Northwest Regional Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, August 12, 2025

Present: Roy Sourdif (Pennington County), Anita Locken (Greenbush), Jim Hest (Marshall County), Charlie Lindberg (Hallock), Mary Cooney (Kittson County), Keri Youngstrand (Marshall County), Nathan Guillemette (Red Lake County), Jan Klatt (Roseau County), Jean Johnson (Roseau), Scott Pream (Thief River Falls), Sandra Melby (Warren).

Others Present: Megan Lysford (Director), Destiny Walker (Business Manager), Janae Hoffer (Automation Coordinator), Kelly Benjamin (Warroad Librarian), Peggy Pearson (Hallock Librarian), Bethany Hait (Thief River Falls Librarian), Sara Niemela with Brady Martz and Associates, and several members of the Middle River community.

I. Call to Order: Board Chair R. Sourdif called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

II. Approval of Agenda: J. Hest/S. Pream moved to approve the Agenda as submitted. Motion carried.

III. Public Comments: None.

IV. Librarians Report: P. Pearson gave an update on happenings at the Hallock Public Library including the visit from the state librarian, the Northern Tropics event, and the Brownstone Book Fund donating 100 kids books. K. Benjamin spoke about the Warroad Public Library's summer reading program. A total of 200 signed up to participate. K. Benjamin also noted the William Kent Krueger event in Roseau went really well with 95 in attendance. B. Hait talked about the summer reading program at the Thief River Falls Public Library with 230 signed up to participate. B. Hait also talked about the Thief River Falls William Kent Krueger event which was attended by 101 patrons. B. Hait noted that a donation will soon be coming in annually from the family of a former patron who passed away and that the Learning Express Trailer that came over the summer was well utilized.

V. Financial Reports

- C. Lindberg/K. Youngstrand made a motion to approve checks #12710-12767, electronic checks #201-202, and reissued check #120491, as well as accompanying financial reports for the month of June 2025. Motion carried.
- K. Youngstrand/J. Hest made a motion to approve checks #12769-12822 and electronic checks #206-207, as well as accompanying financial reports for the month of July 2025. Motion carried.

VI. Approval of June 2025 Meeting Minutes

- S. Pream/S. Melby moved to approve the June Minutes as submitted. Motion carried.

VII. Committee Reports

- **Personnel:** No report.
- **Building:** No report.
- **Joint Powers:** No report.
- **Budget and Salary Committee:** No report.
- **Legacy Committee:** No Report.

VIII. New Business

A. 2024 Audit

- Sara Niemela with Brady Martz and Associates presented the 2024 Audit Report. Since 2023 was disclaimed, the revenues and expenses for 2024 were also disclaimed. All other aspects of the audit passed. S. Niemela noted it was a clean report and thanked D. Walker and M. Lysford for their hard work in getting the audit completed accurately and in a timely manner. S. Niemela discussed the findings which outlined controls that NWRL should put in place to ensure financial accuracy going forward.
- C. Lindberg/N. Guillemette made a motion to accept the 2024 Audit Report. Motion carried.

B. Implementation of PFML

- A new state law will go in to effect on January 1, 2026 requiring employers across the state to provide a new benefit to their employees for extended medical absences.
- D. Walker presented the board with several options, noting that private insurance can be utilized instead of the state program if an entity desires.
- C. Lindberg/N. Guillemette moved to table action on implementing PFML in order to obtain private insurance quotes and allow the budget committee to meet to discuss those options. Motion carried.

C. August CD Maturity

- A. Locken/J. Klatt made a motion to allow the CD at Northern State Bank maturing on August 16, 2025 to renew at the new rate of 4.2% APY for 7 months. Motion carried.

D. Legacy Update

- D. Walker let the board know that FY25 Legacy funds' spending deadline was extended to June 30, 2027, allowing NWRL more time to use those funds.
- S. Melby/S. Pream made a motion to approve the FY26 Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund (Legacy) application. Motion carried.

E. Changes to Open Meeting Law

- D. Walker highlighted changes to the Open Meeting Law, specifically drawing attention to the change to remote meeting locations which no longer need to be open to the public or advertised.
- A. Locken noted that this change needs to be added to the remote meeting policy.

F. 2026 RLBSS

- M. Lysford noted that the amount of RLBSS funding for NWRL will be reduced by about $40k in comparison to the previous year.
- S. Pream/J. Johnson moved to approve the FY26 Regional Library Basic System Support (RLBSS) application. Motion carried.

G. Budget Requests

- Discussion took place regarding the need to attend City/County meetings to request funding. M. Lysford noted that none of the cities or counties can go below the minimum Maintenance of Effort (MOE) amount set by the state.
- C. Lindberg/K. Youngstrand made a motion that NWRL board members reach out to their respective city/county boards instead of the director and request budget increases up to 3%. Motion carried.

H. Minitex Thank You Letter

- A letter from Minitex thanking the NWRL board for their resolution of support was reviewed.

I. Resignation

- The board was presented with a resignation letter from Director Megan Lysford.
- N. Guillemette made a motion to accept the resignation. The motion died due to lack of a second.
- Discussion ensued and M. Lysford was asked what would be needed to get her to stay. She suggested working in office only 1-2 days a week to reduce her drive time.
- S. Pream/C. Lindberg made a motion to decrease M. Lysford’s in-person working hours to 1-2 days a week. Opposed: N. Guillemette, A. Locken, K. Youngstrand, S. Melby, J. Johnson, J. Hest, C. Lindberg, J. Klatt. Motion rejected.
- Further discussion was had with J. Hest noting the personnel committee should meet to decide the best course of action regarding the Director’s hours in office. A trial basis, for an amount of 6 months for example, was also brought up.
- J. Hest/C. Lindberg made a motion that the board does not accept Director Megan Lysford’s resignation. Opposed: N. Guillemette, A. Locken. Motion carried.
- C. Lindberg/K. Youngstrand made a motion to request a meeting of the Personnel Committee prior to the next Board meeting to decide on a workable solution for the Director’s position. Motion carried.

J. Open Discussion

- None.

IX. Old Business

A. Insurance Update

- M. Lysford is still waiting to hear back from North Risk Partners regarding our appraisals conducted earlier this year.

B. TRF Trust Fund

- D. Walker is working with the Board to potentially re-establish the TRF Trust Fund in the financials for NWRL. This was tabled from the previous meeting because more information was needed. That information has not yet been acquired, and the decision was tabled again.

C. Middle River LINK Site Reopening

- At the previous meeting, it was decided to pursue a contract with the City of Middle River and Marshall County to assist in the reopening of the Middle River LINK site. These contracts were pursued by members of the Middle River community. The one for the city was obtained but a road block came up with the County when no existing contract for other libraries in their district could be found.
- It was also asked of the Middle River community members at the previous board meeting to obtain another mold testing sample inside the library room itself. The results of that were presented at this meeting, noting that the library room showed less organisms than the outside control sample.
- S. Pream/M. Cooney made a motion to turn Middle River into a drop-off location staffed by a volunteer temporarily until city and county agreements are in place and budgets are solidified. Opposed: N. Guillemette. Abstained: A. Locken. Motion carried.

D. Approval of 2025 Budget Changes

- The changes to the 2025 Budget were presented at prior meetings and discussed in a Budget Committee meeting earlier this year.
- K. Youngstrand/J. Hest made a motion to approve the updated 2025 Budget as presented. Motion carried.

E. Open Discussion

- J. Hest attended the William Kent Krueger event and praised the author for his exceptional presentation skills.

X. Director's Report

- M. Lysford discussed recent and upcoming Director's activities including that Kilen's Custom Cleaners came in and shampooed the carpets at the headquarters location.

XI. Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn made by A. Locken/J. Hest. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.