

Farmington Libraries since 1901

Library Board Minutes

17 September 2025

Attendees: Celia Bouza, Linda Chapron, Ida Franklin, Trish Pinto-Garcia, Brian Lindroth, Lyman Louis, Janell Lovig, Rich Olivastro, Gary Ontko, Dana Pescatello, Vanitha Patil, Alan Sherman, Elisabeth Umpleby, Jocelyn Kennedy, Amy Palumbo. **Guests:** Curt Goswick (FVGLA), Chris Nardi (SP+A)

Quorum: A quorum was determined. The meeting was called to order at 7:02pm.

Approval of the June meeting minutes: Brian moved, and Linda seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously with 1 correction.

Corrections requested on the contact information list of all Farmington Libraries Board members.

Introduction of new board member Janell Lovig.

Chris Nardi from Silver Petrucelli + Associates presentation and discussion of their final report: Facility Condition Analysis and Capital Needs Assessment Document prepared by SP+A and shared with the Board . Ten priorities were identified to consider for repair and/or replacement during the 2026 calendar year, or sooner, in the main Farmington Library as well as the Barney Library. Annual service and maintenance contracts already in place were excluded from the list.

Facilities Report, reported by Rich

1. There is a new sign on the front of the main library.
2. The bookcase inside the door of the main library was removed.
3. The library interior of the main library was painted.
4. A walk around the main library was done in late Spring to identify what needed to be done, and those that could be done quickly were completed.
5. All ADA complaint issues were handled, including the restrooms. Signs were ordered and recently arrived.
6. The Fire Marshall visited and identified that chairs cannot be stored outside the Community Room. The Community Room has two entrances and a fire exit. The middle entrance to the room is not necessary from a code perspective. Research is underway on how to put panels that are already on the walls for the art and use something similar to cover the middle door. The panels would be removable to bring the chairs in and out of the room. As nothing can block an egress, removing the door enables the library to continue to store chairs in the same place.
7. Three to four dozen lights were replaced that were out of warranty, with another three to four dozen lights replaced that were in warranty a few months ago.
8. The back walkway of the main library was fixed. Another walkway is due to be fixed.

9. Bike racks are going to be installed, with the decision pending as to where. U-bike racks are recommended and are the ideal choice which require 2 feet in front and 8 feet behind. There is currently no place for this type of bike rack without taking up room in the parking lot.
10. New staff chairs have been ordered. The children's room furniture was removed and replaced with more age-appropriate furniture.
11. Passport office has moved, and there is one additional study room.
12. Numbers are being formulated for the 5-year strategic plan. Volunteers are needed for the fundraising effort; Brian is the chair of the fundraising committee and hopes that fundraising will be aggressively part of the plan.

Executive Director Report:

Jocelyn reported that 1,086 people signed up for summer reading: 643 were children, 124 were teens, and 217 were adults. There were 65 events or programs between June 18 and August 22, which were attended by 4,672 people.

The library is collaborating with Canton, Simsbury, and Avon on a 4 or 5 part series entitled "In Order to Form a More Perfect Union" for the America 250 celebration. The first event is on November 20 in Canton featuring Wes Horton, who is the chair of the Supreme Court Historical Society. The closing event, in partnership with the UConn Law School Library, will be in Farmington in April featuring Andy Horowitz, the Connecticut State Historian.

The library is looking to collaborate with town organizations like churches and social groups to put together a town cookbook. Recipe cards will be translated into the 19 languages spoken in Farmington.

The library is doing a collaboration with For All Ages on a community wide ice cream social on October 4 from 1-3pm at New Horizons. The event is to foster community connection.

Jocelyn is on the Farmington Cultural District Committee, and it is sponsoring an Open Studio that is happening around Farmington and Unionville on Saturday, September 20 from 12-4pm. It is through the Farmington Artists Circle, with 5 or 6 artists hosting pop-up studios in the library.

There were 2 programs this summer with the Farmington Land Trust and one last week with teens which has been a great partnership over the last two years.

Monique left the library on September 5th.

The library partnered with the Irving A. Robbins Middle School to create a limited edition library card featuring the artwork of a student who won the competition in the school. The cards are available for \$2 at the circulation desk and would not replace current library cards held by patrons.

Annual statistics are provided to the state library every year:

- 150,000 came to the Farmington Libraries this year
- 400,000 visits to the website
- 34,000 new items were added to the collection
- 10,000 items were withdrawn from the collection
- 345,000 books were checked out
- Almost 60,000 digital items were checked out
- Nearly 1,200 new borrowers were added to the library
- 33,000 questions were answered
- 1,777 Makers Space hours used by patrons
- 156 hours of tech training
- 4,500 patrons booked rooms in the library
- 6,269 computer log-ins on the terminals (not those using wifi)
- 10,842 current library card holders

The library's goals are set for every year and not for the three year period of the strategic plan because of how quickly things can change. There are four strategic areas for 2025-2026: reimagining spaces, increasing access to materials, promoting a lifelong love of exploration learning and creating, and strengthening connections. Included in these areas are to develop a capital plan; looking at space and how the library is used; identify fundraising opportunities; reviewing the website for accessibility, including a new library system expected in June, 2026; updating signage; doing a use and scope analysis on the collection; gathering data from patrons about interests and needs and develop a feedback mechanism; programming for the Farmington Room; a programming committee has been formed to look at the last two years of programming to identify what has been successful; all staff will be required to spend three hours in each department in the library, attend one training, and creation of a professional development intranet for staff to continue to grow their skills.

The board can assist the library in identifying one demographic affinity group to connect with and how to partner with this year – to fill the needs of one demographic group. That would serve as a model to connect with other groups in the community.

Friends of the Library:

Linda reported that the Friends supplied about \$7,000 for fall programming for adults and teens. It's been a robust membership year and \$17,000 has been collected since last February. The Book Nook remains popular and raises between \$700-\$1000 per month. There is a pop-up cookbook sale on October 7. There has been a large children's holiday book donation from a local teacher. There was a final delivery of hundreds of books to Camp Courant, and books to House of Bread, Hands on Hartford, Weaver High School, and Martin Luther King Middle School. The gardens that were removed for the parking lot will begin reclamation when excavation happens next week.

Farmington Room Report, by Trish

Motion by Trish to deaccession the Old State Cowse sculpture held in the Farmington Room and gift it to the Old State House in Hartford, CT. Seconded by Celia. Approved.

Votes to serve alcohol at three events:

1. Art exhibit in the library called Parallel Realities in October. Motion by Ida, seconded by Celia. Approved.
2. Library event 21 Plus Gingerbread House program on December 18, with a certified server. Motion by Brian, seconded by Rich.
3. Annual FVGLA Gala at the Barney Library on December 5. Motion by Celia, seconded by Vanitha.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:02pm.

Next Board Meeting: October 15, 2025, at 7:00pm.