

Board of Library Directors of Cheltenham Township

December 03, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Alycia Kinchloe, Julie Haywood, Jessika McLaughlin, Jesse Gallagher, Tim Gaudreau, Myron Goldman, Mary Kay Moran (Executive Director), Nicole Lynch (Assistant Director), Hannah Miller (Head Librarian, Glenside Branch), Maddie MacKenzie (Administrative and Communications Associate)

Public Comment: None.

Consent Agenda:

- a. President's Report
- b. Director's Report
- c. Statistical Report
- d. Friends Reports
- e. October Minutes
- f. Finance Reports
- g. Committee Reports

Board Comment: Jessika McLaughlin highlighted that CTLS and the School District meet monthly, and asked if CTLS and the Township also meet regularly. Mary Kay Moran explained that CTLS does not have monthly meetings with the Township. Before this year, Mary Kay Moran would report on library business to the Public Affairs Committee at their quarterly meetings, which is the Library System's main means of communication with the Township. The last of those meetings that CTLS was invited to was in March of 2025. CTLS did request quarterly meetings with the Township Manager in the MOU. The Township has never asked CTLS for regular meetings, and the Library System has not asked outside of the MOU.

Motion: Myron Goldman moved to adopt the Consent Agenda, Alycia Kinchloe seconded the motion, and the agenda was adopted.

Sunshine Announcements: An Executive Session was held following the 10/22/25 BOLDOCT meeting to discuss advocacy regarding the proposed township appropriation reduction.

Public Comment General: None.

Commissioner's Report: Commissioner Chirico did not attend because of a conflicting township meeting.

New Business:

Governance (Alycia Kinchloe):

EP Friends Rep.: Julie Haywood announced that this evening will be Myron Goldman's last Library Board meeting, and thanked him for his service to the Cheltenham Township Library System. Myron Goldman has served on the Friends of the Elkins Park Library for 40 years, and as a member of the BOLDOCT for 9 years. In accordance with the CTLS Bylaws, board members can serve a maximum of 3 consecutive 3 year term. Now that their seat will be vacant, the Elkins Park Friends will nominate a representative as a

member of the Board. The Friends approved Sherry Justus as a representative to the Library Board, and Julie Haywood and Jessika McLaughlin met with her in November to discuss member responsibilities and explain committee structures. The Board will need to affirm the nomination and send it on to the commissioners for approval. Sherry Justus is a resident of Melrose Park, a fine art photographer, member of the Elkins Park Friends, a volunteer for the Philadelphia Animal Welfare Society and Jenkintown Food Cupboard who plans to serve on the Library Board as an active member in any capacity that will enhance our libraries as a vital community resource.

- **Motion:** Myron Goldman moved to affirm the Elkins Park Friends' nomination of Sherry Justus to the Township Commissioners for approval, Jesse Gallagher seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Ongoing Discussion re: Executive Director Performance Review (Jessika McLaughlin): The Executive Director Performance Review will follow the same format as the previous year, which consists of gathering feedback from board members and library leadership. The Executive Committee hopes to conduct the review over the next 4 to 6 weeks.

External Affairs (Jesse Gallagher): Since CTLS just sent out the Annual Appeal, and the Township budget process is discussed extensively elsewhere, the External Affairs Committee skipped the December meeting, and will resume in January.

Annual Appeal: The Library System slightly exceeded the goal of raising \$2,500 for Giving Tuesday. With these funds, CTLS will be able to add 12 new Early Literacy Kits to the collection. The kits are popular and well-loved, and are in need of a refresh. Nicole Lynch explained that it was too early to provide a count on the Annual Appeal as the contributions are not fully logged, but she expects to have an update in another week or so.

A generous donor from the community will match up to \$35,000 in gifts for the Annual Appeal. If CTLS meets this goal, we will raise at least \$70,000 for the Annual Appeal this year.

Internal Affairs:

Budget: Mary Kay Moran informed the Board that she had no updates on the township budget. The published budget from the Township does include the \$100,000 reduction to library appropriations. The budget format has been adjusted this year, and the total operating funds now includes the amount that the Township spends on behalf of the library staff who are enrolled in the Township's pension plan, an estimated \$80,000 for 2026. This figure matches or exceeds what library staff members contribute. All full-time CTLS employees are required to participate in the pension. The Library collects 5% from each employee, sends it to US Bank, which holds the pension, and then the municipality is required to make a contribution each year on behalf of the enrolled employees. This year's listed operating funds also includes \$10,000 for maintenance and repairs to the library buildings, all of which are owned by the Township. Mary Kay Moran reported that there has not been a conversation regarding what those funds have been marked for, but they could be required for needed repairs to the Elkins Park Library's roof in 2026. In 2024, the Township spent \$193 in repairs to the library buildings, and in 2025 they spent \$0 on building repairs and maintenance.

Advocacy: The Board of Commissioners will vote on the proposed budget on December 17. The Township will hold a public budget hearing on December 10, which will serve as the opportunity for the public to comment on the budget. There will also be time for public comment ahead of the vote on the 17th, but Mary Kay Moran expects that the commissioners will have made up their minds by then.

Myron Goldman advocated that if CTLS has to cut library hours and services in response to cuts and reductions from the Township, the public should be made aware of the cause. Tim Gaudreau shared that in the Library System's meeting with Ann Rappoport and Jeff Chirico, the commissioners opposed reducing library hours and instead advocated to reduce staff hours and positions. Mary Kay Moran has laid out the consequences of the cuts to the commissioners as part of the public record.

Julie Haywood pointed out that the State saw the benefit of libraries, and increased funding to libraries by 5 million dollars this year. The Library System's state funding will not be reduced as a result of the budget cut, but that could change next year if cuts continue.

Cheltenham Township real estate taxes will increase 9% this year, and cuts have been made across the board except for the fire companies. The \$100,000 cut to the Library System works out to about \$4 per household, but has an outsized effect on CTLS budget and services. CTLS offers a proven return on investment, and has saved the community over 2.6 million dollars last year, just by circulating materials. If CTLS receives another \$100,000 cut next year, library leadership will have to reevaluate how to move the organization forward and still provide the services that the community counts on.

Julie Haywood thanked the Board and the Community Advisory Committee for their advocacy on behalf of CTLS. The Board will have the opportunity to talk about additional advocacy opportunities in Executive Session, and will continue to advocate for sustainable funding to the end of the budget cycle, next year, and beyond.

Myron Goldman reiterated that it should be made clear that potential cuts to hours and services are the consequences of the Township's budget reduction. Jesse Gallagher emphasized the importance of addressing public misconceptions, adding that CTLS did not decide to make the East Cheltenham and La Mott Libraries seasonal, but the township will not heat the buildings. Jessika McLaughlin expressed that CTLS has an opportunity to form a functional relationship with the Township, and must be proactive and aggressive in pursuit of that. The Board discussed the benefit of clarifying the relationship between the Library System and the Township as outlined in the MOU.

Naming Opportunities appendix (see attached from Upper Dublin Public Library): A couple of years ago, CTLS developed a naming policy, based on Upper Dublin Library's policy, that addressed situations in which someone could have their name attached to a certain part of the library for making a significant donation. The thought, at the time, was that a centralized library was in the "near" future, and the Library System did not complete an appendix with specific amounts corresponding to areas of the buildings. Mary Kay Moran and the head librarians discussed which areas of the libraries have naming potential based on the buildings' current footprints, and whether CTLS could use those naming opportunities for refurbishing the buildings. The ceiling of the Glenside Library was repaired and resealed with funds from the Glenside friends last year, and decades have passed since the walls were repainted and the carpets were replaced. Mary Kay Moran explained that if the Cheltenham libraries are going to remain in their existing buildings, naming opportunities could be a viable fundraising option. Mary Kay Moran asked the Board if it was worth determining the cost to refurbish certain areas of the

libraries and set specific amounts for each area. The Board agreed that it was worth pursuing, and that CTLS should consult with the Township on the cost of repairs, as they own the buildings. Julie Haywood pointed out that these are not library owned buildings, and in undertaking naming opportunity fundraising, CTLS would need to be clear with the Township about the use of the funds, who controls them. The Naming Policy will go back to the Internal Affairs Committee for review then will come back to the Board for approval.

Tim Gaudreau added that fundraising for a specific goal and targeted approach can be more successful, as donors can fully see where their donation went. The Board discussed the possibility of fundraising toward a specific goal outside of the Annual Appeal.

Community Advisory Committee: The Community Advisory Committee did not have an official meeting last month so that members could attend the special budget meeting and Q&A. Tim Gaudreau thanked the Community Advisory Committee for contacting their state legislators to advocate for library funding in the state budget, and reminded the Board that the committee is available for fundraising efforts.

Strategic Plan Presentation (Mary Kay Moran): CTLS has been in the process of refreshing our 2022-2025 Strategic Plan to another 3-year plan for 2026-2028. In July, the planning team started working with Amanda Standerfer and the Fast Forward Libraries team to conduct a community survey, stakeholder interviews, and a Board and staff survey, compiling the findings into a learning report. In the fall, CTLS held planning workshops for staff and the Board to review the learning report and continue to develop the plan. Mary Kay Moran and the Board reviewed language changes to the strategic directions and goals in the updated Strategic Plan.

In the first quarter of 2026, CTLS will enter the transition time of wrapping up the previous plan, and preparing to implement refreshed Strategic Plan. This afternoon, the implementation team had its first meeting with Amanda Standerfer to discuss the activity plan, evaluation framework, and methods for reporting progress internally and externally. Now, the Board will need to approve the Strategic Plan so the implementation team can move forward. If board members have comments or requested changes, CTLS can still make adjustments to the Strategic Plan.

Mary Kay Moran answered questions about the goals and potential outcomes of the Strategic plan. The Board addressed the importance of external communication in addressing misinformation about the library system, and ensuring that the community understands what the library system does and has to offer. Various changes to the potential outcomes were discussed.

CTLS will complete the 3-year strategic progress report in Q1 of 2026 to publicize the results and accomplishments. For the last plan, CTLS had posters made of the report, and included it in the newsletter. We can do similar marketing for the refreshed plan.

Myron Goldman suggested revisiting the school district contribution as an activity under “diversify funding,” and shared that Cheltenham School District used to provide \$60,000 to the Library System. Mary Kay Moran informed the Board that the School District will now pay CTLS when the Library provides professional development sessions for the school librarians. Mary Kay Moran explained that as the Library System begins implementing a CSD school ID as a library card and becomes more entwined with the Cheltenham schools, it would be worth considering making a presentation before the school

board about potential funding. School Board meetings also offer an opportunity to share what the library offers the Cheltenham schools and community with the audience on Zoom.

- **Motion:** Myron Goldman moved to approve the updated Strategic Plan, Jesse Gallagher seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Recognition of Myron's Service: Myron Goldman has served on the Board of Library Directors for 9 years, on the Friends of the Elkins Park Library for 40 years, and has been instrumental in the success of the Friends' book sales and Amazon book sales. Through these book sales, the Elkins Park Friends have raised over \$50,000 a year for the Elkins Park Library and CTLS. Julie Haywood thanked Myron Goldman for his attention to detail, years of service, and his work on the new investment policy that the Board adopted. The Board will Name-a-Shelf at the Elkins Park Library in honor of Myron Goldman's 40 years of service.

Senator Art Haywood joined the CTLS Board to honor Myron Goldman and presented him with a Citation from the State Senate, recognizing those individuals who "through their knowledgeable tenure of service contribute in a meaningful ways toward the well-being of their communities and this Commonwealth. Myron Goldman is being honored upon his December 2025 retirement from the Cheltenham Township Library System Board of Directors after a career spanning 9 years on the Board, and 40 years with the Elkins Park Friends... Therefore, the Senators of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania recognizes Myron Goldman for his years of loyalty and service and we proudly note that he demonstrated extraordinary commitment to the Cheltenham Township Library System, and we offer our best wishes and continued success for many years to come."

Senator Haywood also addressed the Township's cuts to library funding and expressed his disappointment with the commissioners, and agreed that the funding cut amounts to a minimal impact on the Township's overall budget. Senator Haywood argued that the cuts are a retreat from literacy, and this is not the time to retreat from literacy. This decision reduces the value of the township. The library is a tremendous asset for the Township and community. Senator Haywood is looking into potential state funding for library facilities

Public comment: None.

Upcoming Meetings:

- External Affairs Meeting, Monday, January 5 at 6:00 PM.
- Governance Committee Meeting, Tuesday, December 9 at 6:00 PM.
- Internal Affairs Committee Meeting, Monday, December 8 at 4:00 PM.
- Community Advisory Meeting, Tuesday, December 9 at 7:00 PM.
- Board Meeting, Wednesday, January 28 at 7:00 PM at the Elkins Park Free Library.

Motion: Myron Goldman moved to adjourn the meeting, Jesse Gallagher seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned.

The Board moved to an Executive Session.