



Trustees Attending: Greg Brakebill - Board Chair, Richard Fogg - Vice Chair, Dawn Reagan, Shawn Graham, Dexter Stewart, Becca Wolfenbarger, Robert White, Kyle Anderson, Kathleen Christy

Staff Attending: Dustin Goforth - BCPL Director, Anjanae Brueland - Deputy Director, Summer Dale

Visitors: Vandy Kemp - Friends of the Blount County Public Library, Nikki Snyder - Ocoee River Regional Library

Call to Order: Greg Brakebill called the Blount County Public Library Board to order on 21 October 2025 at 5:30pm.

Approval of Minutes: Richard Fogg made a motion to approve the 16 September 2025 BOT Meeting Minutes. Dexter Stewart seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Public Comment:

- The board did not hear any public comments.

Report of the Board of Trustees Chair by Greg Brakebill:

- Dustin will be evaluated by the Board in November.
 - Greg passed out evaluation forms for the Board to fill out and return by November 4th..
 - Dawn Reagan will compile them the following day. The end result will be presented at the November board meeting.
- Greg discussed a training that he, Dustin, and Kathleen attended in Crossville, TN, on Library Advocacy.
- He, Dustin, Vandy, and Trevis continue to discuss strategic planning.

Dawn Reagan made a motion to move the Funding Request for Harper Plushies conversation to the beginning of the Board meeting to accommodate the Custom Plushies Representative. Shawn Graham seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Funding Request for Harper Plushies

- Dustin Goforth discussed highlighting BCPL's new mascot, Harper the flying squirrel, as she is identifiable, recognizable, and steeped in history..
- BCPL would like to order Harper plushies as an outreach and promotion tool.
- Harper was designed by Visual Voice just like BCPL's branding.
- This would be a Friends collaboration.
- The funding request includes a quote for 1,000 Harper plushies, including shipping.
- Kerri from Custom Plush explained that the price includes a customizable sewn-in label and hang tag.
- The Bard will be presented with a plushie prototype before it goes to production.
 - We will also be sent a sample to approve.
- If the Board and Friends approve, then we should be able to have them made before Summer Reading next year.



Dawn Reagan made a motion to approve the Harper Plushies and submit for funding by the Friends. Richard Fogg seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Report of the Blount County Public Library Director by Dustin:

- Dustin thanked the Board for their approval of the Strategic Planning meetings with Maelea Galyon.
 - He explained that the staff felt it was a highlight.
 - Managers and specific staff were invited to attend, and the collaboration was wonderful.
 - The topics were narrowed to Enhanced Long-Term Planning, Growth Efficiencies and Staff Training, and Better Use of Space and Facilities.
 - The next meeting will be on October 23, 2025.
- Budget planning is a major priority at this time.
 - Dustin thanked Anjanae and Summer for their assistance.
- Dustin shared some key September statistics results:
 - BCPL welcomed 2,000 additional people from Blount County compared to last year.
 - We had 45,000 more visits.
 - 144,000 more items were circulated.
 - We had 25 more programs than last year.
- The Blount Partnership's Long Table event went well.
- We have a new Food Services Associate, Madison Adams.
- We will be adding the online Comics Plus database to our collection, which allows unlimited check-outs. We are currently in a soft launch phase.
- As our current App is being discontinued, we will be transitioning to Labrista via Atrium.

Financial Report, Anjanae Brueland:

- Anjanae shared that one of PR's TikToks went viral with over 197,000 views in a week.
- Finances are tracking well.
 - The Food Supplies line is being observed as we are moving a lot of product.
 - Revenue in the Cafe is the highest it's been in the same period.
- Anjanae is in talks with County Finance regarding how to move forward.
 - Everything with the budget is going well, and there are no surprises.
- Funding letters were sent out in October.
 - Every Quarter, BCPL writes its funders requesting their quarter of the Budget.

Report of Foundation Board, Trevis Gardner:

- Trevis was not present.
- Greg explained that the Foundation is currently working on fundraising and large donations.

Report of Friends of the Library, Vandy Kemp:

- Vandy Kemp gave a report on the Friends.
- The Friends are working on a new strategy to improve eBay and book sales.
 - They will be focusing on membership management.
 - They are trying to do more outreach.
 - Friends painted pumpkins with kids at the BCPL Fall Festival.
- They are hard at work making sure the strategic plan they adopted in June is implemented.
 - Four teams are working on the strategic objectives.
- The average weekly donation is about 5-6,000 items.



Report of Ocoee River Regional Library, Nikki Snyder:

- The Ocoee River Regional Library Report and the READS FY 2024-25 Data Statistics were distributed by email prior to the meeting.
- Nikki Snyder shared updates from the Regional Library.
- She thanked Greg for his contribution at the training in Crossville, TN.
- There has been a change in continuing education. Staff no longer have to log specific state-sponsored training. Any job-related training will count for continuing education hours.

Old Business:

- The Code of Ethics policy was discussed.
 - The discussion was tabled.

Kathleen Christy made a motion to move this policy to November's meeting so that the new policy format can be implemented. Becca Wolfenbarger seconded the motion. The motion carried.

- The Public Use of Children's policy was discussed.
 - The discussion was tabled.

Shawn Graham made a motion to table this policy until the November meeting in order to implement the new policy format. Dexter Stewart seconded the motion. The motion carried.

- The Bookmark Cafe Employee Health Policy and Contract was discussed.
 - The discussion was tabled.

Shawn Graham amended his original motion to include both policies, which will be tabled until November. Dexter Stewart seconded the motion. The motion carried.

New Business:

- The BCPL Employee Handbook was presented.
 - Dustin explained that much of the language was updated for consistency, and links to the online policies were included.
 - We would like to remove the Education Leave benefit, which allows an employee to take an entire year off for school, as this would be very challenging staffing-wise.
 - The discussion was tabled.

Funding Requests:

- Friends Funding Request: Harper Plushies

Story Theme Mission and Values

- Dustin presented a new mission and vision statement, which highlights the welcoming, family-friendly connection that sets BCPL apart from other Libraries.
- Together, the staff crafted a message with a "story" theme.
 - Mission: to empower and connect our community so that every story can be shared
 - Vision: building community by sharing stories, creating connections, and inspiring imagination.
 - If the Board has any suggestions, please send them to the bcpl.director@blounttn.org email.



Kyle Anderson made a motion to allow the change in the Mission and Vision statements. Dexter Stewart seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Additional Closing Comments:

- The next Friends meeting will be on October 28, 2025, at 4pm.

Important Dates:

Other Library Meetings

Blount County Commission Meeting – 16 October 2025, 6:00 pm – BC Courthouse

Blount County Friends of the Library – 24 October 2025, 4:00 pm – BCPL

Foundation for the Blount County Public Library – 17 October 2025, 8:00 am – BCPL

Maryville City Council - 4 November 2025, 7:00 pm – Maryville Municipal Bldg

Alcoa Board of Commissioners - 11 November 2025, 7:00 pm – Alcoa Municipal Bldg

Next Library Board Meeting – 18 November 2025, 5:30 pm, Sharon Lawson Room

Motion to Adjourn: Dexter Stewart made a motion to adjourn. Kyle Anderson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The next Library Board meeting will be held on 18 November 2025 at 5:30 pm, in the Sharon Lawson Room

Respectfully submitted,
Summer Dale