



REGULAR MEETING – LIBRARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS AGENDA

OCTOBER 9, 2025, 7:00 PM
BY ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING

To allow public access, anyone may access a meeting by telephone and/or Zoom, or a recording in the City of Norwalk YouTube channel. Specific instructions and links can be found at norwalkct.gov/meetings.



Members of the public may call in to participate. Callers will not be able to see the meeting participants. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, dial *9 on the phone and you will be called on by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. All speakers must state their name and address. Comments must be on a topic on the agenda, and are limited to three minutes. Anyone disrupting the orderly conduct of the meeting, including by using threatening, hateful, or sexually-explicit language, will be removed. Please find the information using the link above.



Members of the public who wish to provide "live comments" may also use the Zoom meeting platform. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, click the "raise your hand indicator" and you will be called by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. All speakers must state their name and address. Comments must be on a topic on the agenda, and are limited to three minutes. Anyone disrupting the orderly conduct of the meeting, including by using threatening, hateful, or sexually-explicit language, will be removed. Please find the information using the link above.



Members of the public who wish to provide public comment are encouraged to submit those via email in advance of the meeting. For these comments to be included into the record, they must be submitted by 12:00 p.m. the day of the meeting. Please email Sherelle Harris at sharris@norwalkpl.org with the subject line "Public Comment" to provide written public comment prior to the meeting.

- I. **CALL TO ORDER**
- II. **ROLL CALL**
- III. **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**
 - A. **Regular Meeting: July 10, 2025 and September 11, 2025**
 1. July 10, 2025 and September 11, 2025
- IV. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
- V. **REPORTS**
 - A. **President**
 1. Naming of the History Room

2. New CT Law: AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL AND PUBLIC LIBRARIES

B. Library Director

1. Burndy Library
<https://library.si.edu/libraries/dibner/history>
<https://www.inventionandtech.com/content/inside-burndy-library-1>
2. Library Museum Pass Perks Newsletter
3. Manreesa Island
<https://portal.ct.gov/deep/public-notices/public-notices-proposed-actions---opportunity-for-comment/proposed-individual-permits/manreesa-osprey-llc-norwalk>
4. Main Library Graffiti
5. Fixed: 3 Belden Avenue lot parking space blocking newly-installed sidewalk
6. Capital Budget Update
7. PT Hourly Rate Increase Update

VI. OLD BUSINESS

VII. NEW BUSINESS

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

**CITY OF NORWALK
LIBRARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS
JULY 10, 2025
VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING**

ATTENDANCE: Alex Knopp, Laurel Peterson, Mary Mann (Vice-Chair), Moina Noor (Chair), Jannie Williams, Patsy Brescia

STAFF: Sherelle Harris (Library Director)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Noor called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. There was a quorum present.

II. ROLL CALL

A roll call of those present was performed.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

A moment of silence was held for Cheryl Telesco.

III. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

The minutes have been tabled.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public present to comment at this time.

V. REPORTS

LIBRARY DIRECTOR

LIBRARY WITHOUT BORDERS UPDATE

Director Harris gave a presentation regarding Norwalk Public Library's (NPL) collaboration with Libraries Without Borders (LWB). NPL was selected as one of six libraries in Connecticut to participate in this initiative, which focuses on community inclusivity through libraries by providing information online and throughout the community to bring awareness to library services and programs. She was pleased to announce that the social media percentage increases gained while working with the LWB program is promising and that the information is the Connecticut State Library's website. Ms. Peterson inquired about the program's social media impact. Ms. Harris said social media posts raise awareness of NPL's programs and services, but staff are also cognizant of residents who do not use social media and work to find ways to reach them, as well. Vice Chair Brescia asked about press coverage. Ms. Harris agreed that press regarding the benefits of working with LWB would be beneficial.

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**CITY OF NORWALK
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Ms. Harris went on to provide an update on the work of both children’s departments, main library and SoNo library. She said the main library worked with the Norwalk Early Childhood Volunteer Reader program to provide books to community children’ ages 3 – 5. She said that the SoNo library began working with the Carver Center spring 2024. They bought four units that hold books to distribute in the community. They started with the Carver Center and have recently supplied a unit to Side By Side Community School for their kindergarten classes. She said an anonymous donor learned of their work with LWB and donated \$2,000 to each library to purchase picture books for this work. The main library used the money for their work with the Early Childhood Volunteer Reader program. The SoNo library used the money to stock the units they have in the community with books.

CAPITAL BUDGET UPDATE

Furniture selection was finalized for the adult reading room at the main library, designed with elderly readers in mind, similar to the furniture selection for SoNo’s first floor renovation project. Vice Chair Brescia, who was on the furniture selection committee along with Chair Moina Noor, Treasurer Jannie Williams, and Adult Services Director Cynde Lahey, asked questions regarding delivery and payment. Ms. Harris anticipates September delivery of the furniture for the main library’s adult reading room and the second phase of the SoNo library’s first floor renovation. She shared rendered images of the finalized furniture for the main library. Ms. Harris consulted with Bill Hnatuk, city of Norwalk ADA coordinator to ensure both projects were ADA compliant. She said \$20,000, the amount approved for the main library project would be paid by the city and the shortfall by the Library Foundation. She thanked the board for financial assistance with many projects including vestibule painting at SoNo and the updated outdoor furniture at the main library.

Also part of the capital project, exterior security cameras were installed at both libraries, along with one interior camera on the administrative floor of the main library, Ms. Harris noted, due to thefts from her office. Ms. Harris stated that access to camera footage would be given to her and to the manager of SoNo library to monitor SoNo. Ms. Harris said she would like for the Norwalk Police department to have access to the footage. Ms. Mann asked about the placement of cameras facing library staff and whether they were necessary. Ms. Williams expressed opposition to cameras at staff desks and recommended placing them in hallways and stairwells instead. Ms. Harris clarified that the exterior cameras would capture people going in and out of the building and didn’t see a need to have them directly on staff, but said the stairwells should be given consideration..

OPERATING BUDGET: GROUNDS ACCOUNT PROJECT UPDATE

Funds rolled over from FY2023-24 to FY2024-25 were used to remove fencing and resolve egress issues between the 1 Belden Avenue (main library) and 3 Belden Avenue parcels. Ms. Harris said Neil Rennie, from Guardian, the city of Norwalk’s management company, reported that he didn’t think the drainage issue was no longer a problem.

**CITY OF NORWALK
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JULY 10, 2025
VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING**

PASSPORT SERVICE

Ms. Harris reported that on July 1, 2025, the main library was approved as a passport acceptance facility by the U.S. Department of State's Office of Acceptance Facility Oversight. The South Norwalk Library, however, was not approved. That application will remain on file for one year, and the City may be contacted should additional acceptance sites be needed. The library is currently awaiting next-step instructions via email. Passport service is expected to begin in September.

SECURITY

The library, along with city hall and the health department, has transitioned to a new security guard company.

PEST CONTROL

A new pest control company has also been contracted. Ms. Harris noted that from her initial contact, the new company seems thorough. She stated that Mr. Rennie, from Guardian, introduced the library use Mosquito Squad to address the mosquito issues the main library has had for years and that she is satisfied with their service. Ms. Peterson raised concerns about pesticide use and bee protection. Ms. Harris confirmed that their products are “green” and were vetted for environmental safety.

TIDYING EFFORTS

Images were shown of various areas of the library that had recently been decluttered and reorganized. Chair Noor and others expressed support for the improvements. Areas tidied include the North entrance and the book sale section closest to the café.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business at this time.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

It was announced that the Board will not meet in August. The next meeting is scheduled for September.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jada Caballero

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**CITY OF NORWALK
LIBRARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS
REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 11, 2025**

ATTENDANCE: Janie Williams, Alex Knob, Geraldo Williams, Patsy Bryscia, Moina Noor, Laurel Peterson, Mary Mann (7:02 pm).

STAFF: Sherelle Harris

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Noor called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. A quorum was present.

II. ROLL CALL

A roll call of those present was performed.

III. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A. REGULAR MEETING: JULY 10, 2025

The minutes were tabled.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Ms. Diane Lauricella had her hand electronically raised but was unable to participate. The Board advised that they would reach out to her so she could call during the remainder of the meeting to participate.

V. REPORTS

A. PRESIDENT

1. Moment of Silence

A moment of silence was held for the late Councilmember Greg Burnett.

2. Debate/Voting at Main Library

Ms. Noor reported that the Norwalk Public Library hosted a well-attended Democratic primary debate between Ms. Young and Ms. Smyth and also served as a polling place. She thanked Ms. Harris, library staff, the Registrar of Voters, and the Norwalk Police Department for their coordination. She noted the library will again serve as a polling place in November and expressed pride in its role as a neutral space for democracy, adding that the high turnout reflected years of work improving parking and upgrading the facility.

3. Strategic Planning Next Steps

Ms. Noor thanked Mr. Rennie for his help with parking improvements, fence removal, and debris cleanup. She stated that the goal for the fall is to begin the strategic planning process, noting major changes since the last plan, including a post-COVID environment, an upcoming new mayor, the acquisition of two properties, and shifts in facility usage.

She added that she and Ms. Harris will work on initiating the RFP process to hire a strategic planning consultant to work with the board and the City, and, though they have not yet met with the Purchasing Department, they plan to move the process forward next week. Ms. Brescia extended her willingness to help during the RFP process.

B. LIBRARY DIRECTOR

1. Capital and Main Library Expansion Budget Update

Mr. Knopp voiced a concern about the use of library expansion funds. He stated that while the City appropriately used ARPA funds to acquire three buildings, \$800,000 from the library's expansion funds was used to acquire the parking lot behind the library through a condemnation process. He cautioned that a trial on the property's value is expected next month, and if the court awards more than \$800,000, there may be a possibility that the City may attempt to take the additional amount from the library's remaining expansion funds of about \$700,000. Mr. Knopp emphasized the need to clarify this with the city before issuing an RFP for a design expert, as they should not commit funds they may not actually control.

Ms. Harris provided a capital budget update, reporting the accounts that have been closed out, and estimating the time the remaining accounts will be closed. She reported that the laptop vending machine, which is nearly closed out, and shared usage data of about 700 checkouts FY2023-24 and over 800 checkouts FY2024-25. She explained that the difference between laptop vending machines and laptop dispensers is that the vending machines is the overall project when two machines were purchased for both libraries and the dispensers projects are per the contract to are upgrade the board and laptops every five years.

Ms. Harris noted that Guardian has a capital budget for library projects and will fund the main library elevator replacement, expected around January or February, as well as roof replacements at both libraries, though no timeline has been set yet. This will be funded through their FY2025-26 budget.

2. Statistical Comparison FY 2024-25

Ms. Harris reported that overall library numbers have risen since COVID, though program attendance dipped partly dipped. She noted it has been challenging to bring elementary-aged children back for programs, while attendance for ages 0–5 remains strong. Staff are offering virtual and self-directed programs to engage families.

Ms. Brescia suggested partnering with local scouts to encourage visits, and Ms. Noor proposed coordinating with SoNo staff to develop strategies to reengage older children and teens. Ms. Harris added that adult attendance trends were similar, though room bookings have increased, and Wi-Fi usage has increased. She said main branch door counts are rising, while SoNo's were affected by the closure, and highlighted the need to boost library card sign-ups through new outreach efforts. She mentioned a new idea of creating a museum pass perks newsletter showcasing current programs and events that the museums have. She noted in-house computer use has declined as more patrons bring their own devices utilizing the library's Wi-Fi. The library tracks computer usage by usage statistics track both sessions and minutes across age groups.

Ms. Noor commented on how technology is transforming patron interactions, and Ms. Brescia emphasized the library's growing role as a community center amid rising local population. Ms. Harris stated that when she was at SoNo she assigned a staff member to create outreach packets and take them to new apartment developments and develop a relationship with their staff for resident engagement. She said it would be a good idea to continue that outreach with the main library.

3. Updated Policy Approvals

The Board received and reviewed printouts for the following policies.

A. Circulation Policy

It was proposed for patron privacy and protection to record only the last four digits of identification provided (e.g., driver's license and passports without country name), while still verifying identity at the desk. It the "responsibilities of cardholders" to alert the library of any changes to the identification provided. Specific edits reviewed included removing language implying all transactions occur in person (given phone renewals) and adding the requirement to provide the last four digits of ID in addition to the month/day of birth.

****MS. BRESCIA MOVED THE CHANGES AS PRESENTED.**

**** MR. KNOPP SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

B. Homebound Policy

The Board discussed the Homebound Policy for formal adoption. The policy allows eligible Norwalk residents with medical/physical immobility to receive delivery of up to 10 items every few weeks at no fee; cardholders are required, and a designee may assist with signup.

****MS. BRESCIA MOVED TO ADOPT THE HOMEBOUND POLICY AS PRESENTED.**

**** MR. KNOPP SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

C. Museum Passes Policy

Members proposed increasing the \$5 fee for returning passes in the book drop to deter damage and misuse; \$25 was suggested. Ms. Williams thought the \$25 fee too high.

****MS. BRESCIA MOVED TO SET THE BOOK-DROP RETURN FEE AT \$25.**

**** MR. KNOPP SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****THE MOTION PASSED WITH ONE (1) OPPOSED (MS. WILLIAMS).**

It was also noted that museum pass use is broad. Wi-Fi hotspot lending was recently discontinued due to return issues, and a usage report on specific passes will be provided next month.

D. Materials Donation Policy

Ms. Harris stated that revisions to the material donations policy included removing references of friends group. Everything else remained, including Tuesdays and Thursdays as the preferred donation days, with flexibility as needed. The handling of cash associated with donations will be addressed separately and was tabled.

****MS. BRESCIA MOVED TO ADOPT THE POLICY CHANGES AS PRESENTED.**

**** MR. KNOPP SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. Part-time Staff Hourly Rate Increase Request

Concern that part-time staff have gone over ten years without raises, unlike full-time union staff who receive cost-of-living increases and step raises, was discussed.

Ms. Harris emphasized they work hard, are public-facing for long hours, and deserve recognition. She said the library is open seven days/week from 7.5 – 10 hours/day. She said she continually advocates for the raises. She was invited to a budget meeting and alerted Lamond Daniels who wasn't on the invitation list and the meeting was canceled to be rescheduled. Ms. Noir said she recently spoke with the Mayor's Chief of Staff to push for raises this year.

5. Library Van Update

Ms. Harris confirmed that the library van has been ordered by Mr. Matt Halverson. She noted she will follow up to find out when it will arrive, as it will take time to customize, and confirmed it will be an electric vehicle.

6. Main Library New Reading Room Furniture

Ms. Harris reported that new reading room furniture has arrived, designed for comfort and accessibility, and thanked the city for funding the project and the foundation for funding for agreeing to pay for the shortfall..

She noted wanting to use money left in the budget to replace the outdated auditorium chairs, which are not suitable for elderly patrons and haven't been replaced since the 1970s, with 150 stackable chairs at about \$170 each, totaling roughly \$31,000. If full funding is not available, they could consider purchasing fewer chairs.

7. Text Message Notifications

Text message notifications are nearly ready, with PINs set to be the last four digits of patrons' library card numbers. They expect to launch the feature by October.

8. Public Copiers/Printers with Credit Card Option

Upgrades to the public copiers are still in progress, as the system offered by Xerox was not compatible with the City's financial system. Ms. Harris said they are close to resolving the issue, which will allow patrons to pay by credit card instead of cash.

9. Passport Services

Ms. Harris reported that passport services were delayed due to one staff member's illness and another needing recertification. Since the passport agency did not approve the Sono branch, citing sufficient existing service in the area, that staff member will be reassigned to the main library which will give the main library two certified staff hired specifically for passport service. She hopes to launch passport services by October.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business discussed.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business discussed.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

There were technical difficulties experienced.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:10 pm.



INCIDENT

POLICE CASE #25-53039

AUGUST 23, 2025

MAIN LIBRARY

1 BELDEN AVENUE

Two young men, one in a black tee-shirt and another in a grey/white hoodie are seen entering from the 3 Belden parking lot onto northern library grounds at 9:28:42 PM on our security camera labeled North Entrance 3. They put graffiti on the northwest part of the library. At 9:31:53 PM they can be seen on camera labeled Parking Lot 1 putting graffiti on the library generator.

On the same camera, labeled Parking Lot 1, they can be seen moving west toward the library container in the library parking lot at 9:32:47 PM. The young man in the grey/white hoodie put graffiti on the library container and both exit the library, as seen on camera labeled Parking Lot 2 at 9:33:33 PM.

Approximately eight (8) minutes later a young man in a tee-red shirt enters library grounds as seen on the camera labeled North Entrance 1 at 9:41:12 PM and runs west toward the library parking lot. He looks around as seen on the camera labeled Parking Lot 1 and then exits at 9:42:45 PM as seen on same the camera labeled Parking Lot 2.

I reported the incident to the Code Enforcement Department (graffiti removal). The graffiti was removed from the generator, but not yet the building or the container. They have to match the paint on the latter two.

I don't want the youth arrested. I would like for them to receive a warning.

Please let me know if I can provide more information.

Respectfully submitted,
Sherelle Harris, Library Director
August 26, 2025













DATE 8/26/25 CASE # 25-53039

NORWALK POLICE

ONE MONROE STREET

NORWALK, CT 06854 (203) 854-3000

The above case number has been assigned to your complaint. When making inquiry about your case, kindly refer to the assigned case **NUMBER**. See back of card for obtaining accident reports.

OFFICER Nelson BADGE # 1008

You may pick up a copy of your accident report at either the Norwalk Police Dept., or online at:

www.buycrash.com

Prielson@norwalkct.gov

Case #

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10.7.25

