

MILWAUKEE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, November 25, 2025

Central Library
Rotary Club of Milwaukee Community Room
814 W. Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53233

- PRESENT:** Michele Bria, Teresa Mercado, Ald. Milele Coggs, Matthew Kowalski, Michael Morgan, Ald. Scott Spiker, Ald. Larresa Taylor, Sup. Kathleen Vincent, Jennifer Meyer-Stearns
- EXCUSED:** Darryl Jackson, Joan Johnson, Felicia Saffold, Venice Williams
- STAFF:** Kelly Bolter, Maria Burke, Kieran Fendt, Beth Gabriel, Jenna Harte-Wisniewski, Melissa Howard, Claire Kinder, Yves LaPierre, Casey Lapworth, Tammy Mays Wilder, Amelia Osterud, Karli Pederson, Alyssa Rockey, Chris Schabel, Rebecca Schweisberger, Heather Smith, Emily Vieyra, Kelly Wochinske, Jessica Wolf
- OTHER:** Budget & Management Division: Nic Kovac
Milwaukee Public Library Foundation: Ryan Daniels
Moss Adams/Baker Tilly: Jessie Lenhardt, Tammy Lohr-Schweitzer

Acting Chair Bria called the meeting of the Milwaukee Public Library Board of Trustees to order at 4:06 p.m. on November 25, 2025. Trustees Coggs and Vincent participated by phone/virtual conference. The agenda items were taken out of order; however, these minutes are presented in numerical sequence.

SPECIAL COMMUNICATION

1. **Trustee Remembrance**. Vice-President Bria presented a resolution and held a moment of silence for MPL Board President Mark Sain. The resolution is attached at the end of these minutes. Informational item.

BOARD EDUCATION

2. **Vocera Demonstration**. Karli Pederson, Associate Director – Library Information Technology and Technical Services, gave a demonstration of the Vocera tool. Vocera is a wearable, voice-activated communication system that was implemented systemwide at MPL in 2025. The devices are primarily used by service point staff, the Person-In-Charge, Security, and Facilities staff. The system is designed to improve staff connection, enhance the patron experience, and support a safe environment for all. Deployment included in-person and virtual training, creation of an internal procedure, and a series of drop-in Q&A training sessions. MPL will explore additional features, such as connection to language translation support during interactions, expansion of badge access, and expansion of wireless access points to support the tool. Informational item.

CONSENT AGENDA

3. **Regular Board Meeting Minutes October 28, 2025**
4. **Committee Reports**
 - a. Finance & Personnel Committee – October 28, 2025

ATTACHMENT A - P. 1 of 55
MPL CONSENT AGENDA

2. Regular Board Meeting Minutes - 11/25/2025
P. 4

b. Building & Development Committee Meeting Minutes – November 6, 2025

5. **Administrative Reports**

- a. Financial Report
- b. Library Director's Reports
- c. Statistics

6. **Updated MPL Board Committee Assignments.**

7. **Revised 2026 MPL Board Meeting Schedule.**

Chair Bria asked the Board if any items should be removed from the Consent Agenda presented as attachment A, pages 4-49 of the agenda. Hearing no objection, the Consent Agenda was approved.

REPORTS

8. **MPL Foundation Report.** MPL Foundation (MPLF) Executive Director Ryan Daniels presented an update on fundraising and MPLF activities. In January-October 2025, MPLF raised \$485,684 in restricted funds and \$854,060 in unrestricted funds. Funds raised include pledges promised, but do not include payments made on pledges during 2025. The total also excludes investment income of over \$205,000, a Greater Milwaukee Foundation distribution of over \$33,000, and in-kind contributions of approximately \$20,000. To date, MPLF has gifted \$293,000 to MPL to fund AmeriCorps programming, the Steve Przybylowski Scholarship, and various speaker and author events. MPLF expenses, excluding grants, are \$941,346. The Ben Franklin Awards Celebration was held on September 25, 2025 and honored JoAnne Anton and Judge Derek Mosley. The event raised over \$475,000. MPLF eliminated one position that primarily supported the Friends of MPL and special events. MPLF has been invited to apply for a grant through Impact100. In addition to the traditional year-end campaign, MPLF has launched a digital campaign using the OneCause fundraising platform. MPLF is accepting gifts for the donor wall at Martin Luther King branch through 2025. Informational item.
9. **Services & Programs Committee Meeting.** Deputy Library Director Jennifer Meyer-Stearns, acting Secretary, presented the action items from the November 5, 2025 meeting.
- **Revised Banning Guidelines.** Updated banning guidelines were presented to the Committee. Revisions were made in response to an increase in the severity of security incidents and include: updating violation descriptions, additional classifications for reporting, and increased banning lengths. Trustee Bria moved to approve the banning guidelines as presented. Trustee Kowalski seconded. Motion passed.
 - **Foundation Funding Priorities.** The Committee reviewed the library's 2026 priorities for MPL Foundation (MPLF) fundraising. Trustee Spiker moved to authorize Library Director Joan Johnson to present the fundraising priorities, as presented, to the MPLF Board. Trustee Morgan seconded. Motion passed.

OLD & NEW BUSINESS

10. **Staffing Study Report.** Deputy Library Director Jennifer Meyer-Stearns gave a brief overview of the staffing study and introduced Jessie Lenhardt, Senior Manager at Moss Adams, and Tammy Lohr-Schweitzer, Management Consultant at Baker Tilly, to present the assessment findings and

recommendations. The report is attached at the end of these minutes. To prepare for implementation of new staffing models and scheduling software, MPL engaged Baker Tilly to assess current staffing and scheduling practices. The assessment was conducted from December 2024 to May 2025 and was conducted in four phases: planning, fact finding, analysis, and the final report. Key recommendations and additional considerations were presented and discussed. MPL Administration will continue to update the Board on the implementation timeline and outcomes. Informational item.

11. **2026 Final Budget Update.** Nik Kovac, Budget & Management Director, shared an overview of the 2026 budget process, adopted budget, and how staffing model changes could impact future budgets. Informational item.

NEW BUSINESS

12. **2026 Proposed Library Hours.** The Board reviewed the 2026 proposed library hours of operation, listed as Attachment D of the agenda. The proposal includes year-round Sunday hours at Central Library, Tippecanoe, and Good Hope branches and the addition of Sunday hours at Martin Luther King and Mitchell Street branches beginning in July. Trustee Morgan moved to approve the hours as presented and Trustee Mercado seconded. Motion passed.

SPECIAL COMMUNICATION

13. **Holiday Book Exchange.** The Trustees participated in the annual holiday donation. Informational item.

With no further business, the Milwaukee Public Library Board of Trustees meeting of November 25, 2025 was adjourned at 6:14 p.m.

WHEREAS,

The Milwaukee Public Library Board celebrates the life and legacy of dear colleague and friend, MPL Board President

Mark Sain

And, WHEREAS, Trustee Sain served faithfully on the MPL Board for fourteen years; and

WHEREAS, Trustee Sain first joined the Library Board in June 2011, during his tenure as MPS Board President, was then appointed as a citizen member by Mayor Barrett in May 2018, and reappointed by Mayor Johnson in 2024; and,

WHEREAS, Trustee Sain served in the role of Trustee, Committee Chair, and as an Officer in the position of Board President from 2022 - 2025; and,

WHEREAS, during his service on the Building & Development Committee, Trustee Sain championed the transformation of MPL facilities, including redevelopment/renovation of Villard Square, East, Tippecanoe, Mitchell Street, Good Hope, and Martin Luther King branches, as well as additional renovations and updates within the historic Central Library; and,

WHEREAS, Trustee Sain's thoughtful leadership guided the library through many innovations and changes in library services, from the introduction of Wi-Fi, eBooks, and self-service check-out to sorting machines, maker spaces, and virtual programming; and,

WHEREAS, Trustee Sain was a devoted advocate for education and a steadfast champion for the Milwaukee Public Library, whose vision and generosity touched so many and will long be remembered;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that members of the Board of Trustees of the Milwaukee Public Library express their deepest appreciation to Mark Sain for his many contributions to the staff and patrons of the Milwaukee Public Library; and,

FURTHERMORE, BE IT RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution, suitably inscribed, be sent to the Sain family, and that a copy hereof be spread upon the minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees held Tuesday, November 25, 2025.

