



QUINCY PUBLIC LIBRARY

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Quincy Public Library Board Of Trustees Meeting Tuesday, December 16, 2025 Minutes

JOINT TQ AND QPL MEETING

The joint meeting of the Quincy Public Library Board of Trustees and the TQ Library District Board of Trustees was called to order at 5:45 pm on Tuesday, December 16, 2025, by President Jon Hoover.

REVIEW *SERVING OUR PUBLIC*, PER CAPITA GRANT REQUIREMENT

The Interim Director reviewed the updated Illinois Standards for Public Libraries and the expanded Per Capita Grant application, which increased from nine to seventeen pages this year. The library meets all core standards required for eligibility. The discussion included several areas where the library is performing well and identified opportunities for improvement.

The Interim Director noted that advocacy and community engagement standards are met, with a recommendation to increase leadership presence at community organizations and events. Marketing and promotion standards are also met; however, the Interim Director emphasized the need for a formal marketing plan to ensure consistent and strategic outreach. Programming standards continue to be met, and offerings will be evaluated regularly to align with community needs.

Safety and emergency preparedness standards were discussed, including the need to update the salvage prioritization list created many years ago. Staff training remains a priority, with CPR and First Aid certification available through a certified staff instructor and Narcan training scheduled for next month. The Interim Director noted that Narcan will be required in libraries by 2026, and the library is already compliant. Technology standards are met, though a board member suggested establishing a dedicated technology budget line for clarity and planning. Building and grounds standards were reviewed, with an opportunity identified to transition to LED lighting to reduce energy costs. Finance and governance standards are met, but the Interim Director recommended formalizing the process for adding and removing authorized financial account signers. A draft succession plan has been created and will be presented for board review and approval. Human resources standards were discussed, noting that the library currently allocates 66% of its budget to salaries and benefits, compared to the recommended 70%. Collection management standards continue to be met.

The Interim Director confirmed that the per capita grant amount is expected to remain similar to last year (\$58,207) and will be used for digital resources and collection development. Updated standards documents will be shared with board members upon request.



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The meeting of the Quincy Public Library Board of Trustees was called to order at 6:00 pm on Tuesday, December 16, 2025, by President Jon Hoover. The roll call attendance was as follows:

Jon Hoover:	Present	Clairice Hetzler:	Present
Lena Jones:	Absent	Dean LaVelle:	Present
Scott Walden:	Present	Jake Reed:	Absent
Tony Crane:	Present	Harry Ruth:	Absent
Megan Dusterhaus:	Present		

Present: 6 Absent: 3

Others present: Interim Director: Natascha Will and Jennifer Burkett

I. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

The Board President stated that he had asked the board to review the October 2025 minutes. Corrections were noted at the last meeting and the minutes were adjusted. October 2025 minutes were removed from the consent agenda for separate discussion. No additional changes were requested. Dean made a motion to approve the remaining items on the Consent Agenda, Scott seconded.

Jon Hoover – yes
Lena Jones – absent
Dean Lavelle – yes
Scott Walden – yes
Jake Reed – absent

Tony Crane – yes
Megan Dusterhaus – yes
Clairice Hetzler – yes
Harry Ruth – absent

Yes: 6 | Absent: 3 | Motion carried.

II. PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

The Board President provided an update on his meeting with Mayor Moore regarding the library's financial status. He reported that the mayor reaffirmed that the City Council is unlikely to approve the library's requested subsidy and does not support raising the tax levy above 0.15. Another board member noted that the library historically operated at levy rates above 0.20 prior to and during the implementation of the subsidy model that began in the 1990s.. It was noted by the Interim Director that the levy proposed for the upcoming fiscal year is nearly identical to the library's 2009 levy, effectively requiring the library to operate on 17-year-old funding levels despite significant increases in operational costs.

The President reported that the city has expressed interest in additional budget cuts; however, many of the areas suggested—such as conferences or out of state training—are either grant funded or too minimal to impact the deficit. Other city suggestions, including reopening on Sundays or hiring a CFO level finance position, were deemed unrealistic given current financial constraints.



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Board members discussed shifts in the relationship between the library and the city, including removal from the city healthcare plan and reluctance to approve levy increases despite statutory requirements stating that the city has a ministerial duty to collect the levy set by the library board. Members expressed concern that the library is being treated inconsistently compared to other departments. The President also noted that some City Council members reported feeling pressured by public attendance at last year's meetings, and several board members reaffirmed that public participation is an important aspect of civic engagement.

The Board reviewed current practices regarding donations and memorial gifts. Members discussed whether the current transfer threshold should be adjusted and whether more unrestricted donations should remain with the library considering operational needs. It was noted that the Foundation, while financially stable and experiencing investment growth, does not employ development staff. Annual appeal letters typically generate \$15,000–\$19,000, and most other contributions are memorials rather than results of active fundraising.

Board members considered the potential for more proactive fundraising directed to the library. Members discussed developing a public awareness campaign that clearly outlines the community impact of reduced city funding, including possible reductions in staffing, hours, programming, and materials purchasing. While such a campaign could provide short-term financial support, board members agreed that fundraising cannot replace the stability of levy funding nor substitute for the city's statutory responsibilities.

The Board acknowledged that public education will be essential moving forward. Board members reported that collection levels have visibly declined due to several years of reduced purchasing. In some subject areas, such as history, thousands of items have been removed with limited replacements purchased. Empty shelving is already visible throughout the stacks. Members emphasized the importance of a strategic marketing plan tied to the library's strategic plan, with a designated portion of public communication focused on explaining funding realities, service impacts, and governance options.

The Board further discussed long-term governance considerations, including a possible transition to a library district model. Members noted that the library already operates independently from the city in several areas, including IT, legal services, healthcare, and financial management, and that ongoing financial and political tensions have prompted renewed conversation about the viability of remaining under city governance. While acknowledging economic challenges, members agreed that long term planning is necessary to ensure sustainability.

The President concluded by emphasizing the importance of strategic messaging, public education, and the continued evaluation of all available governance and funding options.



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III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments at this time.

IV. FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Friends reported a store revenue of \$5,319.05. The group is continuing efforts to fill officer positions for the upcoming year and is still seeking a candidate for Vice President. Appreciation was expressed for the recent Friends luncheon, which had a strong turnout from board members.

V. RECOGNITION OF CORRESPONDENCE AND PATRON COMMENTS

The Interim Director noted that a previously mentioned FOIA request did not need to be included under correspondence for December, as it has already been answered. The request sought six months' worth of video footage of all interactions between the requester and library staff; however, the library's security system only retains recordings for approximately two weeks. Staff reviewed the available footage within that timeframe but were unable to provide additional video due to system limitations and the presence of other patrons in the recordings. Follow-up questions have been submitted to legal counsel for guidance on the scope and feasibility of the request, and the library is awaiting further directions. Additionally, a note of appreciation was received from a patron, Sharon, recognizing Andrew for his helpful assistance with making copies. Natascha acknowledged that Andrew frequently receives positive feedback for his customer service.

VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Interim Director reported that six previously vacant positions have been filled. Eric has returned to the library as the Reference Team Lead after having previously served for one year and nine months; staff expressed enthusiasm about his return. After reviewing responsibilities for the Assistant to the Executive Director position, the Interim Director updated the title to Administrative Coordinator to better reflect the scope of duties. Recruitment for this position is ongoing, with a few applications received and potential internal interest.

The Interim Director also offered an opportunity for staff to participate in a self-paced frontline safety training program focused on trauma-informed approaches to conflict de-escalation and patron interactions. Several staff have begun this professional development.

Weston has filled the vacant senior outreach position, and mobile library services continue to be effective at senior stops. Staff are delivering materials directly inside facilities such as Curtis Creek and Sunset Homes to better accommodate patrons with mobility challenges. The mobile library will soon return to North Carolina for



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scheduled repairs; Outreach will continue using the red library van during that time for the little library van visits.

The Interim Director thanked staff for their involvement in interviewing and onboarding new hires as well as administrative support. A reminder was given regarding the upcoming staff Christmas party scheduled for Thursday from 12:00–2:00 p.m.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS LIBRARY DISTRICT DISCUSSION

The Board continued its discussion regarding the possibility of forming a library district. Members reiterated that, given the city's limitations on levy increases and the ongoing financial challenges, the library is running out of viable long-term options under city governance. Transitioning to a district was viewed as a potential solution to ensure stability, autonomy, and credibility. It was noted that some City Council members have expressed support for the district model, as it would remove funding responsibility from the city.

The Board reaffirmed its prior consensus to obtain detailed legal guidance on the process and next steps. The Interim Director will contact legal counsel to request a comprehensive outline of requirements and implications and update the Board of Trustees.

Members also discussed the importance of strengthening relationships with city staff and improving communication. It was acknowledged that email exchanges can sometimes create misunderstandings, and the Board encouraged continued efforts to maintain a positive working relationship with city personnel.

Additionally, the Board emphasized the need for greater community engagement and visibility. Members noted that marketing and outreach should extend beyond digital efforts to include active participation in local events, networking opportunities, and business functions. The Board discussed the expectation that the Interim Director, marketing staff, and potentially other designated representatives attend community events to promote the library and build relationships with decision-makers. This type of engagement was viewed as critical for advocacy, fundraising, and public awareness, particularly as the library explores governance changes.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE

The committee met to review progress on the Executive Director search and assign tasks. The committee has informed the Presidents of the Mary Weems Barton Foundation, TQ, and the Friends groups that they will be invited to participate in the interview process when it begins. Each group will determine its representative for the committee.

Dean is revising the previous job description to reflect current needs and is also preparing salary benchmarking data for comparable libraries. Preliminary analysis indicates that the library's salary range is generally within the market range but at the lower end compared to similar-sized communities.



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The committee discussed communications and agreed to issue a press release announcing the launch of the search to keep the public informed. Dean drafted the release, which will be routed through the library's marketing staff for distribution. A revised draft of the job description will be shared with the committee prior to the next meeting.

The next meeting of the Executive Search Committee is scheduled for January 22 at 9:00 am.

QUINCY PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMITTEES-UPDATED LIST

An updated list of committee assignments was distributed to all board members. Adjustments were made to reflect current roles, including additions and removals where necessary. Members were asked to review their assignments and confirm any changes or corrections. No further changes were requested during the meeting.

ATTENDANCE OF CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Board discussed strategies for attending upcoming City Council meetings to advocate for the library. Members agreed that participation should be coordinated and that a formal sign-up process will be implemented to ensure coverage at each meeting. The goal is to have different board members attend on a rotating basis rather than relying on the same individuals.

Board members emphasized the importance of preparing clear, consistent talking points for each meeting to highlight positive aspects of the library, including programs, services, and community impact. The Interim Director will assist in developing these talking points and coordinating attendance. Members expressed willingness to attend multiple meetings if necessary and agreed that messaging should remain focused and unified.

QPL BYLAWS (INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES)

The Board reviewed the updated bylaws and confirmed that all members have received the current version. It was noted that the bylaws were last revised in 2023 when meeting dates were changed, and that a formal review is recommended every five years. Members discussed forming a committee to review and update the bylaws as needed, with interest expressed by several members to serve on the committee. The Board agreed that the next comprehensive review should occur in 2027, though earlier review may be considered if operational changes require updates.

BUDGET

The Board discussed the current budget process and noted that a finance committee meeting was held since the last board meeting, with another scheduled for January 14. The committee reviewed preliminary figures and directed the Interim Director to begin working on a budget based on the numbers provided to the city, as well as to prepare a contingency or "doomsday" budget in anticipation of potential funding reductions. Further discussion will occur at the upcoming finance meeting.



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OCTOBER 2025 MINUTES – APPROVAL

The Board reviewed the October 2025 meeting minutes prior to approval. Members discussed clarifying certain sections, specifically regarding comments about mobile librarians, which were thought to have occurred after adjournment and should not be included in the official record. After confirming, a motion to approve the October 2025 minutes was made by Scott and seconded by Tony, the motion was carried with no opposition.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

APPROVAL OF OPEN PAYABLES -NOVEMBER 30, 2025 REPORT (ROLL CALL)

The Board reviewed open payables, including invoices from Ingram Library Services for book purchases related to mobile library and school delivery collections. These collections are managed separately from the main collection, though items can be accessed upon request. The discussion clarified that the current approach follows the library's standard material selection policy, and separate line items in the budget help track expenditures for outreach, mobile library, and school delivery.

Members noted that the distinction between mobile library and school delivery collections is primarily a budgeting function rather than a policy requirement. At the recent finance meeting, it was suggested that these categories be separated further to provide clearer reporting on how much collection spending is driven by the mobile library. This would allow the library to demonstrate the additional costs associated with operating the mobile library. The Board agreed that tracking these expenditures accurately is important for transparency and future planning.

Additional discussion addressed accounting practices, including correcting coding errors and ensuring accurate categorization of expenses. The Interim Director confirmed that adjustments have been made to remedy misclassified items and that a complete chart of accounts will be requested for reference. A motion to approve open payables was made by Dean, seconded by Megan and carried unanimously by a roll call vote.

Jon Hoover – yes
Lena Jones – absent
Dean Lavelle – yes
Scott Walden – yes
Jake Reed – absent

Tony Crane – yes
Megan Dusterhaus– yes
Clairice Hetzler – yes
Harry Ruth – absent

Yes: 6 | Absent: 3 | Motion carried.



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FINANCIAL REPORT

The Board reviewed the financial report. Megan noted that the main operating account balance remains healthy at just over \$1 million, despite being lower than the previous month. Trust accounts continue to show modest unrealized gains. Year-to-date figures indicate that the library is 58.33% through the fiscal year, having collected 73.88% of projected revenue and spent 51.86% of projected expenditures. While current spending is below projections, the budget was adopted as a deficit budget, with an anticipated shortfall of approximately \$140,000. Members were reminded not to reallocate underspent funds, as reducing the deficit remains a priority. Current projections show the library ahead by \$539,380, largely due to staff vacancies, which may help offset the future deficit.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments at this time.

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION - REVIEW CLOSED MINUTES

The Board discussed the periodic review of closed session minutes, which is typically conducted in December to determine whether they should remain confidential. Due to logistical issues and time constraints, the Board did not enter executive session. Scott made a motion to table the review until a future meeting. Dean seconded. The motion carried.

XI. ADJOURN

Scott made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Megan seconded and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:46 pm.