



Auburn Public Library
Board of Trustees In-Person Meeting
Tuesday, August 26, 2025 4:30 p.m.

Present: Michael Malloy, Ralph Harder, Nicole Rancourt, Lisa Cesare, John Cleveland, Pat Gautier, Sharon Bergeron, Rick Whiting, Jen Lynch, and Courtney Reed-Marsh

Staff: Donna Wallace, Bethany Lyons

Guests: Jeff Harmon, Auburn Mayor

1. Call to Order/Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 PM. Introductions were made.

2. Discussion with Auburn Mayor Jeff Harmon

Mayor Harmon met with the full Board to discuss the letter he sent from the City Council requesting information from the Library regarding how to measure the value of library services to non-residents. Mayor Harmon pointed out the City Council's main points were: (1) the original relationship agreement between the City of Auburn and the Auburn Public Library was to financially support the library to ensure library services remain free to Auburn residents, and (2) the library building is owned by the City and they assume the costs of our Capital Improvements.

He reported that the City is presently under significant financial pressure and the Council looked at all City services that were fee-based. The City Council believes that services that are provided to non-city residents should have those residents "paying their fair share". They estimated 5% of city tax revenues could be eliminated if non-resident fees across the city covered the cost of that usage. He stated that fees being charged APL non-resident users may not be covering the costs of services at APL. The City "gave APL a pass this budget season as there was not enough time to analyze the data". The City is applying the same policy principle to all departments, and is specifically asking the APL Board to provide a data-based report on whether our non-resident fees cover the cost of services being provided and report back to the city by 12/31. He stated that if the report "seems reasonable, then the city will accept the results".

There was additional discussion about how APL views services more broadly as anyone can walk in and use a public library. Non-resident users are charged a yearly fee to have borrowing privileges at APL. We have had a contract with the Town of Minot for several years that provides a reliable revenue stream for providing their residents with free borrowing privileges. Fees for room rentals and rent for the restaurant space are other revenues the library relies on in our budget. As a non-profit, the library also has “in-kind” assistance from volunteers that enhances our service to users without increasing our expenses. There was also discussion about interlibrary loan services, reciprocal borrowing with Lewiston, and the wider relationship with the Maine State Library. The Board has been asking for a formal Memorandum of Understanding between APL and the City of Auburn. Mayor Harmon agreed to continue those efforts to reach a formal M.O.U. soon.

The Board has agreed to analyze our non-resident fees and ensure they cover the costs of borrowing the items. To do that, the Board should analyze the cost of book borrowing for an Auburn cardholder and then charge the non-residents the same.

3. What Are You Reading?

A full list was posted to the web.

4. Approval of June 24, 2025 Minutes

The meeting minutes from the June 24, 2025, meeting were approved with two minor corrections on a motion by Lisa Cesare and seconded by Sharon Bergeron. All were in favor, with Courtney Reed-Marsh abstaining.

5. Election of Officers for Upcoming Year

Michael Malloy reported that, as of the conclusion of the September 2025 meeting, he will resign as Board President and Trustee but will be willing to be the Library’s registered agent and Library’s pro bono attorney going forward. He also told the Board that he will stay on as head of the Strategic Planning Committee until that is completed. Rick Whiting expressed interest in becoming Board President in January 2026, after he is no longer a member of the Auburn City Council (end of 2025).

Lisa Cesare will continue as Board Vice President. There was a motion by Ralph Harder and seconded by Nicole Rancourt to appoint Lisa Cesare Vice President for another term. All were in favor. Lisa Cesare will serve as interim President until a new President is approved.

Sharon Bergeron will continue serving as Board Treasurer. John Cleveland made a motion to nominate Sharon Bergeron as Treasurer for another term with a second by Lisa Cesare. All were in favor.

Pat Gautier will continue to serve as Secretary. There was a motion by Sharon Bergeron and seconded by Lisa Cesare to appoint Pat Gautier to another term as Secretary. All were in favor.

6. Strategic Planning Committee

Beckie Conrad continues to work on surveys and focus groups. The committee has received good feedback about Beckie Conrad and her process. There will be a longer Strategic Planning workshop on September 29 for committee members or any other interested Board member. Please contact Donna Wallace if you are not on the committee but would like to attend this meeting.

7. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee met in August to discuss the current financials. Sharon Bergeron gave an overview of the financials and reported that the FY25 year ended with a \$15,244 surplus. There was a motion by Nicole Rancourt and seconded by Pat Gautier to send the \$15,244 from Auburn Savings account to MCF to deposit in the Unrestricted Investment General Fund. All were in favor.

There was a motion by Nicole Rancourt and seconded by Ralph Harder to approve July's Financial Report as presented. All were in favor.

Sharon Bergeron pointed out two concerns in the budget: (1) health insurance has been budgeted for a lesser amount than the prior year, and the Board will need to move more money in that category, and (2) the Commodities line will need to be reviewed.

8. “Fun” Raising Committee

Nicole Rancourt gave a fun-raising update. The Community Block Party is scheduled for Saturday, September 13 and they need help from Board members/family members. The committee is looking for six volunteers in each time block (10:30 AM to 12:30 PM and 12:30 PM to 2:30 PM). Duties include helping monitor lawn games, selling raffle tickets, and having the opportunity to engage with the library community. Please sign up with Nicole Rancourt.

9. Director’s Report

A full written report was provided. Donna also gave the following updates:

- A limited part-time position in Lending was posted this week.
- The staff (and interested Board Members) will be meeting on September 10 from 8 AM to 9 AM in the Androscoggin Community Room to discuss the book, *Rough Sleepers*. Please bring a few questions for discussion.
- The new APL electronic exterior sign should be installed this week.
- There is a new printer in the Reference area.
- There was an elevator malfunction this week when a door cable broke and it has since been fixed.
- The annual carpet cleaning was done last week.
- Finance Committee meetings start at 11:00 AM, not 10:30 as indicated in error on the agenda.

10. Lewiston Public Library Report

No one from LPL attended the meeting.

11. Other Business

The Board discussed the two letters that were received from concerned customers regarding the reduction of Saturday hours. At this point, Donna Wallace is conducting research on how other larger libraries handle weekend hours and at this time, APL is open more hours than most bigger libraries. At this time, the hours on Saturday will remain 9 AM to 1 PM.

The Board talked about using part of the September Board meeting to discuss how to analyze the data for the formal response to the City.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 PM on a motion by Nicole Rancourt and seconded by Michael Malloy. All were in favor.