



Manatee County Library Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

February 25, 2026

Central Library Conference Room, 10 a.m.

Roll Call

Present:

Patsy Ugarte
Christine Callahan
Jim Russell
Lauren Quinn
Tammy Parrott
Commissioner Amanda Ballard

Unable to Attend:

Ashley Dawson

Guests:

Jeff Goldman
Mall Chaney

Call to Order

10:00 a.m. by Chairwoman Patsy Ugarte. Patsy took attendance and read the mission statement.

Approval of Minutes

Patsy inquired if everyone reviewed the minutes from January 21, 2026. Christine made the motion to approve the minutes, and Lauren seconded. All were in favor; the motion carried. Therefore, Patsy announced the minutes were approved.

Library Services Updates & Information

- Tammy welcomed new Advisory Board member Lauren Quinn. Ms. Quinn introduced herself and shared that she resides in Lakewood Ranch (LWR), relocated two years ago, is retired, currently operates a consulting firm, attended Rutgers University, and is married with two children. Board members and Commissioner Ballard introduced themselves.

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- Board Leadership Nominations:
 - Chair: Jim Russell (Motion: Patsy; Second: Christine; Unanimous approval)
 - Co-Chair: Lauren Quinn (Motion: Christine; Second: Patsy; Unanimous approval)
- Statistics and Staffing Updates:
 - Tammy advised usage continues to be robust. Average hold times continue to decline, it is not a lot, but it is movement.
 - Tammy went over Material Usage and pointed out that Catalog Logins has gone up 395%. The new catalog numbers have been located and added in with the legacy catalog. Marci has went back and corrected the data for previous months.
 - Tammy stated we continue to operate at full service with full hours, staff are engaged and committed to services running efficiently, library staff are passionate about what they do.
 - Tammy advised we have created a slate of 250 lectures and displays, displays are up. Normally you would not use encyclopedias, but this one created the American Flag. Currently downstairs on display at Central.
- Facility Updates: Tammy advised we are in good shape, some refresh happening around the branches and gave specific updates on CL, RKB, LWR and Mobile Services.
 - Central Library:
 - Youth Department ceiling collapse on 12/30/2025 has been repaired. Painting is currently underway from storm repairs.
 - Brick wall damage in staff parking lot is from a vehicle driving into the wall. Impact area is secured; repairs are coming from Property Management.
 - Rocky Bluff:
 - Remodel and expansion expected to begin late spring/early summer still.
 - Branch will be closed during renovations to expedite project timeline.
 - Commissioner Ballard recognized Rocky Bluff as a heavily used branch; service disruptions may generate public concern according to Tammy.
 - Lakewood Ranch 2nd Floor:
 - Second floor construction is estimated at six weeks from completion.
 - Furniture and fixtures are pending; floor is not staff ready.
 - Outreach & Mobile Services:
 - Outreach & Mobile Services will no longer be at Mixon. Outreach & Mobile Services team and collection will relocate to Braden River Library where one meeting room will close approximately one month prior to staff relocation to accommodate new team members.
- General Updates:
 - Tammy discussed centralized purchasing and how site Supervisors are brought in for discussions. Mango Language is an example of this.
 - Manago Language is not getting much traction; we have other options available and are looking at a 90 day window for this. There are things within Kanopy, and we can add more to Libby. That will bring us under budgets and give us the

- opportunity to get the NY Times online. This includes the historical data within NY Times also. We believe we will have high engagement with this one.
- Tammy went over the closing of Baker and Taylor. Currently there is a slowdown with delivery because the other vendors are busy with their business too. The slowdown is also caused because books now need to be processed in house once received. We can only do so much, staff are quick and we have improved some equipment to speed up the internal process.
 - Lauren asked if there is a benchmark for hold times.
 - Tammy stated there is not a benchmark, more gaged on complaints. Some will decide to go and purchase a book if there is a long hold on it. We want to continue to decrease hold times, see an improvement.
 - Christine asked if we track how often and how many people cancel their holds.
 - Tammy advised that is something we cannot capture.

New Business

- Legislative Action: Commissioner Ballard provided an update on state-level legislation regarding board structure.
 - A required 30-day public notice was deemed insufficient due to a technical “two click” website access issue.
 - The proposal will not move forward this session.
 - The matter may return at the local level next year.
 - The Advisory Board structure remains unchanged at this time.
 - Commissioner Ballard explained the rationale for proposed expansion, noting that county population growth since the original statute was established, when the majority of residents lived in west Bradenton.
- Staff Freeze: A freeze has been implemented on all open positions. Candidates were notified if postings were withdrawn.
 - Temporary positions have been offered to maintain service levels.
 - An internal posting has been initiated for the Bookmobile position.
 - Tammy advised that Lyn’s position remains a pressure point; temporary staffing will not be sufficient, though internal placement could be considered.
 - Jim Russell offered assistance to Tammy as needed during the staffing shortage.
- Property Tax Discussion: Commissioner Ballard provided an update regarding potential state level proposals to eliminate property tax, which could result in a projected loss of up to \$200 million annually countywide.
 - Public safety and Sheriff services cannot be reduced, placing pressure on other departments.
 - Five countywide budget workshops are being scheduled to educate the public on service levels versus potential reductions.
 - November will be a critical point of determination, with FY27–28 significantly impacted.

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- The hiring freeze timeline remains uncertain.
- Reported “DOGE” savings (approximately \$110 million) lack detailed breakdowns.
- Ferry services are funded by tourism tax, not property tax.

Old Business

- None

Action Items

- None

Comment

- Christine stated that she signed up for a class, unaware that it was only for one session and not all six sessions were provided.
 - Tammy advised this is a known vendor issue that limits class registration to single sessions rather than full series enrollment. Staff will consider adding clearer notice messaging during registration.
- Guest Jeff Goldman (Lakewood Ranch, LWR Friends Board member) introduced himself and echoed concerns regarding class registration clarity.
- Commissioner Ballard shared that Commissioner Felts passed away unexpectedly. The Board of County Commissioners will temporarily consist of six members. A tribute is planned for the next BoCC meeting.
 - Patsy inquired if the Governor will be appointing the position.
 - Commissioner Ballard advised the Governor may appoint a replacement, though the seat will be up for election this year.
- Tammy indicated one potential policy update this year related to Bookmobile services. The proposal would primarily address procedure and is expected after one year of operational data.

With no further business to discuss, Christine motioned to adjourn the meeting, Patsy seconded. Meeting adjourned at 11:00 am by James Russell

- Next meeting: 03/18/2026
- Time: 10:00am
- Location: Central Library – Central Library Conference Room