



Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2025

The regular meeting of the Worthington Libraries Board of Trustees was held on Tuesday, October 21, 2025, at 6:01 p.m. in the meeting room at Northwest Library with Joan Herbers presiding. Members present were Kyla Dembowski (arrived at 6:56 p.m.), Elizabeth Grieser, Emma Mulvaney, and Haze Saputra. Also present were Lauren Robinson, Director/CEO; Jeremie Stevens, CFO; Monica Baughman, Director of Support Services; Phyllis Winfield, Director of Human Resources; Theresa Messenger, Executive Assistant; and Sam Lewis, Systems Administrator.

There was no public participation.

Lauren Robinson gave a presentation on the Gallup Employee Engagement Survey.

- Participation rate increased from 92 percent to 93 percent. Gallup considers this Best in Class for participation rates.
- Our Engagement mean, the average of all Q12 questions, increased from 4.27 to 4.31. In 2021 our engagement mean was 3.69. That's a significant increase within four years.
- Percentile rank increased from the 64th to 66th percentile. This means our engagement mean is greater than 66 percent of those in the Gallup Overall database.
- Our engagement index, a ratio of actively engaged to actively disengaged, decreased slightly from 30:1 to 22.33:1; but we saw a 6 percent shift from not engaged to engaged. Best in Class is 70 percent or higher or engaged with 2-3 percent disengaged, according to Gallup.

On a motion by Ms. Mulvaney, and seconded by Ms. Saputra, RESOLUTION #10-01-25 was tabled until a quorum was present to vote.

Roll call: Ms. Grieser, aye; Ms. Herbers, aye; Ms. Mulvaney, aye; and Ms. Saputra, aye. Motion passed.

The following information items were presented:

- Director's Report – September 2025

Director's Report

September 2025

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

- Prepared for Collective Bargaining sessions with the Union
- Continued providing last stage of Clifton Strengths training for staff
- Launched the Your Voice Counts survey for staff

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Attended MAC committee meetings
- Prepared for Leadership Worthington sessions

FUTURE PLANNING

- Held an SRC retreat with members of the planning team
- Met with Monica and Bricker attorneys to discuss building projects and next steps

LIBRARY NEWS

- Attended OLC's regional meetings for library directors and fiscal officers. OLC provided advocacy training and practical talking points.

September 2025

Key Performance Indicators

	Current month	Change from last month	Change from last year	Sparkline
	September 2025	August 2025	September 2024	January 2023 – September 2025
Total first-time circulation	69,077	-4% ●	-7% ▼	
- Browse circulation	41,894	-5% ●	-8% ▼	
- Hold circulation	27,183	-2% ●	-6% ▼	
Digital circulation	71,979	-11% ▼	20% ▲	
Total door counts	56,486	0% ●	3% ●	
- OWL door counts	28,488	3% ●	11% ▲	
- NWL door counts	16,437	-3% ●	-3% ●	
- WPK door counts	11,561	-2% ●	-4% ●	
Program attendance	5,483	381% ▲	28% ▲	

	Current month	Change from last month	Change from last year	Sparkline
	September 2025	August 2025	September 2024	January 2023 – September 2025
Meeting room reservations	78	18% ▲	56% ▲	
Study room reservations	1,404	4% ●	11% ▲	
Website sessions	97,863	0% ●	-3% ●	
Pages printed	79,297	-3% ●	-67% ▼	

➤ Organizational Highlights – September 2025

ORGANIZATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

SEPTEMBER 2025

Library Program Highlights

Preschool Apple Fun



The program Preschool Apple Fun was held on September 12 at OWL; 71 patrons attended. Library Associate Julie McIntosh and three volunteers ran the apple-themed session, which included a craft, process-art painting projects and learning activities. Several grandparents who brought grandchildren commented on how much they enjoyed the activities, and several parents were overheard talking about how they could replicate some of the projects at home.

Let's Go Camping



On September 14, NWL's popular yearly program, Let's Go Camping, was held in the backyard. At the after-hours event, 122 attendees enjoyed lawn games, crafts, temporary tattoos and snacks. As the evening grew darker, library staff built a fire and led camp songs, made s'mores and told scary/silly stories. There were 70 people who registered to stay overnight, camping in tents in the backyard or sleeping in the library, then having breakfast in the morning before breaking down camp. Volunteers Coleman, Dylan and Nathan; library associates Nick Spence, Lex Bright and Jennifer Simcic helped families with the evening events, then librarians April Overly and Lily Dawson as well as Director of Public Services Susan Allen took the overnight shift, set up breakfast and cleaned up.

Storybook Ball



On September 26, 1,007 people attended OWL's Storybook Ball! Princes, princesses, fairies, book characters and more flocked to the library to celebrate their love of stories of all kinds. Activities included storytimes with costumed characters, "ballroom" bubbles and dancing, a costume parade, fairy tale activities, airbrush tattoos and a bounce house. There was also cotton candy, drink "potions," a cozy reading corner, an interactive wishing well and many fun crafts. Lead Librarian Karah Power coordinated a team that included Storytime Associate Chase Gartland; library associates Emmy Wolfe, Gerta Rehfeld and Lex Bright; librarians April Overly, Jodi Langley, Kathy Irvin and Ria Vimal; Lead Librarians Annie Christensen, Chaz Carey, Meredith Richards and Stephanie Brand; and Library Manager Ellie Kirchner. This event was an immediate success, with many patrons asking when we would have another. In the days after, we received this message: "Do you have the next Storybook Ball scheduled? I heard from a friend how fantastic it was and would love to bring my granddaughter to the next one."

Zoo Animal Sponsorship

As part of the 2025 Summer Reading Club, each library location sponsored a different Columbus Zoo animal, chosen by summer reading participants. As part of the sponsorship, each location received a plushie of the sponsored animal. While SRC officially wrapped up at the end of July, patrons were able to enter names into a drawing to name each plushie through early September. There were 291 names submitted across all three locations. NWL's hawksbill sea turtle is now named Blippi, OWL's koala is Doug and WPK's western lowland gorilla is Rosey. Kids loved suggesting names for the newest additions to our children's area stuffies.

Community Engagement Highlights

World War II Through the Eyes of the Veterans Who Experienced It



On September 25, Local History Librarian Meredith Southard participated in the program World War II Through the Eyes of the Veterans Who Experienced It at the Griswold Center. The event drew approximately 110 attendees and featured seven speakers sharing aspects of the war as experienced by Worthington veterans and residents. The program was attended by Worthington native and World War II veteran Theodore Harper. La Chatelaine French Bakery & Bistro provided American and French flag-shaped cakes. In addition to the Library, participating organizations included Motts Military Museum, Blue Star Mothers of America, La Chatelaine, the Worthington Veterans Alliance, Worthington V.F.W., Worthington American Legion, Worthington Historical Society and Worthington Parks and Recreation. Numerous attendees shared how impactful the program was; one emailed afterward: "Congratulations on a great program tonight, Meredith. Glad the library is bringing community members together to honor those who served and sacrificed so much for our country and the free world." *Attached photo by Worthington Historical Society photographer Kevin Kuhn.*

School Visits

With school back in full swing, monthly outreach to Worthington Schools has resumed. Outreach Librarian Desi Thomas visits each elementary Care After School program and leads a book discussion at Worthington Kilbourne High School. Book discussions are also held monthly at Perry Middle School and McCord Middle School, led by librarians Lily Dawson and Stephanie Brand. These partnerships will continue throughout the school year.

Pop-Up Library stats: 7 events, 728 people

Patron Highlights

NWL received the following online reviews:

- Patron Richard J. left the following Google review: "It's a good place to go to study or to relax. All the staff are well trained and polite. They are always willing to help you with the projects and assignments on your agenda. I've been coming here for years, I used to reside in the area and I miss living closer to the library, but it's definitely worth the trip because of all the things I can get accomplished while I visit the library. The outdoor setting and landscape is very nice. The Poetry Path is a great area to channel your greatness."
- Patron Jane F left the following Google review: "Great staff! And my dog loves the treats at the drive up window!"
- Patron Arsha T. left the following Google review: "This is a very cool library that I come to. It has lots of fun events and a wide selection of books. I personally recommend and love it."
- Patron Shannon left the following Google review: "Beautiful library with a super helpful staff! I got book recommendations and help scanning a document. Everything was organized really well and there are a ton of resources available."

WPK received the following 5-star Google review from patron Stafford L: "This library is poppin!"

Library Associate Emmy Wolfe shared that a patron stopped her to say: "I feel compelled to thank you for the collection you all have here. I am especially impressed by the books you choose to display face forward. I see so much diversity when I look around, and that makes me feel a lot better about my son, who is Latino, having access to a whole array of titles." The patron and Emmy talked about how important it is for the library to welcome every member of our community. Emmy pointed out our Spanish language books and helped the patron pick a few out, along with their English language counterpart.

A woman recently stopped by NWL's accounts desk to say how much she loved NWL, specifically how well laid-out everything is. She said she used to go to Dublin, but that NWL is much better.

Staff Highlights

On September 12, Staff Development Coordinator **Jenn Eyer** presented the closing session at OLC's New To Libraries Conference. Her presentation, How To Stay Calm During Difficult Situations, focused on skills and tools to successfully de-escalate potentially volatile situations. Jenn is a certified instructor in Non-Violent Crisis Intervention and Crucial Conversations, and shared her expertise on both topics. The session was well-received, and many attendees thanked her for her presentation.

Sarah Norman, WPK adult services library associate, has announced her resignation. Sarah accepted a position as adult services librarian at Bexley Public Library. "The past seven years have been an amazing experience. I appreciate the opportunities I've gotten at WPL to grow in programming, reference, reader's advisory, and strategic planning. I am grateful for the amazing people I've gotten to work with throughout my years here. I hope to stay in touch." Sarah's last day was September 9.

Tranea' Jones, WPK youth services librarian, has announced her resignation. "Thank you for the opportunity to work within the organization." Her last day was September 12.

Sarah Helke, social media coordinator, has announced her resignation. “I have truly loved working at the library alongside such a wonderful team of people. It was not an easy decision, and I will be forever grateful for the opportunities and memories I gained from my time at Worthington Libraries! Thank you for everything.” Sarah’s last day was September 19.

Libi Varughese, WPK circulation aide, has announced her resignation. She would like to express gratitude for the support and guidance she was given by all staff during her time here; and best wishes for the library’s and everyone’s continued success and growth. Libi’s last day was October 7.

Maddison Chaffin will join our team as social media coordinator on October 20. Maddison’s most recent employment includes social media intern (2021-2023), social media and graphics manager (2023-2025) and communications manager (2025) for Educated Choices Program. Maddison earned a Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Communications from The Ohio State University and an Associate of Arts from Columbus State Community College.

Amanda Nechovski, NWL custodian, has announced her resignation. She has accepted a position with another organization. She has appreciated the opportunities she has been given at the Library and values the experience she has gained. She says she will miss the people most, both employees and patrons; but she will continue to visit as much as she can. Amanda’s last day will be October 24.

Andrea Alvarado, OWL circulation assistant, has announced her resignation. “I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to work for and belong to the Worthington Libraries staff and community. I value the skills that I have learned, and I am grateful for the continued support of my professional growth. It has been such a pleasure to work with everyone at the library!” Andrea’s last day will be October 30.

- Ohio Public Library Levies and Bond Issues on November Ballot

Finance/Support Services

- Finance Report
- Meeder Investment Report

Personnel

Appointment	Position	Department	Location	Repl/ New	Date
Maddison Chaffin	social media coordinator	community relations	OWL	R	10/20/25

A Finance/Operations Committee Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 4, at 8 a.m. in the Director’s office to review the 2026 budget and appropriations.

A Personnel Committee Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 9, at 8 a.m. to discuss the pay administration, revisions to position descriptions, table of organization and revisions to Personnel Policy.

Ms. Saputra updated the board on the trustee search. A total of 14 applications were received. The committee will be interviewing six candidates for the trustee position. A recommendation will be made to the Board at the November Board Meeting.

Board Governance Committee Meetings have been scheduled for Monday, October 27, beginning at 4 p.m. and Tuesday, October 28, beginning at 4 p.m. to interview candidates for the trustee position and to review the virtual meeting policy.

Ms. Mulvaney moved with a second by Ms. Saputra to adopt RESOLUTION #10-02-25 to set the regular meetings of the Board of Trustees for 2026 at 6 p.m. (unless otherwise noted) as follows:

<u>Board Meeting Day/Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Time</u>
Tuesday, January 20	Board Meeting	NWL-MR	6 p.m.
Tuesday, February 17	Board Meeting	WPK-MR	6 p.m.
Tuesday, March 17	Board Meeting	OWL-MR	6 p.m.
Tuesday, April 21	Board Meeting	NWL-MR	6 p.m.
Tuesday, May 19	Board Meeting	WPK-MR	6 p.m.
Tuesday, June 16	Board Meeting	OWL-MR	6 p.m.
<i>Tuesday, July 21*</i>	<i>Board Meeting</i>	<i>NWL-MR</i>	<i>6 p.m.</i>
Tuesday, August 18	Board Meeting	WPK-MR	6 p.m.
Tuesday, September 15	Board Meeting	OWL-MR	6 p.m.
Tuesday, October 20	Board Meeting	NWL-MR	6 p.m.
Tuesday, November 17	Board Meeting	WPK-MR	6 p.m.
Tuesday, December 15	Reception	OWL-MR	5:30 p.m.
	Board Meeting	OWL-MR	6 p.m.

*If Necessary

MR – Meeting Room

OWL – Old Worthington Library, 820 High Street

NWL – Northwest Library, 2280 Hard Road

WPK – Worthington Park Library, 1389 Worthington Centre Drive

Voice vote: 4 ayes; 0 nays. Motion passed.

Ms. Grieser moved and Ms. Mulvaney seconded to adopt RESOLUTION #10-03-25 to move into Executive Session to discuss the following topic: #4. Union Negotiations/Collective Bargaining O.R.C. 121.22(G)(4). To prepare for, conduct, or review negotiations or conduct bargaining sessions with public employees regarding compensation or other terms and conditions of employment.

Roll call: Ms. Grieser, aye; Ms. Herbers, aye; Ms. Mulvaney, aye; and Ms. Saputra, aye. Motion passed.

Ms. Dembowski arrived at 6:56 p.m.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 7:36 p.m. and no action was taken.

Ms. Mulvaney moved and Ms. Saputra seconded that RESOLUTION #10-01-25 be taken from the table.

Roll call: Ms. Dembowski, aye; Ms. Grieser, aye; Ms. Herbers, aye; Ms. Mulvaney, aye; and Ms. Saputra, aye. Motion passed.

Ms. Mulvaney made a motion with a second by Ms. Dembowski to adopt RESOLUTION #10-01-25 to accept and approve the items under the consent agenda at one time.

- Minutes – Records Commission – September 16, 2025
Regular Meeting – September 16, 2025
- Fiscal Officer's Report of the Payment of Bills for September in the amount of \$1,009,730.78
- Fiscal Officer's Financial Statement and Investment Report for September 2025
- Gifts for September
General Fund – \$97.00 from an anonymous donor in honor of Henry Dyer and \$48.50 from Margaret S. Foster

Roll call: Ms. Dembowski, aye; Ms. Grieser, abstained; Ms. Herbers, aye; Ms. Mulvaney, aye; and Ms. Saputra, aye. Motion passed.

Ms. Herbers moved the adjournment of the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

Bank Balance as of September 30, 2025: \$24,257,344.01

This meeting was digitally recorded and is maintained on file by the Worthington Public Library.