BRIDGEPORT LIBRARY

Board of Directors Regular Meeting
Wednesday, July 16, 2025

ATTENDANCE-Board of Directors

- James O'Donnell, President- Absent
- Kenya Osborne-Gant, Vice President- Via Zoom
- Thomas R. Errichetti, Treasurer- In person
- Denise Clemons- Secretary- In person
- Marcie J. Patton- In person
- Barbara A. Rogo- In person
- Jeanette Muños Allam- In person
- Kathleen E. Turner- In person
- Blanca Bermeo- Via Zoom

ALSO ATTENDING:

- Elaine Braithwaite, City Librarian- In person
- Laura Matthews, Assistant City Librarian- In person
- Sara Santos- Administrative Assistant- In person
- Joyiesha Smoak, Library Assistant I- Via Zoom

CALL TO ORDER: Director Kenya Osborne-Gant called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

MOTION: A motion was made to adopt the agenda.

Motioned made by: Director Errichetti
Seconded by: Director Patton
Result: Passed unanimously

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was noted that the spelling of Katherine Cornell's name in the previous minutes was incorrect. The correct spelling is Cathryn Cornell. The minutes will be amended accordingly.

MOTION: A motion was made to approve the minutes of the June 11th meeting with the correction of the spelling of Cathryn Cornell's name, which had been incorrectly listed as Katherine Cornell.

Motioned made by: Director Errichetti
Seconded by: Director Rogo
Abstained: Director Clemons and Director Patton
Result: Passed

APPROVAL OF TREASURER REPORTS/PAYMENT OF INVOICES/APPROVAL OF LINE ITEM TRANSFERS

MOTION: A motion was made to approve the vouchers as follows: $1,743,896.25 from City Funds for Fiscal Year 2026, $32,869.58 from City Funds for Fiscal Year 2025 invoices, and $35,433.00 from Other Funds, for a total amount of $1,812,198.83.

Motioned made by: Director Errichetti
Seconded by: Director Clemons
Result: Passed unanimously

There is a favorable variance in the amount of $28,417.70. However, retiree payouts totaling $117,643.12 will need to be covered. The source of funding for these payouts will be determined once Fiscal Year 2025 is officially closed. If no other funding source is identified, the amount will be drawn from the cumulative surplus.

No line-item transfers.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- ❖ *Status/Action re City Council approval of Director Appointments* - Appointment forms will be available in the Library Office or can be accessed online, on the City of Bridgeport's website. {www.bridgeportct.gov → Government →Boards & Commissions→Download an Application}

- ❖ *Status/Report re roll out of Library App* – A meeting has been scheduled to address the rollout of the Library App on Tuesday, July 22. The rollout committee will include: Elaine, Laura, Brian and one or two members from the Technology Committee. Further updates will follow after the meeting.

MOTION: A motion was made to set the rollout date for the Library Logo as September 1, 2025.

Motioned made by: Director Clemons
Seconded by: Director Patton
Result: Passed unanimously

- ❖ *Status/Report re marketing committee and content engagement* – There was some confusion regarding this agenda item. As a result, the item was tabled for future clarification and discussion.

- ❖ *Status/Report re Cathyrn Cornell bequest* – The North Branch Library's portion of Cathryn Cornell's IRA ($70,000) has been successfully transferred into an Inherited IRA. The funds will eventually be moved into the Morgan Stanley account. The process is taking longer than expected due to the nature of the account, it being a corporate account.

- ❖ *Status/Report re use of Project*: Play2Learn games as literacy/marketing tool – No report at this time.

- ❖ *Status/Report on staff input for Burroughs/Saden centennial celebration* – For clarification, the cornerstone of the Burroughs/Saden Library was laid in 1925, with the official opening in 1927. During the discussion, the City Librarian recommended that library board members join the centennial planning committee. The Library Board, in turn, recommended opening the committee to public participation to encourage broader community involvement.

CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS

One item of correspondence was received, it is the Association of Connecticut Library Boards (ACLB) Newsletter Spring/Summer 2025 edition.

CITY LIBRARIAN REPORT

The Library Administration met with Dr. Avery and several members of the Board of Education. As a result of the meeting, it has been agreed that beginning this fall, all new students registering at the new registration center at Housatonic Community College will also be signed up for library cards.

The following policies must be reviewed and updated to ensure compliance with Connecticut Senate Bill 1271 (SB1271), which introduces new statutory requirements for public and school libraries:

- Collection Development and Maintenance Policy
- Library Display and Program Policy
- Material Review and Reconsideration Policy

The updated policies must be submitted to the State Library for approval by November 1, 2025.

- ***Review of monthly statistics and presentation by staff*** – There were no staff presentations this month. Monthly statistics are available in the department head reports. The Library Board requested that the City Librarian reach out to Chief Porter regarding several recent incidents at the Beardsley Branch. The Board recommended requesting a police presence at the location during officers' breaks—ideally by having patrol cars park in the library lot—with the hope that their visible presence will help deter further incidents.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Buildings

- ***Status/Action re East Side Branch Phase II project***- The team is still evaluating the scope of work required for Phase II of the East Side Branch project. There are no further updates at this time.

- ***Status/Action re Black Rock façade repair and improvements*** – Two individuals have expressed interest in donating their services and materials toward the Black Rock Branch façade repairs. The total value of the donation is currently unknown. The Building Maintenance Manager Otero is in the process of obtaining quotes for the necessary repairs to better assess the scope and cost of the project.

- ***Status/Action re Burroughs/Saden 1st floor changes and acoustics*** – Nothing to report. However, there was a discussion regarding the bathroom doors in the Children's Department, the doors are too heavy. This issue should be reported to the Maintenance Manager and added to the Facilities Issues To-Do List for follow-up and resolution.

- ***Action/Status re report of David Otero re other facilities issues*** – The Building Maintenance Manager's report highlighted several Capital Fund expenses for the next 3 to 10 years. Additionally, he identified three immediate repair needs scheduled for early FY26 they are:

  1. Burroughs/Saden Library – Chiller Repair: $19,947
  2. Vacuum Pump Replacement: $6,363
  3. North Branch Library – Sprinkler System Repair: $3,260

- Finance

  - ***Review of MUNIS tracking of 2024-25 Budget*** - We will need to wait for the hard close on the budget to determine whether there is a surplus or deficit.

There was a brief discussion regarding the potential use of Saden Funds for purchasing books, followed by a consideration of reallocating funds from the publications budget line to support building maintenance projects. It was also noted that there are endowment funds available that could be used for book purchases.

❖ Governance

➢ *Staff report on strategic plan survey and implementation* – The Strategic Plan Survey is scheduled to be open for three weeks, from August 11 to September 1. It was noted that SurveyMonkey does not seem to offer automatic translation into other languages; further investigation is needed to determine the best approach for offering the survey in multiple languages to ensure accessibility.

Community members will be able to complete the survey:

- Online
- At a dedicated computer station or printed form at each library branch
- Through distribution by community partners

To promote the survey, the library will conduct outreach through:

- Library website
- Press releases
- Social media outlets
- Bookmarks and flyers featuring a QR code

City Librarian Braithwaite and Assistant City Librarian, Matthews are planning to conduct targeted community conversations with community partners, using a set of leading questions to gather meaningful input and insights that will inform the strategic planning process.

➢ *Staff report on policy review and revision proposals* – Elaine discussed a few in her City Librarians report. It was suggested that perhaps there be a yearly review of all policies. The Board recommended to review all policies yearly, this suggestion will be forwarded to the Governance Committee. Normally, the library policies are reviewed every three years.

❖ Marketing Committee

- *Status/Action re True North logo roll out and marketing strategies*- The discussion began with a review of the library logo options, focusing on selecting which design will be considered the primary logo moving forward.

MOTION: A motion was made to approve the logo with the file name: " BPL_Logo_Horiz_CMYK_2_Color" as the main logo for the Bridgeport Public Library. A copy of the logo is attached to these minutes.

Motion made by: Director Clemons
Seconded by: Director Patton & Director Errichetti
Result: Passed unanimously

- *Status/Action re Dinormous Social Media an PR proposal* – The Board expressed uncertainty regarding Dinormous' definition and measurement of marketing success. It was noted that statistical analysis alone has not yielded a clear or actionable understanding of impact. The Board emphasized the need for specific, quantifiable metrics to evaluate progress toward defined goals.

MOTION: A motion was made to table the current discussion and refer the matter to the Marketing Committee for further development. The Marketing Committee is tasked with creating a dashboard that outlines specific metrics and goals for Dinormous to execute.

Director Osborne-Gant subsequently WITHDREW THE MOTION.

Director Errichetti recommended a more outcome-oriented strategy. He proposed that Dinormous align its marketing initiatives with the following measurable objectives: 1. Increase in library card registrations, 2. Growth in attendance at library events, 3. Expanded use of library facilities.

MOTION: A motion was made to table the current discussion and authorize payment for services rendered through August. The Board referred the matter back to the Marketing Committee, which will be responsible for creating a dashboard that outlines the metrics and deliverables they want executed by Dinormous.

Motion made by: Director Osborne-Gant
Seconded by: Director Clemons
Abstained: Director Patton and Director Rogo
Result: Passed

The discussion ended with the following action plan:

July 18: Director Muños Allam will complete the draft of the marketing plan and send a copy to all board members for feedback.

July 25: Deadline for feedback on the final draft.

July 29: Final edit of the draft to be completed.

July 30 at 6:00 PM: A special board meeting will be held on to review the final revision of deliverables to be submitted to the Dinormous Marketing Firm. The purpose of this meeting is to approve the finalized materials in order to proceed with the next phase of the partnership.

In addition, the board has requested a brief historical overview of Dinormous's activities and progress from April through July to provide historical context to ensure alignment with the library's strategic goals.

- *Coordination of Library staff marketing with Marketing Committee* - Each BPL location has a designated point person to coordinate with Dinormous. This individual must have approval from their Department Head and will serve as the main contact to ensure a streamlined workflow. All staff have received an email outlining the detailed procedures for marketing library programs and events.

- Personnel

- *Status/Action re table of organization/job description*- There was no Personnel Committee meeting this month.

- *Status/Action re City MOU proposal for Health Dept. social worker* – The Memorandum of Understanding between the Bridgeport Public Library and the Department of Social Services, City of Bridgeport Health and Social Services has been emailed to all board members for review. The purpose of the MOU is to outline the expectations and responsibilities of both parties. In short, the Bridgeport Public Library agrees to provide office space at designated library locations for individual meetings, in compliance with HIPAA regulations and to reimburse the Social Worker for travel expenses incurred between library locations during business hours. Directors Clemons and O'Donnell will conduct a final review and discuss the MOU at the next Committee meeting.

- <u>REPORT OF FRIENDS</u>

  The reorganization of the Friends of BPL is progressing well. TJ is emerging as a strong candidate for the next President of the Friends. He recently attended the meeting of the Friends of Connecticut Libraries, where the organization expressed interest in potentially providing funding support to the Friends of BPL. The proposed funding would be used to provide transportation services for a new outreach initiative. The Friends of BPL aim to bring every third-grade class in the City of Bridgeport to visit their nearest BPL branch. This initiative was recently discussed with the Board of Education. The Friends and the Library's Administrative Office will coordinate efforts to implement the plan.

The Friends of the Bridgeport Public Library's bookstore formerly known as the bookmobile garage, now has its own address, it is 255 State Street.

NEW BUSINESS

- Discussion re implementation of public survey discussion groups. There was some confusion as to what the implementation of public survey discussion groups meant. As a result, the item was tabled for the time being pending further clarification.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: The motion was made to adjourn the meeting.

Motioned made by: Director Clemons
Seconded by: Director Rogo and Director Patton.
Result: Passed unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Sara Santos, Administrative Assistant