair Pamela Duncan called to order the regular meeting of the Pierce County Rural Library District Board of Trustees at 3:32 pm. Board members present were Pamela Duncan, Neesha Patel, Abby Sloan, and Pat Jenkins. Ryan Wheaton arrived at 3:39 pm. The meeting was conducted in person, with the option of virtual attendance.

STAFF PRESENTATION

Foundation: Dean Carrell, Foundation Director, provided an overview of the Pierce County Library Foundation and its vision and mission. Director Carrell highlighted the Foundation's focus on community-centered giving, freedom of expression, diversity and inclusion, and equitable access to library resources and services. Trustees commended the Foundation's ability to securely accept digital currency through a managed platform and thanked Director Carrell and staff for their work in support of the Library's mission.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes of June 11, 2025, Regular Meeting
2. Approval of June and July Payroll, Benefits, and Vouchers

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

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORTS

1. Executive Director Report – Executive Director Gretchen Caserotti reported that staff continue to keep projects moving forward and deliver programs and services across branches. She highlighted a recent tour of the Summit Library with State Representative Keaton from District 25, where staff were distributing giveaway books as part of the summer reading program. She thanked the Foundation for supporting summer reading goals and noted a successful Pacific Science Center program held at the branch in partnership with community organizations.

Trustees complimented the use of floating collections and asked how depleted materials would be handled and whether there were financial benefits. Executive Director Caserotti noted that librarians monitor load balancing and can place orders to maintain the overall collection. While financial benefits are not yet quantifiable, reduced delivery volume and staff time are anticipated. Deputy Director Connie Behe added that selection librarians and the collection management team set optimal levels for each branch and can shift materials

within the system rather than order externally. She noted further review is needed to measure delivery reductions.

Trustees inquired about the Summer Reading on the Road program and site selection. Customer Experience Director Alison Eckes explained outreach team prioritizes ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) populations, highest need communities, and low-income neighborhoods using census data, distance from library locations, and other county indices and data points. Decisions are data-driven and informed by partnership opportunities such as with Nourish Pierce County to expand access where barriers exist. She also noted the Foundation's support is critical, as building home libraries has proven to have a long-term impact.

2. Deputy Director Report – Deputy Director Connie Behe reported circulation numbers show a predictable decline due to the cybersecurity event, during which the Library was offline and unable to check out books. Chair Duncan commended the Public Services Highlight: Beyond Library Walls as being mindful of all the ways the Library serves the community.
3. Finance Director Report – May and June 2025: Finance Director Mary Stimson reviewed key payments during this period, including the refresh for the Customer Experience Department at the Administrative Center, consulting services from Nash Consulting for training and development, and the public opinion poll. Capital expenditures included replacing fire panels at Gig Harbor, South Hill, and the Administrative Center. Financial trends remain on track at approximately 50% of budget, with materials spending expected to rise later in the year due to publishing cycles. Work is underway on the 2026 budget. A draft budget will be presented in October. Director Stimson also noted development of a new, more detailed budget book to enhance fiscal transparency by drawing data directly from financial systems and supporting best budgeting practices.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Sumner Library Project Update: Executive Director Caserotti reported another meeting with the architects is scheduled and noted the City may bill for repairs while the Library remains in the current building. She acknowledged challenges from a mid-process redesign and expressed confidence in real-time cost estimates aligned with the construction market. A building condition assessment identified known issues, with major replacements deferred. Value engineering has been applied, and contingency funds are available to address potential costs overruns.
2. Strategic Implementation Plan Quarterly Update – Deputy Director Connie Behe reported that teams are on track and have reached the research and development phase. She noted that a community of practice has been built where sponsors share learning and coordinate

efforts. The full PowerPoint update is included in the Board packet and will be sent to Trustees following the meeting.

3. Policy Review

a. Fiscal Management Policy: Director Stimson reviewed the additional edits and noted that she will bring a resolution before the Board next month to update auditing officers and account signatories. This change will provide flexibility and remove the need for annual approval when updates are required.

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

NEW BUSINESS

1. Trustee Patel Reappointment: Executive Director Caserotti reported Pierce County Council confirmed Trustee Patel's reappointment to a five-year term. Trustees offered congratulations, and Trustee Patel expressed appreciation and enthusiasm for continued service.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Trustees were asked to watch for a poll in the coming weeks to schedule fall study sessions.

A new partnership with the Department of Social and Health Services mobile unit begins in September, bringing medical, cash, and food assistance programs to branches. This expands the Library's strategic partnerships and community resources.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 4:25 pm Trustee Wheaton moved to recess to Executive Session, per RCW 42.30.110, to discuss a periodic personnel evaluation for approximately 15 minutes. Trustee Jenkins seconded the motion. Motion carried. The session ended at 4:40 pm.

CLOSED SESSION

At 4:40 pm, Trustees recessed to Closed Session to discuss collective bargaining matters. The session ended at 5:15 pm.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:16 pm on motion by Trustee Wheaton, seconded by Trustee Jenkins.

Gretchen Caserotti

Gretchen Caserotti (Sep 17, 2025 16:14:27 PDT)

Gretchen Caserotti, Secretary

Pamela E. Duncan

Pamela E. Duncan (Sep 23, 2025 17:10:04 PDT)

Pamela Duncan, Chair