

## Lawton Public Library Board

Wednesday May 6, 2026

Notice of the meeting and agenda were posted in accordance with Oklahoma law.

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM by Patty Neuwirth, Chair.

Roll Call: Patty Neuwirth, Chair; Sue Kremmer, Vice Chair; Frantzie Couch, Member (Arrived at 4:15 PM); Fermin Viruet, Member; Michael Wilson, Member (Absent); Kristin Herr, Library Director; Tina King, Deputy Library Director; Megan Stockton, Administrative Assistant; Sherene L. Williams, City Council Liaison

Draft minutes for the April 1, 2026 Board meeting were presented to Board. Sue made a motion to approve the minutes with a spelling correction. Fermin seconded this motion and it was approved unanimously by the Board.

### Reports:

- No customer comments or correspondence were presented to the Board.
- The Financial Report was given.
  - Kristin informed the Board that the Library is unable to start anymore requisitions and may only purchase essential items.
  - Kristin explained the remaining funds in the special and grants accounts.
    - These are funds leftover after having spent out a majority of the Carnegie and Beak Week money.
- The Director's Report was given.
  - Kristin informed the Board that the AARP tax preparers completed over one thousand tax returns.
  - A written report from the Community Engagement Team was presented detailing the recent happenings at the Library.
  - Kristin reported that the Library is preparing for the summer and the Summer Reading Program which will launch on May 30<sup>th</sup>.
  - Patty asked about the LEGO programming. Kristin stated that it is very successful with the help of FISTA and there have been photos in the newspaper showing off the programs several times recently.
- The Friends of the Library Report was given.
  - Fermin reported that the annual book sale brought in over \$10,000.00 with over six hundred boxes of books for sale.
  - Fermin stated that the recent Friends meeting was on April 27<sup>nd</sup> with a speaker from Marie Detty describing the services they provide and detailing their new building. The next meeting is scheduled for July 27<sup>th</sup> and the speaker is not yet decided on.
  - Fermin informed the Board about Chautauqua and its upcoming workshops and performances. Fermin also stated that the Friends of the Library received a donation of \$10,000.00 from the McMahon Foundation for Chautauqua.

- Fermin gave an update about the Lawton Adult Literacy Center. He stated that there are currently 56 students in the program and that the program has a new administrative assistant.
- The Family and Local History Report was given.
  - A written report from Clifford Takawana, Family and Local History Librarian, was presented to the Board. In this report, Clifford ruminated on the content of the collection and what it should like in the future.
- The City Council Report was given.
  - Sherene informed the Board about the recent Ward 7 volunteer painting of homes in the Lawton View area.
  - Sherene announced the dates of several upcoming events including: D&D meetings on May 12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, City Council meetings on May 12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, Arts for All the weekend of May 8<sup>th</sup>, the Armed Forces Parade on May 16<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM, Memorial Day on May 25<sup>th</sup>, and the opening of the new playground and Dunbar monument at Lemuel Harkey Park.
- The Grant Report was given.
  - A list of the status of the various Library grants was presented to the Board.
  - Kristin announced that the Friends have applied for a Dollar General grant and a rural tech grant.
  - Kristin stated that the Library has received a telescope through a grant and \$2,500.00 for Chautauqua through a Civics grant.
  - Kristin informed the Board that the Oklahoma Department of Libraries is releasing several grant applications early.

Business:

- The Library of Tomorrow was discussed.
  - Kristin informed the Board that the recent agenda item to move forward with the Ceiling Project was tabled by City Council so that a study can be completed on the lifespan of the current building first. Kristin explained how there was a question of where the money for the study could come from.
    - The process of the study going to a committee was explained to the Board after some questions about the process.
  - Kristin reported that Guernsey, the architects, and some contractors showed up earlier in the day for a pre-bid meeting that was never canceled.
  - Kristin notified the Board that Randy Warren created a new agenda item to allow the Library of Tomorrow Committee to decide what the goals and aims of the committee should be.
  - Kristin stated that she believes that there will be another Library of Tomorrow meeting, but does not know when.
- The Library meeting rooms were discussed by the Board.
  - Kristin informed the Board that the price for the meeting room software had increased in price by threefold and that the Library could not pay for the renewal.

- Kristin stated that having staff make and keep track of meeting room reservations by the public is not a feasible option either.
- Kristin also stated that Library staff had been unable to book the rooms for Library events due to their popularity.
- Therefore, Kristin's stated that unless there were any other ideas, the plan is to close the meeting rooms to the public.
- Frantzie questioned as to whether Library staff would have suggestions on where to send the public to instead and Kristin listed off several places.
- The FY27 budget request was discussed.
  - Kristin informed the Board that the preliminary City budget is now out and that there were several cuts to the Library budget.
  - Kristin also informed the Board that one Library position had been cut with that staff member leaving for another opportunity already, but that also two other staff members had put in their resignations.
  - To solve staffing and budget issues, Kristin stated that, with the needed approvals, the plan is to have the Branch Library open only five hours on Saturdays and discontinue the Hoopla service for the time being.
    - Kristin explained that Hoopla is a pay-per-use model and costs nearly \$5,000.00 a month.
    - There were some questions about the different pots of book money, State Aid, County, and City, and so Kristin explained these. Kristin also explained how State Aid funding requires a maintenance of effort that may not be met.
  - Kristin informed the Board that with the City Print Shop closing and the budget cuts, no large print jobs can be completed and that paper is being conserved.
    - Using the Cameron Print Shop was investigated, but it was found to be too costly.

Comments from the Floor:

- Patty reminded everyone about Arts for All.
- Frantzie asked how she or the public can speak to Council about her thoughts about the Library and its situation.
  - Sherene explained the audience participation process to the Board.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:54 PM.

Megan Stockton, Administrative Assistant III

Library Budget - Grants  
As of 5/4/26

Org	Object	Description	2026 Revised Budget	2026 Actual	2026 Encumbrances /Requisitions	2026 Available	2026 Percent	2026 Original Budget
2653501	51000	Supplies, Tools & Equipment	5,521.04	5,445.82	0.00	75.22	98.64	0.00
2653501	51001	Computer Supplies	8,569.69	8,569.69	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00
2653501	51004	Library Books	34,434.36	13,748.97	0.00	20,685.39	39.93	0.00
2653501	52025	Prof & Technical Service	9,727.19	2,283.39	3,056.00	4,387.80	54.89	0.00
2653501	53020	Construction, Imprvm, Addition	65,591.81	65,591.81	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00
		Total	123,844.09	95,639.68	3,056.00	25,148.41		0.00

Library Budget - Special  
 As of 5/4/26

Org	Object	Description	2026 Revised Budget	2026 Actual	2026 Encumbrances /Requisitions	2026 Available	2026 Percent	2026 Original Budget
2003501	51000	Supplies, Tools and Equipment	2,728.65	2,728.65	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00
2003501	51004	Library Books	5,701.85	5,219.19	482.66	0.00	100.00	0.00
2003501	52025	Prof & Technical Service	1,569.50	1,569.50	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00
2003501	53020	Construction, Imprvm, Addition	10,000.00	9,253.60	0.00	746.40	92.54	0.00
		Total	20,000.00	18,770.94	482.66	746.40		0.00

Library Budget - General  
As of 5/4/26

Org	Object	Description	2026 Revised Budget	2026 Actual	2026 Encumbrances /Requisitions	2026 Available	2026 Percent	2026 Original Budget
1003501	50000	Salaries and Wages	681,000.00	574,929.44	0.00	106,070.56	84.42	681,000.00
1003501	50005	Differential/Standby Pay	950.00	0.00	0.00	950.00	0.00	950.00
1003501	50010	Sick Leave-Pay in Lieu	6,200.00	42.79	0.00	6,157.21	0.69	6,200.00
1003501	50015	Contract Labor	4,000.00	3,953.82	0.00	46.18	98.85	2,000.00
1003501	50020	Part Time	133,000.00	127,335.21	0.00	5,664.79	95.74	133,000.00
1003501	50025	Overtime	1,700.00	86.97	0.00	1,613.03	5.12	1,700.00
1003501	50035	Unemployment Contribution	2,770.00	0.00	0.00	2,770.00	0.00	2,770.00
1003501	50040	FICA	51,500.00	40,859.32	0.00	10,640.68	79.34	51,500.00
1003501	50042	Medicare	12,500.00	9,555.84	0.00	2,944.16	76.45	12,500.00
1003501	50045	Workers' Compensation	4,000.00	0.00	0.00	4,000.00	0.00	4,000.00
1003501	50050	Group Life & Hospital	92,000.00	81,692.70	0.00	10,307.30	88.80	92,000.00
1003501	50055	City Pension Plan	80,000.00	66,266.01	0.00	13,733.99	82.83	80,000.00
1003501	51000	Supplies, Tools & Equipment	22,396.00	19,269.35	0.00	3,126.65	86.04	23,886.00
1003501	51001	Computer Supplies	1,664.00	584.63	0.00	1,079.37	35.13	2,664.00
1003501	51004	Library Books	91,300.00	88,786.42	0.00	2,513.58	97.25	92,250.00
1003501	51020	Repair & Maintenance	12,900.00	11,467.03	1,000.00	432.97	96.64	13,500.00
1003501	51025	Contractual Maintenance	16,169.00	15,653.85	150.00	365.15	97.74	15,219.00
1003501	51035	Uniform and Clothing	796.00	617.60	172.85	5.55	99.30	306.00
1003501	52025	Prof & Technical Service	93,510.00	74,088.40	4,128.36	15,293.24	83.65	68,510.00
1003501	52044	Postage	4,200.00	2,960.31	0.00	1,239.69	70.48	4,200.00
1003501	52045	Electricity and Natural Gas	99,925.00	90,228.52	6,776.96	2,919.52	97.08	103,425.00
1003501	52050	Insurance	60.00	0.00	0.00	60.00	0.00	60.00
1003501	52055	Dues and Memberships	9,875.00	5,258.39	0.00	4,616.61	53.25	9,275.00
1003501	52060	Training and Travel	6,100.00	4,808.28	0.00	1,291.72	78.82	2,600.00
1003501	52090	Other Expenses	250.00	145.40	0.00	104.60	58.16	250.00
		Total	1,428,765.00	1,218,590.28	12,228.17	197,946.55		1,403,765.00

## Director Report

May 2026

### Tax Time

Tax season is over and 1060 tax returns were done at the library in February, March, and April.

### Book Sale

Another book sale is done and over. The Friends grossed \$10,446.94.

### Kudos



**Joyce Chappell**

Local Guide • 13 reviews • 0 photos



5 days ago

**NEW**

I go here for majority of my reading materials. They also have public computers and other activities.



**Amillia Houghton**

Local Guide • 20 reviews • 8 photos



1 week ago

**NEW**

Lovely library. Great selections and friendly staff. Really enjoy the non fiction



**Vicki Triche**

Local Guide • 33 reviews • 0 photos



3 weeks ago

**NEW**

So helpful and friendly!



April 2026



## Community Engagement Report

Library Board

April 2026

**Events & Classes:** April was full of special moments at the Lawton Public Library. We had 16 participants dyeing Easter eggs in the library. This helpful bunch was even excited to help library staff clean up after the program! Our Sewing Basics: Buttons class drew in 14 participants eager to learn how to sew buttons. It was a great mix of individuals wanting to learn a new skill and parents wanting to pass along this valuable skill to their children.

A highlight of the month was hosting 31 kindergarteners from Hugh Bish during a field trip. These tiny learners and their educators were filled with wonder about all of the things their public library had to offer. They enjoyed storytime with Tanya, a tour with Beth and Julia, and a CreateSpace tour with Garrett. They also made a craft before leaving and departed with their very own LPL goodie bags!

**Looking Ahead:** Teen Intern Applications are available now and we've already received a few returned applications. We're excited to welcome a new bunch of teens to help assist us with summer programming. They are always such a bright piece of our summers! Teens can return their applications now until May 15.

We are anticipating another busy month in May! From health literacy activities to our summer kickoff party with Lawton Fire Department, we will be connecting with our community a lot this month. We will also be taking part in the Comanche County Community Baby Shower and All About Understanding End of School Year Bash.

**Community Partnerships:** We partnered with the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission and South Central Workforce Board to host a job fair at the Main library in April. We reached a total of 92 job seekers who had the opportunity to meet employers and connect with career resources. We look forward to hosting another fair with them at Lawton Farmers Market in September.

We are looking forward to partnering with Amethyst & Ink Books again as they serve as the coordinator for the Lawton Book Crawl on Saturday, April 25. We will serve as one of several bookish locations across southwest Oklahoma for participants to collect a stamp on their passport. Participants who stop at the Main library will receive a bookish pin while supplies last.

**In the Community:** April was a month dedicated to participating in community events. During Open Streets, the Library provided an Easter Bunny for children, adults, and families to take their photos with. We reached a total of 753 people.

Fort Sill asked us to be a participant at their Superhero Ball in honor of Child Abuse Prevention Month. We set up a table where kids could spin a wheel to win a fun prize and parents could connect with library events and resources. We reached a total of 209 people.

We had such much fun participating in the YMCA Healthy Kids Day. We are always excited to bring fun and movement to our community! We reached a total of 349 people.

**Feedback:** Reagan Phillips stated: "I opened my newsletter yesterday and went 'OOO! They changed the format! Love it!"

Destiny Sterkel commented on our Rock Painting class event: "We will be there! My child loves painting the rocks"

Miluzka Perez expressed her appreciation for the library introducing a ton of activities and programs for children.

Deanna Smalley Copeland commented on the National Library Week video: “I love that I can bring my children to events at the same library I visited as a kid. I am excited to be able to bring my children when they get older and are able to pick out their own books to read. The library has so much things besides just books its really a great meeting and working area for many people.”

Heather Gordon commented on the National Library Week video: “I love being able to read new books, but also access the audio books through Libby! This weekend I was able to rent the stud finder too so I could put some stuff up in my new home. Super thankful for that!”

Open Streets thanked Lawton Public Library for having the Easter Bunny at the latest Open Streets event. Their post stated: “A big thank you to the Lawton Public Library for making a few extra calls to bring the Easter Bunny out during one of his busiest weekends of the year. We’re so grateful for partners who go the extra mile for our community.”

## Family & Local History

Board Update

May 2026

**Dearest Board Members,**

### **Collection Direction – April 2026**

One of the ideas I continue to reflect on is the mission of our collection—where it has been and where it is going. Prior to my direct involvement, my exposure to the collection came only in passing: scanning materials or fulfilling distant patrons' interlibrary loan requests. These brief interactions offered only a limited understanding, but even then, the collection presented a confusing posture. Organized under the Library of Congress classification system, its layout made locating materials unnecessarily difficult and, at times, discouraging.

Now, five months into my second year, many of those structural barriers have been addressed. The transition to a more navigable system has significantly improved access, and much of the confusion that once defined the space has been reduced.

Yet one characteristic of the collection remains a persistent thought—something of a quandary, even a quiet mystery. The depth and specificity of the holdings—from county records and state summaries to inventories and society journals—suggest a collection built with a distinctly scholarly and research-driven intent. Its scope often feels more aligned with a collegiate or specialized research institution than a public library setting. This observation is not a critique of past leadership or legacy. On the contrary, through ongoing conversations with Kristin and engagement with genealogy organizations across southwestern and central Oklahoma, it is clear that we maintain one of the strongest and most comprehensive public genealogy collections in the state. That standing is a point of pride and reflects years of thoughtful development.

My reflection instead centers on direction. As we look ahead, what should the collection continue to become? Do we maintain our current trajectory—acquiring highly specialized, county-level materials focused on specific timeframes, individuals, and locations? Do we continue to expand the scholarly reach of the collection? Or is there an opportunity to refine and concentrate our efforts in a way that better aligns with both community needs and our institutional role?

These questions are particularly relevant in light of current budget constraints and the timing of annual acquisition decisions. Deliberate choices must be made—not only about what we add, but about how we define the purpose and future direction of the collection.

My perspective is grounded in the needs of the individuals we serve each day, the scope of the public library, and my own experience in family history research. Together, these factors point toward a focused approach: prioritizing resources and services that help community members build confidence and take their first steps into family history research.

While experienced researchers remain an important part of our audience, the primary emphasis of the collection will be on accessibility, guidance, and foundational support—ensuring that individuals are not only interested in their history, but equipped to begin exploring it.

Accordingly, materials and efforts will prioritize those at the beginning of their research journey, with acquisitions intentionally reinforcing this approach. At present, this area of the collection is underdeveloped;

practical “how-to” resources and step-by-step guides are limited. Addressing this gap will be a defined priority in future collection development.

## **Roots & Branches: Genealogy Lab – April 6, 2026**

In another advance to empower the masses the focus of Roots & Branches this month was to provide free, online websites that patrons can visit without the hassle of a membership. One of the great features that our library provides are the databases we have access to, specifically Ancestry.com Library Edition and Fold3 Library Edition. Access is indeed the magic key, however, when one is not at the library that doesn't mean the search is entirely on hold. There are plenty of resources that are available that are free of charge and easily accessible at home.

The main sites we visited and examined in detail are listed below:

### **FamilySearch**

A free, nonprofit genealogy database providing access to billions of historical records from around the world, including census data, vital records, and digitized documents. It also offers collaborative family tree tools and is enhanced through affiliate library access.

### **Find A Grave (findagrave.com)**

A free online database of cemetery records and memorials, featuring gravestone photographs, burial locations, and biographical details contributed by volunteers. Widely used for locating burial sites and verifying death information.

### **FamilyTreeNow (familytreenow.com)**

A free website that compiles modern public records, including addresses, estimated relatives, and possible family connections. Often used as a starting point for locating living individuals or building recent generations of a family tree.

### **USGenWeb (usgenweb.org)**

A volunteer-driven network of state and county websites offering free access to local genealogy resources, including transcriptions, records, and historical information specific to individual counties across the United States.

### **OKGenWeb / OK Cemeteries (okcemeteries.net)**

A regionally focused, volunteer-maintained resource providing cemetery transcriptions, burial listings, and local records for Oklahoma. Particularly valuable for researching rural and lesser-documented burial sites within the state.

## **FamilySearch Affiliate Library Workshop – April 20, 2026**

This past Monday brought another successful workshop, with a group of 15 participants attending the evening's journey down FamilySearch lane. Aided by a superb press release and a mention on the local television station, we welcomed a sizable crowd eager and willing to learn more about our second most-used genealogy database.

FamilySearch, as I often describe it, is Ancestry.com's little brother—but in many ways, it answers what Ancestry.com Library Edition cannot. Chief among its advantages is account creation, which allows users to personalize their experience, save pertinent records, and build a digital family tree. While the commercial version of Ancestry.com offers similar features behind a paywall, Ancestry Library Edition—though free to use—does not provide these personalized tools and is only accessible within the library.

In contrast, FamilySearch, through its Affiliate Library access, not only extends usability beyond the library but also allows users to stay engaged with its ever-growing collection of records and discoveries. It becomes a valuable companion throughout one's genealogical journey. That said, it must be noted that users gain the greatest benefit when accessing FamilySearch within the library setting. Yet another prime reason to grace our hallowed glass walls with our patron's presence.

On another note, I would like to highlight the added benefit of having Maliki Stevenson's assistance. Maliki, one of our outstanding circulation specialists, was on loan to us for this particular event. Through coordination with Dana, our Circulation Manager, we were able to secure his support—and it proved invaluable.

One of the primary challenges with FamilySearch is the account creation process, which can be a significant hurdle, particularly for some of our older patrons. Being mindful of this, I made it a priority to have additional knowledgeable staff on hand to assist.

As expected, and in keeping with the high standard of our staff, Maliki went above and beyond. Not only did he assist patrons in successfully creating their accounts, but he also helped guide participants through some of the more complex features of the workshop. His ability to provide clear, patient assistance ensured that even our less technologically experienced patrons could participate with confidence.

We are tremendously grateful for both Maliki's efforts and Dana's coordination in making this level of support possible.

**Library Grants**

As of 5/4/2026

<b>Status</b>	<b>Grant</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>City Council Agenda Date</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>\$ Received</b>
Awarded	Unilever	Smart Telescope	n/a	n/a	receiving telescope	
Awarded	ODL Civics250	\$2,500.00	upfront	n/a	for Chautauqua	4/22/2026
Awarded	ODL Conference Grants	\$3,077.68	reimbursable	n/a	OLA conference 3/11-3/13	4/22/2026
Awarded	Carnegie Foundation	\$10,000.00	upfront	2/24/2026	unrestricted	
Awarded	ODL FY26 Health Literacy	\$5,000.00	upfront	12/2/2025	funds received January 2026	
Awarded	E-Rate Cat 2 from ODL	\$4,000.00	reimbursable	n/a		
Awarded	E-Rate Category 2	\$53,994.30	vendor receives money	n/a		
Completed	OK Heritage Preservation	\$25,000.00 + \$2,500.00 match	reimbursable	3/11/2025	final report completed	
Completed	ALA Thinking Money	kids finance kits	non-cash	n/a	final report completed	
Completed	BEAK Week Eisenhower	\$10,000.00	upfront	4/8/2025	literacy related	5/22/2025
Completed	Priddy Foundation	\$70,000.00	upfront	5/27/2025	replaced brick floor, mtg room windows	6/24/2025
Completed	ODL Technology Grant	\$8,569.69	upfront	n/a	technology related	8/12/2025
Declined	OK Heritage Preservation	\$25,000.00 + \$2,500.00 match	reimbursable		will hear in January 2026	

**Friends Grants**

As of 5/4/2026

<b>Status</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Grant</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>\$ Received</b>
Submitted	STEM	Rural Tech Fund	\$5,500.00	?	robotics funds	
Submitted	Literacy	Dollar General	\$10,000.00	upfront		
Submitted	Literacy	Nora Roberts Foundation	\$5,000.00	upfront		6/24/2025
Awarded	Literacy	Laura Fields Foundation	\$7,500.00	upfront	awarded 3/15/26	3/16/2026
Awarded	STEM	Science Across America	\$500.00	upfront	space activities	
Awarded	Literacy	Citizenship (ODL)	\$14,000.00	upfront	Received notice of award - 11/6	1/12/2026
Awards	Literacy	Dollar General	\$10,000.00	upfront		6/?/2025
Completed	Chautauqua	Oklahoma Arts Council ARPA Recovery	\$7,160.63	reimbursable	submitted 1st, 2nd, & 3rd reports. GR24-2412-12056	
Completed	Library	STEM Board	\$4,743.37	reimburse	funds received January 2026	1/2/2026