

MINUTES OF THE DAVIESS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MONTHLY MEETING
July 16, 2025

Members Present: Susan Montalvo-Gesser, President
Kathi Mattas, Secretary
Kevin Dorth
Al Mattingly

Others Present: Erin Waller, Director
Debbie Young, Business Manager

Absent: Rodney Ellis, Treasurer
Comm. Janie Marksberry, Fiscal Court Liaison

The meeting was called to order in the 2nd floor public lounge by Mrs. Montalvo-Gesser at 5:05 p.m.

Mrs. Montalvo-Gesser called for approval of the June 2025 minutes. The motion to approve was made by Al Mattingly, seconded by Kevin Dorth, and carried unanimously.

Debbie Young presented the Treasurer's Report. With no questions or corrections, the motion to approve was made by Kathi Mattas, seconded by Al Mattingly, and carried unanimously.

Erin Waller presented the Director's Report, including:

1. Two board positions will open in September. The library will be taking applications until August 15, and then will submit those to KDLA for consideration.
2. On August 14, the bid opening will begin for the second floor library remodel.
3. A company has been secured for the hail damage repairs on the library-owned houses.

Old Business.

1. First Reading. Request for Reconsideration Policy:

The board discussed and made suggestions regarding the proposed new RFR policy and form. Director Erin Waller took notes and indicated a revised proposed policy and form would be prepared for the August meeting, including multiple options on some points for the board to consider and choose from.

2. "Discussion of "The Bare Naked Book":

At the previous meeting, the board had given instruction to "look into creating a JPar books location ... in order to keep the JPar collection within the children's department area for parents' convenience, while also making it less accessible to young children." Director Waller informed the board that staff noted there were also "parenting" books in the Adult Non-Fiction collection. In conjunction with the upcoming second floor remodel plans, the Adult Non-Fiction collection would be moved to the second floor, and the Adult Fiction collection moved to the first floor. Therefore, staff suggests incorporating the JPar books, to include The Bare Naked Book, into the Adult Non-Fiction parenting collection. A board member asked if the Adult Non-Fiction parenting collection could be shelved closer to the children's department for parents' ease of access to those titles, and the reply was in the affirmative.

New Business.

“Discussion of ‘Sold’ Book”: With just four board members present, and the potential for another 2 – 2 tie vote on any proposed action, President Montalvo-Gesser suggested tabling the item until the August meeting, when hopefully a full board will be present to review Sold. A majority of the board agreed.

Susan Montalvo-Gesser called for Public Comment. There were about 35 people in attendance, with four “yes” and two “maybe” signed up to speak to the Board.

Jerry Chapman referenced the RFR list submitted two years ago and the First Amendment Freedom of Speech rights he was commended by library staff for exercising at that time. He had spoken with a Constitutional Law attorney about the proposed RFR changes discussed at the last meeting and urged the board to heed warnings and concerns about these First Amendment rights in making policy changes. He also requested a copy of the proposed policy and form be emailed to him.

Kevin Whear referred to past public comments by someone who justified keeping books with explicit content in the library because similar content is in the Bible. He noted that the Bible condemns, and does not condone, bad behavior. He asked what standards the library follows and recommended providing youth with books that encourage good behavior instead.

Zachary Whear saw a “Staff Picks” display on his way to the meeting and randomly picked up a book. In just flipping through it, he noted that it was so sexually graphic and explicit that he could not read aloud the pages he was holding open. He questioned why library staff would select such a book off the shelves to essentially advertise/promote it to teens by displaying it right outside the YA department.

Robin Scott noted the president has told patrons to use the RFR process, then asked: why it took 18 weeks to get to “no action” on Kisses for Jet by a partial board, and no response to a July 2 request for a full board review; why so long for RFR feedback (i.e. 3 submitted 8 weeks ago; no response), and what is the line of communication; why isn’t the patron notified sooner if an RFR item was already to be removed for “low circulation”; are board emails and letters delivered directly to them? She also stated that a ~\$6,000,000 taxpayer-funded budget should allow for enough staff to process RFR’s more quickly.

Kathy Estes stated that she was repeating what she has said before: this is a public library and not a church. She also noted that she agreed with Al Mattingly’s earlier comments.

With no objection, Susan Montalvo-Gesser adjourned the meeting at 6:01 pm.

The next meeting of the Daviess County Public Library Board of Trustees will be held at 5:00 pm on Wednesday, August 20, 2025, in the second floor public lounge.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be the name of Susan Montalvo-Gesser, located at the bottom right of the page.