

Daniel Boone Regional Library

Minutes, Meeting of July 10, 2025

Call to Order, Roll Call and Quorum Determination

Cori Miller, President, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Daniel Boone Regional Library (DBRL) Board members present were Shannon Alvis, Margrace Buckler, Dorothy Carner, Dawn Dirks, Mary Fennel, Jacqueline Kelly, Cori Miller, Pat Powell, and Travis Pringle. Seth Christensen, Lisa Finn, Tonya Hays-Martin, Jean Howard, and Jennifer Rodewald were absent.

Also in attendance was DBRL Executive Director Robin Westphal as well as DBRL managers Erin Magner, Angela Scott, Jim Smith, Karen Crago, Mitzi St. John, Nathan Pauley, Sara Henry, Sheryl Bucklew, and other members of library staff.

Public Comment

None.

Minutes

There were no corrections or comments concerning the minutes of the June 12, 2025 Board Meeting. The minutes were approved as written.

Monthly Reports

Director's Report:

Robin was happy to share that DBRL has won the Senator Chuck Graham Memorial Disability and Advocacy Ambassador Award because of our programs like Adults with Disabilities programs, Sensory Friendly Story Times, Memory Cafe, and more. This is the first time this award was given to an organization rather than an individual. Robin shared that the award will be presented at the Monday, August 4 City Council meeting which all of the trustees are invited to attend.

Robin reported that, earlier that morning, we hosted a breakfast for the Friends of the Columbia Public Library to honor their hard work. Also celebrated at this event was Debbora Jones who recently stepped down after 20 years of service as the Friends' President. On June 14th, we tabled at the Grown Up Book Fair selling a little over \$500 in books. Robin added that, each year, we also receive a portion of the ticket sales from the event which equated to a \$2,600 donation this year.

Lastly, Robin shared that the Missouri House of Representatives has created an interim committee on property tax which will begin gathering information and input in order to evaluate possible changes to statewide property taxes. Robin, Erin Magner, and Jim Smith will be attending the first of the committee's hearings on July 16. Robin shared that she planned on giving testimony and that she will be working with the other special taxing districts in Boone County to further advocate as a group.

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Financial Report:

Jim Smith reported that, as seen in the May report, our Total Revenue is as expected for this time of year and that property taxes are still ahead due to the change in our collection pattern. In regards to the Investment Interest line, Jim shared that he is still working with the Boone County Treasurer's Office to receive the February-June monthly statements for the Boone County Investment Pool. Moving on to the Expenditures section, Jim reported, under the Salaries and Benefits line, that 45% of the budget had been expended, but that he would expect utilization to be at 48%, meaning we are under budget. Jim shared that this line being under budget will help other lines like Health and Dental Insurance and Short Term Disability Insurance which are currently overbudget.

Under the General Operating Section, Jim shared that we are still over budget for Personal Vehicle Mileage as the IRS reimbursement rate increased after the budget was finalized. Jim further shared that he expects to be over budget for Postage as well as the postal service is raising their rates. Lastly, Jim shared that he has received the first quarter vehicle maintenance and gasoline invoices from the City of Columbia.

Service Report:

Robin reported that Circulation was down in Holts Summit by 23.3% compared to June of 2024, however this decrease may be explained by the homeschooling groups that frequented the branch in 2024, checking out large quantities of books at a time. Another notable number that Robin shared from the report was Library Visits at the Southern Boone County location which seemingly increased by 168% when compared to June of 2024. Robin further explained that this large increase was actually due to the door counter being broken, thus under reporting the visits in 2024.

Robin also reported that we would be evaluating the service report in the future as it has not been changed in several years. One addition to the report she mentioned was adding statistics for our Community Resource Specialist regarding her contacts with patrons like number of contacts, etc.

Service Spotlight: Books by Snail Mail - Erin Swearngin

Erin Swearngin, Children's Librarian, introduced herself to the board and shared that she has been a part of the Books by Snail Mail team for nine years. Erin shared that this program runs throughout the summer and serves children in rural parts of our district who are not able to access a library while school is not in session by mailing books to their house free of charge. Registration forms are delivered to the schools before summer break, or parents can find the form on our website. These forms give the child, and their parent, the ability to tell the librarians what types of books they would like to receive. Once the form is received, and the Books by Snail team has selected materials, the books are mailed to the children for them to read and send back. Erin shared that they are able to request more books through the summer and that some of the children send back notes to the team, some of which she shared with the board.

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So far this year, the team has 188 students enrolled in the program and typically they have people signing up all the way up to August. Erin went on to thank all of the other departments that help make this program work and opened the floor for questions and comments. Pat Powell asked whether the children have to send all of the books back before receiving more, to which Erin shared that for the most part yes, but that they allow them to keep some chapter books longer and allow them to be sent back with the next batch of books. Shannon Alvis shared that her nine year old loves getting things in the mail and asked whether they had considered doing the program all year on a subscription basis to more than just the rural areas. Erin shared that they would love to serve more areas and be able to extend the program in the future.

District Reports

Callaway County Library District Report:

Mary Fennel reported that the Callaway County Library District Board of Trustees met on July 8 to discuss additional funding needed for the Callaway County Public Library HVAC project. The board voted to recommend that the DBRL Board of Trustees approve utilizing funds from the Helen J Forsee Donation Fund for the remainder of the cost of the project.

Robin further shared the other options the CCLD board had to come up with the extra funds for the HVAC project. Cori Miller shared that no vote was necessary at this time, but that the vote would be in new business under the 2026 Budget Amendment.

New Business

Director's Evaluation Staff Survey Presentation:

Karen Crago, HR Director and Evaluation Committee Staff Liaison, shared that a staff survey was conducted as a part of the 2025 Executive Directory Evaluation which saw a 51% participation rate (95 of 187 employees). Karen shared that staff were given the option to provide demographic information, such as whether they were managers, full-time or part-time, and where they worked and that most chose to answer these questions. The feedback from this survey, which included five rating questions and one open ended response question, showed a significant positive change when compared to last year's staff survey. For example, Karen shared that over half of the respondents (53.2%) stated that the library's overall direction is exceeding expectations, compared to just 20.2% in 2024 and only 3.2% indicated a need for improvement this year, a drop from 28.6% last year.

When asked about Executive Director Robin's leadership, a strong majority of staff reported satisfaction with her efforts to foster a people-first workplace and increase transparency and communication. One question, for instance, showed that over 75% felt Robin is exceeding expectations in promoting openness with the board and staff.

Leadership and managerial feedback was also overwhelmingly positive. Among the leadership team, 100% agreed that Robin is exceeding expectations in cultivating a supportive workplace culture. Managers echoed these sentiments, with no responses indicating a need for improvement in key areas.

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2026 Budget Amendment:

Jim shared that, as discussed earlier, the enclosed budget amendment would increase the Contributions line by \$506,000 to account for the needed funds for the HVAC project in Callaway County. These funds are to be taken from the Helen J Forsee Memorial Donation Fund which is managed by the DBRL Foundation.

ACTION: Powell moved, Alvis seconded approving the 2026 Budget Amendment which will permit utilizing funds from the Helen J Forsee Donation Fund for the remainder of the cost of the Callaway HVAC project. The vote was taken by roll call: Alvis– yes; Buckler – yes; Carner – yes; Dirks – yes; Fennel – yes; Kelly – yes; Miller – yes; Powell – yes; and Pringle – yes. The motion passed unanimously.

1-220 Nature of Employment:

Karen shared that the update to this policy was being requested to align it with the current Missouri Department of Labor’s language.

ACTION: Buckler moved, Pringle seconded approving Policy 1-220 Nature of Employment. The vote was taken by roll call: Alvis– yes; Buckler – yes; Carner – yes; Dirks – yes; Fennel – yes; Kelly – yes; Miller – yes; Powell – yes; and Pringle – yes. The motion passed unanimously.

1-330 Leave of Absence without Pay:

Karen shared that the changes requested in this policy would allow it to match the language used in the Union Agreement.

ACTION: Kelly moved, Alvis seconded approving Policy 1-330 Leave of Absence without Pay. The vote was taken by roll call: Alvis– yes; Buckler – yes; Carner – yes; Dirks – yes; Fennel – yes; Kelly – yes; Miller – yes; Powell – yes; and Pringle – yes. The motion passed unanimously.

1-323 Paid Time Off (PTO):

This policy was brought to the board at last month's meeting, but was tabled due to concerns with having a category of “0-4 hours worked” rather than “1-4 hours worked” in relation to how many PTO hours accrue for different working classifications. Karen shared that this change has been agreed upon by Leadership and the Labor Management Committee.

ACTION: Alvis moved, Kelly seconded approving Policy 1-330 Leave of Absence without Pay. The vote was taken by roll call: Alvis– yes; Buckler – yes; Carner – yes; Dirks – yes; Fennel – yes; Kelly – yes; Miller – yes; Powell – yes; and Pringle – yes. The motion passed unanimously.

Other Business

None.

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Staff Announcements

None.

Board Comments/Announcements

Shannon Alvis shared that she and her coworkers did a tour of the library, led by Jonya Pacey, which they all enjoyed. She shared that Jonya was fantastic and that a few of her coworkers signed up for library cards.

Cori Miller shared that at the last board meeting, she had asked about tween events at the Fulton branch and has since gotten a list of the programs. She shared that now that they know about the programs, her daughter has been going to the library nearly every day!

Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Cori Miller adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Emily Camden.

Jean Howard, Board Secretary