



Meeting Minutes: Dakota County Library Advisory Committee

Date: 09/10/2026
Time: 5:30 p.m.
Minutes prepared by: Chrissy Harrington
Location: Kaposia Library

Attendance:

- MaryJanice Alongi, District 1
- Ann Matthews-Baussion, District 2
- Robin Cerio, District 3
- Kari Cahn, District 4
- Lee Knutson, District 5
- Lynette Cargill, District 6
- Mary Ellen Gallagher, District 7
- Jennifer Reichert Simpson, Library Director
- Hayley Tompkins, Deputy Director
- Heather Stephenson, Assistant Library Director
- Honora Rodriguez, Kaposia Library Branch Manager
- Chrissy Harrington, Sr. Library Administration

Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order by Kari Cahn at 5:31 p.m.

Public Comment

- No public comment was made.

Consent Agenda

- Kari Cahn asked the committee to approve the July Meeting Minutes and Statistical Report.
- Lee Knutson moved to approve the July 9, 2026 Consent Agenda and Ann Matthews-Baussion seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- Lee Knutson moved to approve the July 9, 2026 Statistical Report and Ann Matthews-Baussion seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Kaposia Library: Honora Rodriguez

- Honora briefed the committee members that the current building was opened back in 2024.
- Summer has been very busy with Summer Discovery.
- Both the youth and adult programs have shown growth and increase in participant engagement.
- Library spaces are consistently in high demand and are being utilized regularly.
- The library continues to foster strong partnerships with community organizations.
- The library maintains a partnership with the local city to support after school programming.

Library Data for Advisory Committee: Hayley Tompkins

- Hayley asked the committee what kind of data would be most helpful for them to see going forward.
- Hayley showed charts that will be presented to committee soon once the committee decides on what data is needed.
- Hayley asked the committee for some examples so we can better inform the committee on the success of the library.
- The committee will make a determination at a later date regarding which data will be used.

Director Report: Jennifer Reichert Simpson

- Jennifer updated the committee on the County's 2027 budget process.
- Proposed cuts to the library's budget include:
- 1.45 million for the elimination of 10.1 FTE and reduction in the substitute budget. The library will be unable to maintain current hours with reduced staffing. If budget cuts move forward, Pleasant Hill, Robert Trail and Heritage would have the hours of Farmington library. Burnhaven, Galaxie, Wentworth would close Thursdays at 5 p.m. and be closed Sundays.
- \$700,000 collection budget reduction.

- \$100,000 from increased fees and reductions in several budget lines.
- The County Board of Commissioners will make initial budget decision and sets maximum Levy on September 22, 2026.
- The County Board of Commissioners will adopt the budget on December 15, 2026.
- Jennifer also updated the committee on the many successes of the library and how it impacts the community.
- Over 6,500 books were given out as part of Summer Discovery to gain confidence and skills in reading. 127 teen summer volunteers positively contributed to their community and gained pre-employment skills.
- As part of the library's Be a Reader effort, the new collection of decodable and striving reader books are in every library location to support Minnesota State and local school districts efforts to support every child reading at grade level.
- The volunteer application for Reading Tutors is live. Reading tutors will start on January 1, 2027.
- The Unity Trail is a five-mile loop of interpretive stops along existing paved trails in Inver Grove Heights and one of the stops is at the Inver Glen Library.
- The project provided funding for three poems in the sidewalk by community members, 25 story walk sign holders, and an artist mosaic designed bench.
- The library was featured at the Dakota County Fair and gave the staff an opportunity to build awareness of services beyond books while connecting to thousands of residents.

Update from Committee Members

- Lynette Cargill shared that the Friends of the Heritage Library Book Sale will be on September 17-20 2026.
- Lynette Cargill shared that author Denise William will be at the Heritage Library on October 21, 2026.

Adjournment:

- Meeting ended at 6:45 p.m.

Adjournment/Next Meeting

Date: 11-12-2026

Time: 5:30 p.m.

Location: Inver Glen Library