



Manatee County Library Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

July 15, 2026

Central Library Conference Room, 10 a.m.

Roll Call

Present:

Andy Sulavik
Christine Callahan
Jim Russell
Patsy Ugarte
Lauren Quinn
Ericka Dow
Chelsea Ross-Munro
Commissioner Amanda Ballard

Unable to Attend:

Ashley Dawson

Guests:

Mall Chaney
Jeff Goldman

Call to Order

10:00 a.m. by Chairman Jim Russell. Jim took attendance and read the mission statement.

Approval of Minutes

Jim inquired if everyone reviewed the minutes from June 17, 2026. Patsy made the motion to approve the minutes, and Christine seconded. All were in favor; the motion carried. Therefore, Jim announced the minutes were approved.

Library Services Updates & Information

- Andy introduced himself to the Board and shared his vision and priorities as the new County Librarian. He emphasized the importance of stability, consistency, system-wide alignment, and data

driven decision making, noting the Library's history of leadership turnover. He plans to build on existing work to strengthen organizational culture, documentation, communication, and coordination among branches and staff. Andy stated he is currently conducting a staff listening tour, with plans to engage community stakeholders next.

- Jim welcomed Andy, believes he will be a big asset, and advised Andy he has a great group of people but may need direction. The addition of a person like Andy to the organization will make it better within a couple years.
- Commissioner Ballard thanked Andy for taking on this role during this transition. With the experience and attitude coming in, it is the right attitude to have.
- Statistics: Ericka
 - Brooke has provided the most recent material usage from June 2026.
 - LinkedIn learning has been discontinued. The service has been off since last fall but officially discontinued now.
 - Libby users have increased over 20%. Mostly due to Hoopla's discontinuation.
 - Summer Learning Program has 3,297 active readers signed up as of 07/14/2026. Over 5,000 rewards have been given away. Over 110,000 books have been read, this is only within six weeks.
 - Commissioner Ballard recommended local authors to us, Kel Sprague and Jessie Marks, they will be at the Palmetto Library on Saturday July 28 for a local author event.
 - Lauren asked if the percentage of kids in public schools participating was known.
 - Last year it was around 50,000-54,000 students.
- Facilities:
 - Central:
 - Andy advised we have been working with the County ADA Officer for around six months. We have updated public computers with Fusion; the computers have signs on them and the software is on the computer. There is an icon that gives prompts to patrons and assistance to surf websites or use other computer functions. There will be more steps at a later date due to staffing restrictions. Our self-check machines are ADA compliant.
 - Rocky Bluff:
 - Andy spoke with the project manager, David, and David believes it will be six months before they close the branch. Kimberly Middleton will be our new project manager as David is leaving. We do not know if this will delay or speed up the project at this time.
 - Lakewood Ranch Second Floor:
 - Andy just completed a walkthrough, furniture is coming in. Once the final furniture is delivered, Andy and Jim will install the technology; self-checkout, remote printing, scan ez. The second floor will mostly be for adults, a three stage project.
 - Commissioner Ballard and board discussed signage for upcoming changes.
 - Braden River:
 - Andy advised last week one of the HVAC units at the branch went down. Worked around closing the branch by adjusting the working HVAC unit. One of the boards has been corrected as of Monday, but one is still waiting to be fixed.
 - Commissioner Ballard advised she was at the branch yesterday and it was comfortable there.

- Chelsea advised fabrics and finishes have been completed for Central and Palmetto's furniture. No date for delivery yet.
- Mixon:
 - Book drop at Mixon has been installed, wrapped and is open.
- Island:
 - New book drop for Island will be installed outside under the overhang so patrons can return books.
 - Christine asked if the drop located in the wall would be locked permanently.
 - Chelsea advised yes.
- Staffing:
 - Andy announced that Chenoa Shull was nominated and received Employee of the Month for July. She is a wonderful cataloger. Pasco County has seven branches, and we have less than half the staff they do, she is our only cataloger. The award presentation will take place at July 28, 2026, Board of County Commissioners' meeting.
 - Andy announced Courtney DeSear as the new Tech Services Supervisor. Courtney was previously Andy's Assistant Supervisor (Librarian II), she was overwhelmingly qualified and accepted the position. We do have her Assistant seat now vacant.

New Business

- Hours Reduction:
 - Andy went over the proposal for hours reduction that was prepared for Molly. Molly had to get approval from County Administration for the upcoming change. Starting August 1, 2026, the new effective hours will begin. Management is stretched thin at the moment, and we see managers asking for assistance with coverage, we may need to think about pulling some non-public facing staff to circulation.
 - Christine asked how the public is being informed, no notice on the app.
 - Ericka advised we pulled this together very quickly, Elle worked with our IO Department to come up with a roll out plan. It has been put on social media; the website and signage have started going out including yard signs. It is not going to be fool proof, but in phases.
 - Lauren inquired if we find more children attending programming while school is out.
 - Chelsea and Ericka advised yes, there is an increase in kids during the summer.
 - Lauren asked if during the summer we could open more time, a few hours at a time for kids.
 - Andy stated that the Island branch would be a prime location for in/out of season hours.
 - Discussion on moving the Advisory Board Meeting to 10:30am instead of 10am, allowing public entry to the building for the meeting.
- Staff Training Support:

Manatee County Library Advisory Board Minutes – July 15, 2026

- Andy advised that we no longer have a training budget from the county, we have asked the Foundation for more money and they will be assisting. Staff attend conferences and training, including our internal staff development day.
- Public Printing Prospective:
 - Andy stated that every year our public printing has grown by 33%, we have brought in about \$124,000 during that period. Our current printers are at the end of their life; we will easily save around \$40,000 by replacing the current ones with Cannon, which includes faxing. There will be savings in cartridges, they will now auto order instead of staff ordering. We expect this to take place over the next two months.

Old Business

- None

Action Items

- Advisory Board Meeting Time:
 - From New Business - For the duration of the reduced hours, a motion to move the Library Advisory Board meeting from 10am to 10:30am. All were in favor to move the meeting to change, Christine Motioned, Patsy Seconded. All were in favor; the motion carried.
- Central Library Considerations:
 - If you have any thoughts on downtown, how we can enhance our services.

Comment

- Mall Chaney:
 - Delighted for the next five years, there is a lot of work to do.

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

- Next meeting: 08/19/2026
- Time: 10:30am
- Location: Central Library – Central Library Conference Room