

**DEARBORN PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
**LIBRARY COMMISSION MEETING**  
Henry Ford Centennial Library - Room 111  
Wednesday, June 25, 2025  
**APPROVED**

**Commissioners:**

- Interim Chair Dr. Ryan Lazar - Present
- Secretary/Treasurer Jihan Jawad - Present
- Adam Abusalah - Present
- Zeinab Alhashemi - Absent
- Gerilyn Biggs - Present
- Ali Dagher - Present
- Amira Haidar - Present
- Dr. Cheryl Hawkins - Present

**Library Administration:**

- Library Director Betty Adams - Present
- Assistant Director of Technical Services Mark Hancock - Excused
- Assistant Director of Programs & Services Rebecca Hermen - Present
- Assistant Director of Operations Patty Podzikowski - Excused
- Office Assistant III Daniel Smith - Present

Deputy Corporation Counsel Brad Mendelsohn was in attendance on behalf of the City Legal Department.

Dearborn Historical Commissioner Mary Bugeia was in attendance on behalf of the Historical Museum.

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Interim Chairperson Lazar at 5:03PM.

**II. Approval of Minutes - April 9, 2025 regular meeting**

Commissioner Hawkins noted that no vote was held regarding City retiree library cards, and a resolution was not achieved. The minutes will be revised to reflect this. The minutes were approved as amended.

**III. Election of Officers**

The board broke for introductions and to welcome the new commissioners. Interim Chair Lazar briefly explained the roles and responsibilities of the officer positions before proceeding with the elections.

**A. Chairperson**

Lazar began serving as the interim chairperson with the resignation of Marcel Pultorak. Commissioner Dagher nominated Lazar to continue as chair. Lazar

declined. Commissioner Abusalah nominated Commissioner Hawkins. Commissioners Dagher and Jawad supported. Hawkins accepted. A roll call vote was held.

- Hawkins - Yes
- Dagher - Yes
- Biggs - Yes
- Abusalah - Yes
- Jawad - Yes
- Haidar - Yes
- Lazar - Yes

The Commission voted unanimously to approve Hawkins as Chairperson

**B. Vice Chairperson**

Commissioner Hawkins nominated Commissioner Dagher for the role of Vice Chairperson. Lazar supported. Dagher accepted. A roll call vote was held.

- Hawkins - Yes
- Dagher - Yes
- Biggs - Yes
- Abusalah - Yes
- Jawad - Yes
- Haidar - Yes
- Lazar - Yes

The Commission voted unanimously to approve Dagher as Vice Chairperson

**C. Secretary/Treasurer**

Commissioner Dagher nominated Jihan Jawad to retain her role as Secretary/Treasurer. Abusallah supported. Jawad accepted. A roll call vote was held.

- Hawkins - Yes
- Dagher - Yes
- Biggs - Yes
- Abusalah - Yes
- Jawad - Yes
- Haidar - Yes
- Lazar - Yes

The Commission voted unanimously to approve Jawad as Secretary/Treasurer

**IV. Department Reports**

**A. Historical Museum**

Interim Chair Lazar proposed to change future agendas to allow the representative from the Historical Museum to present their reports first.

- Commissioner Hawkins motioned to approve. Commissioner Dagher seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Hawkins suggested a consent agenda for future meetings. The group discussed. Deputy Corporation Counsel Mendelsohn noted the Commission bylaws would need to be changed to reflect this should it become practice.

Historical Commissioner Bugeia reported that several memorial trees were planted on Museum grounds, honoring residents who have made a lasting impact at the Museum.

She reported that the Pioneer School program wrapped up on June 2.

She reported that the banjo concert at the HFCL auditorium on May 2 was well-attended.

The Museum's antique cars were repaired for the Memorial Day parade route.

Women from the Daughters of the Civil War were recognized at the May 30 Decoration Day ceremony, including descendants of the 103rd Regiment.

The annual Teddy Bear Picnic will be held on June 28.

The Historical Walking Tours began on June 14 at the Rouge Greenway. There will be another on June 26 in west downtown, followed by July 12 at Warren Avenue, and returning to west downtown on August 1.

The Vintage Sale will be held on August 16 through 18.

**B. Library Foundation**

Director Adams reported that two new members were accepted to the board. She expressed enthusiasm for the diverse backgrounds of the board members.

Price quotes were shared with the Foundation for wishlist items for the Library.

**C. Director's Report**

Please see the report in full starting on page 6.

- Commissioner Haidar departed the meeting at 5:46PM

**V. New Business**

**A. Library 2026 Holiday Closures**

The Commission reviewed the proposed dates. Director Adams noted that the holiday closure schedule coincides with the City's, with some variations for weekends and staff training days. Deputy Corporation Counsel Mendelsohn noted that facilities closures require approval from both the Commission and City Council. The group discussed some conflicts with the City's holiday schedule and Library contracts. Interim Chair Lazar proposed tabling the item until more clarity could be reached.

- Commissioner Hawkins motioned to table the proposed holiday closure schedule. Commissioner Dagher seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- Commissioner Abusalah departed the meeting at 6:15PM.

**B. Rates & Fees Revision**

The rates and fees for conference room rentals were reviewed by the group. Director Adams noted that the revisions were reflective of the policies and fees of nearby library systems, particularly Dearborn Heights.

Tiered pricing was presented under the proposal. Rentals would be free for Dearborn residents for civic use for up to two hours; Dearborn-based businesses would be charged \$35 per hour for up to four hours; non-residents and all other groups would be charged \$50 per hour for up to four hours. An additional \$20 per half-hour would be charged beyond four hours. Private parties and celebrations were found to not align with Library values and are excluded for rentals.

Director Adams explained the rationale for the proposed new rates, including the need to promote local businesses and provide affordable space for community groups, while recouping costs for maintenance. She further stated that libraries should provide free and affordable spaces as a core tenant. The group discussed varying sentiments of City leadership in this regard.

Commissioner Dagher made a motion to approve. Commissioner Biggs seconded. Commissioner Hawkins requested a roll call vote.

- Hawkins - No
- Dagher - Yes
- Biggs - Yes
- Jawad - Yes
- Lazar - Abstained

Motion failed. Interim Chair Lazar called to table the vote until more commissioners could be present.

**\*\*Note:** Further correspondence from Deputy Corporation Counsel Mendelsohn on 7/1/25 indicated a misunderstanding of the Commission bylaws (Article 4, Section 6). As a quorum was present, and a majority voted in favor, the motion was deemed to have passed. Relevant parties were notified of this change.

**C. Wayne County Penal Fines Settlement**

Deputy Corporation Counsel Mendelsohn presented a settlement offer from Wayne County regarding miscalculated distributions of penal fines payments. The Library is to receive \$241,764.55 under this offer. He stated that accepting the offer would forestall further litigation and ensure the full amount is received. He opined that the most sensible course of action was to accept, and noted that the offer is subject to approval by the Wayne County Commission.

- Commissioner Dagher motioned to pursue as directed. Interim Chair Lazar seconded. The Commission voted unanimously in favor.

**VI. Old Business**

**A. City Retiree Library Cards**

No vote was held in the April 2025 meeting. Interim Chair Lazar tabled the vote for the July meeting.

Interim Chair Lazar stated that the Commission had received emails expressing concern for the quality of Library professional development training days. Director Adams shared that the most recent session consisted of KultureCity sensory accessibility training, and training for the Summer Reading Program. Commissioner Hawkins requested that agendas and packets for future training sessions be brought to Commission meetings for review, along with statistics and feedback when applicable.

The Commission deliberated on conducting a closed session at a future date to address privileged legal matters.

**VII. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 6:47PM

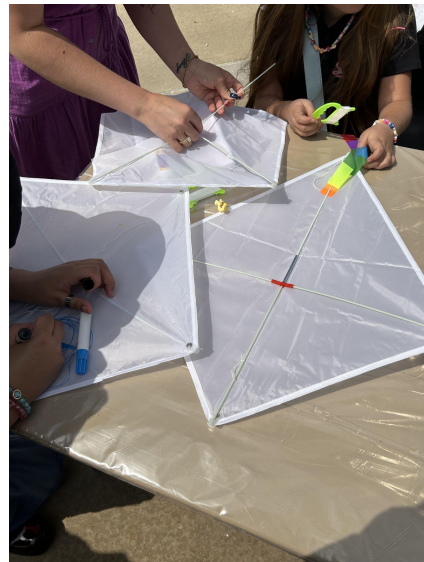
# Dearborn Public Library

## Director's Report

Presented at the Library Commission Meeting

Wednesday, June 25, 2025

Betty Adams, Library Director



*Summer Reading Kick-Off  
was a colorful success on  
Saturday, May 31, 2025*

# Commissioner Notes & Patron Feedback

- "The talk was so interesting and important (Grand Bargain Talk) — all the newspapers should cover it!"
- "Thank you very much for having this program (When Detroit Played the Numbers). Please continue these types of events. Great presentation, very knowledgeable and educational!"
- "Staff was so very helpful and patient too! I'm 66 yrs old and doing some things the first time on a computer... [the employee] did it with a joyous energy and smile. Kudos to a great employee. I loved my day in this library!"
- "I just want to share our renewed enthusiasm for the Children's Department. We love the increase in accessible interactive toys and learning tools. We had been visiting other libraries, but now we love it here! Tell the youth staff they are doing an excellent job."
- "The conversation with Matthew Specktor was wonderful. Thank you so much for hosting it!"
- A patron was delighted to learn we had a graphic novel section for adults after receiving staff assistance locating a title.

These patron statements highlight growing appreciation for:

- Dynamic and relevant adult programming
- Outstanding customer service
- Enhancements in youth services and interactive spaces
- Staff commitment to accessibility and lifelong learning

## Strategic Priority 1: Cultivate Library Programming and Services that Foster Community Connections

- **Programs like When Detroit Played the Numbers and the Grand Bargain Talk** reflect a growing focus on cultural history and civic engagement.
- **Author visit with Matthew Specktor** fostered thoughtful community dialogue and attracted new audiences.
- **Ongoing excellent customer service**, exemplified by Jeremy's support of older adult patrons learning digital skills, builds trust and increases patron comfort.

## Strategic Priority 2: Innovate Library Spaces to Support Learning and Collaboration

- **Youth Department updates** to include more accessible, interactive toys and learning tools have significantly improved the in-library experience for children and families, as noted in direct patron feedback.
- **Improved shelving organization** and dedicated spaces such as the adult graphic novel section help patrons independently navigate and discover resources more effectively.

# Commissioner Notes & Patron Feedback

## Strategic Priority 3: Elevate Library Visibility and Outreach Efforts

- Community excitement around programs like the Grand Bargain Talk, When Detroit Played the Numbers, and author conversations shows our events are resonating widely.
- Feedback asking for continued programming of this type underscores public interest in high-quality, relevant events.

## Strategic Priority 4: Increase Accessibility for Children, Youth, and Seniors

- Direct praise for Youth Services highlights our success in responding to family needs with engaging, sensory-rich environments.
- Positive recognition of staff assistance in helping older adults gain computer confidence showcases progress in digital inclusion.



*Tool Time at HFCL on May 3 was tool-tastic!*





# Current Happenings at the Library

- Summer Reading is in full swing! Sign Up!
- New Library Branch Manager and Library Supervisor
- Preparing to complete the fiscal year budget
- Bryant has entered the Bid and Contract drafting phase of planning
- Esper has entered the Design phase of planning
- Drafting plans for the upcoming closure due to construction of the Esper Branch
- The Great Dragon Hunt of 2025 is going strong, partnering with Parks and Recreation



*Councilwoman Leslie Herrick was welcomed as a storytime reader at Bryant Branch on May 13, 2025.*

# Strategic Priority 1

## Cultivate Library Programming and Services that Foster Community Connections

### Adult Services

- *You Can Never Die Talk* and *Talk with Elliot Wilhelm* attracted 18 and 19 patrons respectively. Attendees praised the speakers and the newly renovated auditorium.
- *Country Blues Narrative with Songs*, *Puzzle Challenge*, *Open Mic Night*, and *DIY Lotion Balms* successfully blended entertainment with hands-on creativity and social connection.
- *Teens in Motion* used LEGOs to build Rube Goldberg machines, showcasing STEAM learning through fun.
- Summer Reading Kickoff included caricature artist Andrew Sigman and enthusiastic community turnout.

### Youth Services

- **Summer Reading Kickoff:** Over 125 attendees enjoyed a festive outdoor event with kites, music, lawn games, arts, and LAHC support.
- **Community Collaboration:** Attended "Discover and Play Family Fest" where staff engaged in nursery rhyme-themed activities and networked with early childhood organizations.
- **Notable Programming:**
  - *Tool Time* for hands-on family interaction.
  - *Dress to Impress IRL*, storytimes, and crafts engaging children across age groups.
  - Regular connections with patrons and their families foster deep community bonds (e.g., "Connect Four" playtime with Miss Meghan).



*Dress to Impress IRL had youth show off their style and sense of humor in this Roblox adventure come to life at the Henry Ford Centennial Library in the Auditorium.*



*Miss Meghan engaging with a youthfilled patron using our newly available in-house non-traditional collection items, such as vehicles, checkers, dinosaurs, Legos and more!*

# Strategic Priority 2

## Innovate Library Spaces to Support Learning and Collaboration



*The Library is filling with color and creativity to highlight our Summer Reading theme, Color Our World!*



### Processing

- **Collection Growth & Support:**
  - 1,372 items received, 928 added to collection, 1,482 relabeled.
  - 148 items transferred from Bryant (EBL) to HFCL to improve shelf distribution.
  - Lending Lab launch included 3 new outdoor games added to the collection; more items underway.
- **Ordering Transition:** Fiscal year purchasing ended May 19; budgets now under review for the next fiscal cycle.

### SparkLab Activity

- 10 new SparkLab patrons registered in May.
- 20 sign-ins recorded, 34 machine uses logged.
- 3D print and specialty print requests processed; equipment reservations support growing maker interest.

### Automation & Facility

- **Space Efficiency & Tech:**
  - Commercial digitization via D-Lab saved patrons \$3,000+.
  - 15 public events supported with tech, including peaceful demonstrations and Summer Reading.
  - Updated internal access to weekend schedules improves remote staff coordination.



*Open Mic Night brings the community together through collaborative and individual opportunities to try something new.*

# Strategic Priority 3

## Elevate Library Visibility and Outreach Efforts

### Digital Engagement

- **Online Metrics:**
  - 14,000 active website users, 32,000 page views in May.
  - Top resources included OverDrive, ValueLine, and Kanopy.
  - Gender and SS# fields were removed from Horizon system for improved privacy.

### Community & Event Support

- Major support provided for Summer Reading Kickoff
- Hosting First Responders Training
- peaceful demonstration support

Three examples from May of the Library reinforcing our visibility and commitment to city-wide events.



*Outreach can take many forms, opening our doors to offer outreach opportunities at our various locations is another way we provide support for our community while improving our visibility.*



# Strategic Priority 4

## Increase Accessibility for Children, Youth, and Seniors

- **Inclusive Training:**

Staff received KultureCity training to better serve patrons with sensory sensitivities.

- **Digital Equity:**

2,640 public computer logins in May; Automation continued enhancements to access and service platforms.

- **Youth Engagement:**

Deepened personal connections with families through early literacy programming, play-based learning, and staff approachability.

- **Improved Collections:**

In May, multiple departments worked vigorously to prepare for the launch of the Lending Lab, a collection of non-traditional library materials, available to all patrons for check out.



*All Staff Training in May secured our team with Kulture City Training and Certification! Soon, the Library will be a sensory inclusive location with materials available for patrons to use and checkout.*

# Circulation & Service Trends

## Circulation Totals (May 2025)

- HFCL: 15,014 (+10.15%)
- Bryant: 3,091 (-1.81%)
- Esper: 1,018 (-3.48%)
- Digital Content (combined): Over 12,000 digital loans; Comics Plus added as new resource.
- TOTAL: 33,357 (+5.89%) from May 2024

## Library Visits

- Total: 20,287 visitors in May (+8.25%)
- HFCL (1st Floor): 16,049
- Esper saw a notable increase to 2,594 visitors (+9.65%)

## New Registrations

- 173 new patrons registered in May (up from 166 in May 2024)



Thank you!



*Esper Lego Club has continued community engagement.*

