

**Red Wing Library Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting
City Council Chambers
July 9, 2025**

Members Present: Library Board President Natasha Yates; Board Members Bruce McBeath, Amanda Motschke, Catherine Friend, Jacqueline West, Ron Skjong, Kim Emery, and Joan Heineman

Members Absent: Board Member Marm Nihart

Others Present: Dan Brower, Library Director; Vicki Jo Lambert, Council Liaison; FOL Representative Beth Cato

1. Call to Order

Library Board President Yates called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

President Yates led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Excusal of Members

President Yates reported that Commissioner Nihart was unable to attend the meeting.

4. Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Member Friend, seconded by Member West and unanimously carried, to approve the Agenda as presented.

5. Public Comment

President Yates reviewed the public comment procedure.

Alan Muller, Red Wing, commented that in the past Red Wing played a more substantial role in the intellectual life of Minnesota residents. He stated that a company town mentality encourages people to allow their thinking to be done by others. He commented that the Red Wing Library can improve the intellectual life of the community. He stated that the Library was not mentioned during past planning activities but has been mentioned more recently by new City leaders. He suggested consideration of expanding Library hours. He suggested encouraging the City Council to consider whether the Library has been given adequate priority.

6. Consent Agenda

A. Motion to Approve May 14, 2025, Library Board Meeting Minutes.

B. Motion to Approve May and June Bills.

A motion was made by Member Friend, seconded by Member Skjong and unanimously carried, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

7. Motions & General Business

There were no motions or general business items.

8. Communication Items

A. Director Report.

Director Brower highlighted topics from his report:

- Director Brower discussed the recent ILS migration. He noted that notifications are still not working as expected. He stated that SELCO has purchased an automatic sorting machine that will utilize RFID.
- Director Brower discussed upgrades to the locker system.
- Director Brower discussed upgrades to the mobile printing process and the cash and bill acceptor equipment.
- Director Brower reviewed website content updates.
- Director Brower discussed the switch to a new jobber, Ingram.
- Director Brower reported that Minnesota State Park passes are available.
- Director Brower reported that the Red Wing Rotary Club has funded the purchase of disc golf sets that Library patrons can check out.
- Director Brower stated that he has been asked about the possibility of the Library staying open later on Thursdays. He noted that a past staffing request was not approved and the current Library staff has no capacity.
- A Library garden update was provided.

Member McBeath requested a locker system update. Director Brower reviewed recent user statistics. He stated that he has been tracking the amount of time it takes to manage the lockers, mostly his time. He stated that the smart return hardware has been ordered by EnvisionWare.

B. Library Board President Report.

President Yates indicated that she had nothing to report.

C. SELCO.

SELCO Representative Janet Brandt was not in attendance.

D. City Council Liaison Report.

Council Liaison Lambert spoke in support of the launch of the Late Night Thursdays program in downtown Red Wing. She asked about the potential to open later in the morning in order to stay open later in the evening. Director Brower commented that current programming would not allow the Library to open later. He discussed the challenges of varying the opening time. Member Heineman suggested taking Thursdays into consideration when planning future programs. Director Brower indicated that he will look into potential future options, noting that the Placer.ai data and circulation numbers will help provide a more informed picture. The current Library hours were reviewed. Council Liaison Lambert suggested consideration of swapping the Monday and Thursday hours, so that the Library would be open until 7 p.m. on Thursdays.

Council Liaison Lambert stated that she has frequently given Director Brower and the Library staff shout-outs during City Council meetings. She expressed appreciation for the extensive programming options that are offered to the community by the Red Wing Public Library.

E. Friends of the Library.

Friends of the Library Secretary Beth Cato introduced herself as an author and a newer Red Wing resident. She reviewed the current FOL Board and noted that there are currently 120 FOL members. She discussed the successful spring book sale, noting that this sale raised a total of \$3,395.44. She reported that the fall sale will take place October 1-4 in the Foot Room.

F. Fine Arts Committee.

Member West indicated that there was nothing to report.

G. Personnel Committee.

Member McBeath referenced the performance evaluation process for Director Brower.

H. Long-Range Planning Committee.

Director Brower reviewed a long-range planning tracking document.

Director Brower provided updates regarding three goals that have been included in the long-range plan:

1) Partner with Hiawatha Valley Adult Education to provide ESL classes.

Director Brower stated that he will be contacting the manager to discuss a potential partnership.

2) Create a Library Board Marketing Committee to assist in increasing the visibility of Library resources.

Director Brower indicated that this committee has not yet been formed.

3) Work toward increasing the staff with one 22 hour-per-week position. Monitor the need for staffing changes in terms of numbers, staff responsibilities, and duties.

Director Brower reported that he has been working with the Budget Committee regarding a position request. He stated that he would like the Library Board to consider a recommendation to hire a 20 hour-per-week Library Assistant position.

Director Brower noted that the duties of this position would include coordination of the locker system, connections with the Hispanic community and Prairie Island Indian Community members, social media communication, and outreach activities beyond the city limits of Red Wing. He stated that the ideal candidate would be fluent in conversational Spanish.

Director Brower stated that Goodhue County funding is dependent upon the number of rural, non-Red Wing resident patrons that the Red Wing Public Library serves. He stated that if this position is not approved, a request could be made for an additional 7 hours per week for the Youth Services Assistant to help cover the current programming load.

President Yates commented regarding the user-friendly format of the long-range planning document.

I. Budget Committee.

Member Heineman reported that the Budget Committee met recently and reviewed information provided by Director Brower. She stated that the committee agrees that the fully funded option is reasonable and aligns with the long-range plan. Member McBeath discussed a current budget deficit of approximately \$12,000. Director Brower provided additional rationale for an additional 20 hour-per-week position. He stated that approving this position as part of the 2026 budget request would demonstrate that this position is a priority in order for the Library to maintain its current level of operations.

A motion was made by Member Skjong, seconded by President Yates, to approve the 2026 budget request as discussed, including a 20 hour-per-week Library Assistant position. A vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously.

J. Board Member Comments.

President Yates provided an update from the Bequest Committee. She reported that the committee put together a proposal and met with the attorney for the estate. She commented that the committee is awaiting further communication from the attorney. She stated that the committee will schedule a meeting after this information has been received.

Meeting attendees were offered an opportunity to provide book reviews.

Member Emery recommended the book *Lies and Weddings* by Kevin Kwan, the author of the *Crazy Rich Asians* book series. She stated that she likes his writing style and the way he describes the settings and people along with including footnotes.

Member Motschke stated that she and her husband visited the Frank Lloyd Wright designed Taliesin house in Spring Green, Wisconsin, this past May. She noted that the tour referenced the murders of 1914. She stated that she subsequently read a book describing these murders, *Death in a Prairie House: Frank Lloyd Wright and the Taliesin Murders* by William R. Drennan.

Member Friend referenced her interest in science fiction. She recommended books by author John Scalzi, describing his writing style as approachable. She discussed his novel *Fuzzy Nation*.

Member Heineman discussed the children's book *Blueberries for Sal* by Robert McCloskey. She described the book as beautifully written with wonderful illustrations.

President Yates recommended the book *Six Days in Bombay* by Alka Joshi, describing it as a fun novel with interesting characters.

Member West discussed the memoir *Careless People: A Cautionary Tale of Power, Greed, and Lost Idealism* by Sarah Wynn-Williams, a former Director of Public Policy at Facebook.

Member McBeath recommended *The Midnight Library*, a fantasy novel by Matt Haig, describing the book as very imaginative.

Member Skjong described *The Quiet Librarian*, a novel by Allen Eskens. He described the book as the survival story of a woman who is forced to confront her troubled past during a time of war.

Council Liaison Lambert commented that she recently read *The Last American Road Trip*, a memoir by journalist Sarah Kendzior. She also recommended other books by this author.

Beth Cato described her love of food industry books, noting that she has a keen interest in cheese. She referenced her own novel *Cheddar Luck Next Time* and discussed the book *Cheddar: A Journey to the Heart of America's Most Iconic Cheese* by Gordon Edgar.

K. Announcements.

Director Brower commented that future statements from the St. Paul Foundation will reflect the large donation from the estate of Dennis Ahern in the development fund.

Director Brower provided an update regarding the Red Wing Library history book. He summarized a recent meeting with author Bruce Colwell, who stated that if the Library staff and the Library Board are satisfied with the current version, grant funding may be available to publish the book. He stated that Mr. Colwell suggested the formation of a committee to review the book and assist with design and publication. He noted that Mr. Colwell offered to update the history, which would delay the process by another 12 to 18 months. Member Friend commented that the current version is much better than other versions of the book. It was suggested to add this topic to the next workshop agenda.

President Yates referenced a goal to create a Marketing Committee and asked whether Board Members had interest in serving on this committee. Members Emery, Friend, and West volunteered to serve on the committee along with President Yates.

L. Attachments.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

ATTEST:



Joan Heineman, Secretary