

## **Board of Library Directors of Cheltenham Township**

### **May 27, 2026 Meeting Minutes**

**Attendance:** Alycia Kinchloe, Jessika McLaughlin, Thom Estilow, Jesse Gallagher, Tim Gaudreau, Emily Cheramie-Walz, Mary Kay Moran (Executive Director), Nicole Lynch (Assistant Director), Angela Lang (Youth Services Coordinator), 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. March Minutes
- f. Finance Reports
- g. Committee Reports

**Board Comment:** Jessika McLaughlin welcomed Thom Estilow to the Board of Library Directors.

Jessika McLaughlin asked Mary Kay Moran about recent HR Changes. Mary Kay Moran informed the Board that CTLS hired a new cataloger, Bee Martin, who has been training with Jeanine Pringle, our retiring cataloger. This week Mary Kay Moran received formal resignation letters from the two other departing staff members, and can now move forward with those positions.

**Motion:** Alycia Kinchloe moved to adopt the Consent Agenda, Tim Gaudreau seconded the motion, and the agenda was adopted.

**Sunshine Announcements:** None.

**Public Comment General:** None.

**Librarian's Report (Angela Lang):** See attached report.

**Commissioner's Report (Emily Cheramie-Walz):**

**Facilities:** Emily Cheramie-Walz gave a small update about the Elkins Park Library roof replacement. Alyson Elliott, the Interim Township Manager, had some questions about the contract, so once those are answered, the report will be signed, and the construction work can begin. Emily Cheramie-Walz will speed the process along, and update the Board as soon as there is a more definite timeline. Glenside Hall will also be getting a new roof this year.

In regards to the Rowland Community Center, Alyson Elliott was not aware of the access issues, and suggested that CTLS reach out to Kelly Rebitz, the Parks and Recreation Administrator. Emily Cheramie-Walz has not yet received any updates on the pipes bursting.

**Township Updates:** The Township has progressed to the final interview recruitment stage for the chief of police position, and the township manager job posting is live. The commissioners held a forum for community members to express their priorities for a new township manager, and spent a lot of time developing and writing

the job description. The township has already received some promising applicants, will hold interviews in June, and hope to have filled the position by July. The township is experiencing a significant transition period in leadership positions. Henry Sekawungu, the Head of Building and Zoning has left, and his role is being split between a number of staff members. The Human Resources manager has also departed, and the township has arranged interim staffing through an external HR firm.

**Community Events:** The Cheltenham Pride flag raising will be held on Monday June 1 at noon at the Township Building. The Board will coordinate to have library representation present. Next year, Emily Cheramie-Walz aims to hold a real Cheltenham Pride celebration and festival. The Juneteenth Flag raising will be held on Thursday the 18<sup>th</sup> at the La Mott Community. Emily Cheramie-Walz encouraged the Board to check out the Parks and Recreation calendar of summer programming. One summer camp will focus on a different sport each week, and the other is a more traditional township camp. Bill Salvatore will be investing all of the funds from the camp fee into the experience, and will also be offering early care and aftercare for the first time this summer.

**Community Centers:** Mary Kay Moran asked about the status of the La Mott Community Center's scheduled renovations and updates on the township's plans for the Rowland Community Center. Commissioner Cheramie-Walz responded that that start of the renovations are delayed, but not postponed. The township is waiting on some information, and is estimating a couple of weeks delay to the start of the La Mott construction. Mary Kay Moran informed the Board that community members have been asking about the status of the Rowland Community Center on CTLS social media. Emily Cheramie-Walz explained that the Rowland Community Center Project will be built out in phases, with phase 1 being community meetings and renovating the useable part of the building, and phase 2 involving building out the gym and possible extensions. The township received \$1.5 million of initial funding and then another \$500,000, and have also applied for additional funding. Emily Cheramie-Walz expects the process to begin after the new township manager starts.

**MOU:** Jessika McLaughlin asked if there has been any progress on the MOU. Emily Cheramie-Walz explained that the township is concerned that with the current staffing levels, they do not have the capacity for snow removal. Emily Cheramie-Walz and the Board will schedule a meeting with Alyson Elliott, the Interim Township Manager to discuss the MOU further.

## **New Business:**

**Governance:** The Governance Committee is continuing to work on the advocacy plan, but has no new business for the Board this evening. The next meeting will be held in July.

## **External Affairs:**

**Friends & Volunteers Luncheon:** The Friends & Volunteers Luncheon will be held at the Elkins Park Library at noon on June 25<sup>th</sup>. As of today, 19 people have signed up to attend. Jesse Gallagher shared that the External Affairs committee will likely skip their June meeting, and will meet next on July 6.

## **Internal Affairs:**

**2027 Early Budget Discussion:** This year, Mary Kay Moran reached out to the township finance director early in the year. When they met, Janice Salerno told Mary Kay Moran that the library system should not expect a budget increase, and could face another significant reduction of up to \$100,000 this year.

The fiscal director requested that Mary Kay put together a number of budget scenarios for the next 3-5 years. The first scenario has been completed and includes operating the Elkins Park and Glenside Libraries as they are for the next 5 years. Further requests were to provide a projection of closing either the Glenside or Elkins Park Library and working out of one branch, and a variety of scenarios involving the community center libraries. Because this forecasting involves

significant staff time, the Internal Affairs Committee would like to speak with some of the commissioners about their vision for CTLS. Julie Haywood tried to set up a meeting, but the commissioners were not all available at the same time. There are concerns by CTLS leadership about how this forecasting information would be used. Given the way CTLS expenses were shared at the 2026 township budget meetings, BOLDOCT considers this a valid concern.

Emily Cheramie-Walz explained that the conversation about the library's budget future is still between the director of fiscal affairs and the township manager, and the commissioners are not brought into the budget conversation until the fall. Commissioner Cheramie-Walz only knows about the one-library projection request because Mary Kay Moran informed her personally. Tim Gaudreau added that we underestimate the local politics involved and the unique position from which the library has had to advocate. Last year, by the time the library system and the commissioners were brought into the budget process, decisions had already been made. This year, the Board wants to have an earlier conversation about what a \$100,000 budget cut means for the library system in practice. Emily Cheramie-Walz emphasized the opportunity to frame the budget conversation as a partnership between the township and the library system. Commissioner Cheramie-Walz will connect with Julie Haywood and Mary Kay Moran to coordinate a meeting.

**Elkins Park Friends Library Board Representative:** Welcome Thom Estilow

**Community Advisory Committee:** Jesse Gallagher informed the Board that attendance at the recent Community Advisory Committee meetings has been light. The last meeting had one community member in attendance, who also joined CTLS for the elected officials meeting. Email updates about Committee activities have continued to go out to keep the members informed, and the community members were well represented at the elected officials meeting. Jessika McLaughlin suggested inviting the Community Advisory Committee Members to the Friends & Volunteers Luncheon, and Nicole Lynch will send out the invitations.

**Strategic Plan:**

**2026-28 Implementation:** Mary Kay Moran highlighted the draft activities plan included in the New Business Packet. The SPLIT members will be reviewing the activities the staff work groups came up with and adding their priorities to the final column. At the next SPLIT meeting, the team will begin plotting everything out on the timeline and developing the activities in detail.

**Status of Impact Report distribution (Nicole Lynch):** CTLS leadership created a checklist for distribution of the Impact Report. Mary Kay Moran and Nicole Lynch met with Representative Napoleon Nelson to discuss the successes of the Strategic Plan and the challenges that the library system is facing. His team will help CTLS share resources and events in their newsletter. Representative Nelson asked about financial support, and Mary Kay Moran is working on a list to share with his team. Most of our CTLS community partners have now received the Impact Report, including the school district and school librarians, and Nicole Lynch sent postcards to the library system's top donors. The Impact Report will be permanently available on the 'Strategic Plan' page of the CTLS website, and has been promoted on CTLS social media, included in the May Newsletter, and is available in print and digitally via QR Code bookmarks and posters in all CTLS branches. The Library Board had hoped to meet with the commissioners to discuss the Impact Report and the new Strategic Plan, but the budget meeting now takes precedence. Mary Kay Moran will send a digital copy of the Impact Report to the commissioners with the June 1-pager email.

**Facilities:** Mary Kay Moran updated the Board on a number of facilities concerns.

- The front doors of the Elkins Park Library have not been working since Sunday. Advanced Door Services, the company that services the automatic doors, have been out to repair them quite often. In this instance, a burned out part is blocking the doors' electrical supply, and preventing them from opening. Elizabeth McGoran is waiting on a quote, but will not receive one until Friday at the earliest, so the doors will not be repaired until at least next week, despite it being an emergency service call. Allen Brown and Dave Schmidt both took a look before Advanced Door Services was called. The doors can be opened from the inside in an emergency. The Elkins Park Library does have a ramp on the side door but it is not ADA accessible. Elizabeth McGoran is trying to push the quote forward.

- The Glenside retaining wall has been repaired, and the contractor also re-mortared the edge of the steps where they were separating from the side of the building.
- The bridge contractor started construction on the temporary driveway behind the Glenside Library this morning.
- Emily Cheramie-Walz previously updated the Board about the Elkins Park Library's roof.
- The Rotary Club removed the old bushes in front of the Glenside Library and replaced them with donated native plants.
- **EC Library Flood:** During a visit to the East Cheltenham Library, Nicole Lynch discovered that multiple pipes burst when the township turned the water back on, including in the library staff kitchen. There was a large hole in the wall, cinderblocks on the floor, and a cabinet taken down, and the library was not informed. Mary Kay Moran caught Allen Brown at the Elkins Park Library, and he apologized that CTLS did not get a call alerting us to the damage. We still have materials and technology in the Rowland Community Center, assets to the library paid for with taxpayer money, which fortunately were not compromised by this leak.
- During the same visit to EC, there was a charter school renting the building from the township for state testing. The site supervisor from the charter school told Nicole Lynch that she could not be in the building during the testing per their contract with the township. CTLS was not informed of this despite a long email chain with Bill Salvatore about when CTLS staff would be in the building. Bill Salvatore had also offered use of the library space for one-on-one testing without informing CTLS. Mary Kay Moran will need to have a discussion with Bill Salvatore about who will be in the building. The site supervisor called Allen Brown and Bill Salvatore while Nicole Lynch was there. Nicole Lynch did touch base with Bill to apologize for us being there, and ask if there were other dates we should not be in the building, and he said there were not.
- **Glenside Air Conditioning:** The Glenside Library is experiencing the same problem as last year with the air conditioning system circuit switching off. As of now, the air conditioning has been on for a couple of weeks without switching itself off again. There is a reset bar on the side of the compressor that library staff can use, but it not a consistent fix. If that does not work, TRIAC has to come out for repairs.

**Board Education & Talking Points:** Mary Kay Moran passed out the 1-pager to the Board, and reviewed the talking points on the library's Summer Reading program. CTLS changed the format of the Summer Reading Challenge based on feedback from the school librarians, who have observed a lack of joy in reading and families reading together. This year's challenge of reading 15 minutes a day for a minimum of 30 days aims to build a daily habit of reading. Reading during the summer break helps close the achievement gap; middle school students only need to read 4-5 books over the summer to maintain their reading skills. The libraries are holding an extensive slate of free summer programming, all financed by the Library Friends, which helps draw reluctant readers into the library.

CTLS library card holders now have access to Creativebug, an electronic resource with tutorial videos on a variety of creative arts, including knitting, crochet, paper crafts, DIY home décor, soap making, charcuterie boards, and more! All videos have public performance rights through Creativebug, and can be used as part of in-person library programming.

The Elkins Park Library's Climate Circle will welcome an exciting guest speaker, Professor Jesse Keenan at their June meeting. There will be a Storywalk set up at Curtis Arboretum through June 8. CTLS will have a table at historic La Mott days, but there will not be access into the community center. There will be a Storywalk set up in Cheltenham Village. The school librarians recommended that CTLS collaborate with the township camps on the Reading Buddies program. Currently, we have lots of teen volunteers, but not enough buddies.

The Board discussed potential community outreach events to maintain a presence in Cheltenham Village and La Mott. Nicole Lynch added that events may not happen this summer, but library popups are on a high priority on the current the strategic activities plan. Mary Kay Moran shared that CTLS asked about the library attending Brews with a View, but the Township said no. CTLS was invited back to the fall program, but the library table was previously in a weird corner away from the food and activity, so we did not attend last year. Mary Kay Moran expressed reservations that Parks and Rec is excited to work with the library system. Emily Cheramie-Walz volunteered to finesse the relationship between CTLS and Parks and Rec., and suggested events the library could attend like Caribbean Night in the fall, Conklin Pool's last summer, the Harvest Festival in downtown Elkins Park, and the Battle of the Brews at Gimbel Field. The Board

discussed further ideas for community programming focusing on the Cheltenham Village area. CTLS will have a table at Arts in the Park, the Monarch Fest, the Ice Cream Social and other township events.

**Board Comment:** None.

**Public comment:** None.

**Upcoming Meetings:**

- The next External Affairs Meeting will be held on Monday, July 6 at 6:00 PM.
- The next Governance Committee Meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 14 at 6:00 PM.
- The next Internal Affairs Committee Meeting will be held on Monday, June 8 at 4:00 PM.
- The next Community Advisory Meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 14 at 7:00 PM.
- The next Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 22 at 7:00 PM at the Glenside Free Library.

**Motion:** Tim Gaudreau moved to adjourn the meeting, Jesse Gallagher seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned.