

Lewistown Public Library



**Regular Meeting Minutes
Lewistown Public Library
Board of Trustees**

**Wednesday, October 15, 2025
1:00 PM
Lewistown Public Library**

Mission Statement

The Lewistown Public Library provides free and equal access to quality materials and services, which fulfill the educational, informational, cultural, and recreational needs of the entire community.

1:03 PM – Call to order – Roll call – Regular meeting of the Library Board of Trustees called to order by Mary Callahan Baumstark (Zoom, 1:03-1:52). Trustees Present: Dani Buehler (at 1:12 p.m.), Andrea Payne, Jean Collins, Mary Jo Hamling, and Mariah Shammel. Library Staff present: Alissa Wolenetz.

Appoint Recorder of Minutes: Alissa.

Reading of the Mission Statement: Andrea.

Revisions to the Agenda: Moved approval of September 17, 2025 Executive Session Minutes to next meeting. Noted that Mariah will take over as Chair at 2 p.m. when Mary leaves.

Comments for the Good of the Library: Mariah was sad to miss the last meeting, but is glad to be here now!

Public Comment on All Agenda and Non-Agenda Items: None.

Disposition of September 17, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes

- Andrea moved to approve the minutes, Jean 2nd. No discussion. All in favor.

Financial Reports

- Mariah appreciated additional notes about financials. Alissa reported that the City will bill the County for half of their FY 26 contribution by end-of-month to ensure continuous cash flow.
- Alissa will also follow up on several claims submitted as part of FY 25 year-of-end closeout process that appeared on this month's reports.
- Mariah moved to accept September 2025 Claims, Jean 2nd. No discussion. All in favor.

Dani joined the meeting at 1:12 p.m.

Discussion of Director's Report

- Alissa noted that changes in circulation totals for this year have been driven by changes in timing of Summer Reading Program events, the loss of Nancy Sackett, and our statistics program no longer representing institutional checkouts (e.g., to mending or processing accounts) in general patron circulation totals.
- Mariah explained that an increase in fines collected this year has been driven by contributions made through the Shammel fund for dog-eaten books.
- We are requesting inter-library loan items for our patrons, but will not send out items to other libraries until we are fully staffed and trained.
- The MSL is starting to formally discard items deaccessioned during our recent collection update, so the number of discards will sharply rise. Previously, these items were checked out under a system account to preserve collection information in order to allow for MSL data analysis to help inform decisions about restocking.
- Department Heads have recently begun discussing a City-wide website update that would be more cost-efficient. In the meantime, Parks & Rec and the Library will look into temporary sites.
- The Board asked for options for thank you card designs that incorporate our existing logo or existing community art (but want to ensure fairness in selection).

Communications

Friends of the Library

- The September one-day sale was a huge success. Scheduling for Santa's Seconds Sale is in progress. The FOL is receiving a ton of book donations! They are also working with local educational institutions to create opportunities for children to receive books. The heat at the Book Station is working well after recent repairs. Lewistown Online recently installed Wi-Fi at the Book Station!
- The next FOL meeting is (probably) the 29th of October.
- Alissa thanked the FOL for their huge impact for the Library and community.

City Commission - Dani Buehler

- At the Commission's last meeting on October 6th, they discussed changes to ordinances, including parking, snow removal, and cat licensing.
- Dani is now the proud owner of a spectacular list of areas for snow removal. Public input for this process has been limited.
- Public comment during the meeting focused on waste management, the new lack of local composting options, and the possibility of creating a local waste facility to provide additional services, as well as some comment on whether to allow transient housing (i.e., mobile homes) within City limits.
- The City held their first reading of proposed parking and snow removal ordinances.

Mary hopped off at 1:52. Mariah took over as Chair.

Continuing Business

- *Updates on hiring for open Librarian II/III position (Discussion)*
 - Hiring panel will include Director, HR, and Legal. No other updates at this time.

- *Updates on CDBG progress (Discussion)*
 - SMDC is administering this grant. We hope to evaluate updated responses in November. We are looking into ways to inform the community of this project's possibilities and expand the Library's presence during this time.
 - The Board noted that we're lucky to have SMDC on (ahem) board!
 - Alissa is looking forward to working with the Board on to develop strategies for engagement and outreach.
- *Updates on training this fall (Discussion)*
 - The MSL will provide regional training for South Central Federation trustees on October 21st and 22nd.
 - Alissa will look into options for training provided through the MLA and provide more information at the next meeting.
- *Review and approve annual budgetary calendar*
 - The Board reviewed the MSL's annual budgeting calendar for library boards. Alissa noted that because this schedule is not aligned with the City's usual timelines for budget preparation, things may need to fluctuate. She would love for budgeting to be completed (as much as possible) by the end of May to avoid overlap with SRP.
 - Andrea moved to accept the budget calendar, Dani 2nd. The Board discussed creating an annual Board program of work to overlay with the budget calendar; Alissa will draft by end of year. No further discussion. All in favor.

New Business

- *Approve creation of a substitute librarian program to provide coverage when the Library is short-staffed, contingent on Union approval*
 - The Board discussed creating a substitute librarian plan to prevent interruptions in services, and especially to provide coverage when librarians are ill. They recommended looking into the substitute program through Lewistown Public Schools as a point of comparison. Alissa has also asked other libraries with substitute programs for policy examples, and will continue to collaborate with the City and Union to determine how substitute librarians will be positioned within the existing Collective Bargaining Agreement and pay grades.
 - Dani moved to approve the research and development going into the creation of a substitute librarian program, pending further research presentation. Andrea 2nd. No additional discussion. All in favor.

Trustee Minute: Mary Jo noted that the Friends, with the help of Alissa and Sue, have asked CMF to sponsor local costs for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library for 2026. The Friends are looking forward to hosting a celebration when the Fergus County program reaches 10,000 books gifted, which will be happening fairly soon! She also mentioned that voter registration is open and that ballots for City elections will be sent out shortly, and shared information about upcoming events on Indigenous cooking at American Prairie and the schools. Mary Jo just read *We Were the Lucky Ones* by Georgia Hunter. Jean is reading a book by Nadia Bolz-Weber, and is excited to attend an event with her soon. Andrea recently finished *The Warsaw Orphan*; it was excellent! Mariah noted that the

PTO school carnival is coming soon; she is managing games and activities, and may request volunteers to help manage trinkets, candy, and screaming children.

*2:35 p.m. Jean moved to adjourn, Dani 2nd. All in favor. Meeting adjourned.
Respectfully submitted by Alissa Wolenetz.*