



Meeting Minutes: Dakota County Library Advisory Committee

Date: 07/09/2026
Time: 5:30p.m.
Minutes prepared by: Chrissy Harrington
Location: Farmington Library

Attendance:

- Ann Matthew-Baussion, District 2
- Kari Cahn, District 4
- Lee Knutson, District 5
- Lynette Cargill, District 6
- Mary Ellen Gallaher, District 7
- Oliva Tri, At-Large Youth
- Jennifer Reichert Simpson, Library Director
- Hayley Tompkins, Deputy Director
- Heather Stephenson, Assistant Library Director
- Barb Svobada, Farmington Branch Manager

Call to Order:

- The meeting was called to order by Kari Cahn at 5:38p.m.

Public Comment:

- No public comment was made.

Consent Agenda:

- Kari Cahn asked the committee to approve the May Meeting Minutes and Statistical Report.

- Lee Knutson moved to approve the May 14, 2026, Consent Agenda and Ann Matthews-Baussion seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Farmington Library: Barb Svobada

- The multi-day Top the Tater Days in Farmington was as huge success this year. The library saw increase of visitors due to the citywide festival.
- Installation of solar panels on the library rooftop is expected to be completed by the end of the year.
- The Dakota County Parks and Recreation Department and the Farmington Library are team up again this year to host the Geocaching Adventures. The goal is to find geocaches hidden throughout 27 different city parks and earn prizes.
- The library gardens are maintained by a resident of Farmington that oversees its upkeep.
- The Children, Teen and Adult programs remain strong, with consistent attendance and positive participant feedback.
- The Seed Library remains a successful initiative, with usage and engagement, possibly expanding to other libraries in the county.
- 95 percent of the seeds went out at the Farmington Library, while 81% of the seeds went out at the Kaposia Library.
- The Annual Book sale is going to be held on August 10-15 during regular library hours.
- The next Dakota County Public Health mobile vaccine clinic is going to be held on September 30, 2026, from 2:00p.m. to 6:30p.m. at the Farmington Library.

Strategic Plan Goal to Raise Awareness and Strategy of Library

Ambassadors: Hayley Tompkins

- Hayley talked about the Dakota County Library strategic plan that includes the goal to increase awareness about the library's many offerings.
- The committee discussed the role of library ambassadors in supporting library programs, promoting services, and strengthening community partnerships.
- Hayley also discussed the importance of how library ambassadors can make Dakota County better by the following actions:
 - Supporting residents across the lifespan.
 - Building trust and value for residents
 - Strengthening communities and local economies.

Self-Service Hours Update: Jennifer Reichert Simpson

- Self-Service Hours remain a successful additional library service.
- 598 Self-Service hours a week and 592 staffed hours a week

- Self-Service hours account for 2.3 percent of checkouts and 7.7 percent of visits in 2025
- Reviewed promotional efforts for the library self-service hours by the following actions: Launch campaign, ongoing promotion such as library podcast, social media and digital signs.
- Review the registered customers metrics from when the program first started in 2023 there was 833 patrons that signed up. As of April 2026, we now have 8,738 patron's that have signed up for the self-service hours.
- Use shows that Self-Service Hours customer are primarily using the space of the library for meetings, to study and work, and to use the children's play features. The feedback from residents using the service indicates high satisfaction and strong utilization of self-service hours.

Directors Report: Jennifer Reichert Simpson

- Dakota County won a 2026 NACo award, for the library and Public Health partnership to transform library locations into community health hubs that connect residents with critical health resources in familiar, trusted spaces.
- The library will offer 30 All Abilities events countywide this year. All Abilities programs are art, music and writing events for adults with cognitive and development disabilities. Some of the organizations to connect adults with these events are Midwest Special Services, ProAct, Living Well, MRCI Disability Services, Lifework, IDS 200 Community Ed, and Tipping Cow Press.
- Wescott Library hosted a Flay Day Celebration with partners from Dakota County Veteran's Services, Eagan Beyond the Yellow Ribbon, American Legion Dan R. Olsen Post 594 and the MN Department of Veteran's Affairs. The event drew 82 people to celebrate our nation's flag and honor active military, veterans, family members and supporters.
- The new Dakota County webpage launches on July 9, 2026.
- The Dakota County Board will pass the maximum levy in September and adopt the 2027 Budget in December.

Update from Committee Members:

- Lynette Cargill shared that Reading in the Park for Pan-o- Prog days was successful with 85 participants attending the event.
- The ice cream social that was held at the Heritage Library was successful with over 400 people attending the event.
- The Annual Heritage Library Booksale will take place September 17-20, 2026, during regular library hours.
- Author Denise Williams will be at the Heritage Library in September.

Adjournment:

- Meeting ended at 6:38p.m.

Adjournment/Next Meeting

Date: September 10, 2026

Time: 5:30p.m.

Location: Kaposia Library