

Board of Library Directors of Cheltenham Township

July 22, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Julie Haywood, Alycia Kinchloe, Jessika McLaughlin, Thom Estilow, Jesse Gallagher, Mary Kay Moran (Executive Director), Nicole Lynch (Assistant Director), Hannah Miller (Head Librarian of the 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. May Minutes
- f. Finance Reports
- g. Committee Reports

Board Comment: Julie Haywood noted that the Internal Affairs Committee report should read July 13, and not June 13.

Motion: Jesse Gallagher moved to adopt the Consent Agenda, Thom Estilow seconded the motion, and the agenda was adopted.

Sunshine Announcements: None.

Public Comment General: None.

Librarian's Report (Hannah Miller): See attached report.

Commissioner's Report (Emily Cheramie-Walz): Emilie Cheramie-Walz was not able to attend. Mary Kay Moran read the report that she provided. The commissioners have appointed Jonathan Altshul to be the new Township Manager. Altshul starts on September 8th, and the new chief of police appointee will be announced in the next week. The La Mott Community Center renovation project has been officially released for bids, and bids are due by July 31st, with the goal of reopening in the summer of 2027. Upcoming community events include the La Mott Fire Company Community Day on Saturday, July 25, Concerts in the Park with brews at Curtis Arboretum on July 26 and Robinson Park on August 9, and Battle of the Breweries with a Concert in the Park at Gimble Field on Sunday, August 30.

New Business:

Governance: Jessika McLaughlin

Strategic Plan Dashboard: Jessika McLaughlin reminded the Board that the Strategic Plan Dashboard has been sent out, and committee chairs or co-chairs should fill out their goals and activities if they have not already done so.

Open Board Seat: The board vacancy has been posted, and the Recruitment Committee has already received some responses. After the July 31st deadline, the committee will review the applicants, vet them, invite a few strong candidates to interview, and come back to the Board with recommendations. Tim Gaudreau will be leaving the Board in September. Julie Haywood thanked Tim Gaudreau for his invaluable feedback and work on a forecasting model for the budget, both as a Community Advisor, and a board member.

External Affairs: Jesse Gallagher

Friends & Volunteers Luncheon: Jesse Gallagher shared that this year's Friends & Volunteer Luncheon was a successful, and the written thank-you notes were well received. The External Affairs Committee plan to broaden the luncheon, and make it a yearly event.

Elected Official Visits: The External Affairs Committee met with Senator Haywood at the Glenside Library. Mary Kay Moran and Nicole Lynch met with Representative Nelson recently, and did not need to hold an additional meeting. Representative Nelson is a library supporter and advocate, and the Board will keep that communication ongoing. Mary Kay Moran shared that the libraries were flat-funded in the state budget.

Thank-a-thon: Jesse Gallagher explained that Board members do not all have to make calls for the donor Thank-a-thon at the same time. Nicole Lynch will send out a Sign-Up Genius to sign up for individual call sessions next week. There will be a script provided, and call will be made from August through early October.

Development Contractor: Nicole Lynch, Mary Kay Moran and Emily Cheramie-Walz who works in development, met to discuss hiring a part-time development contractor. A contractor could seek out funding from private foundations or donor advised funds that can be used to cover operating costs. A development contractor could also build and deepen relationships with donors, sponsors and local foundations. Emily Cheramie-Walz advised that a successful contractor can earn back their annual fee within the first year, and generate a serious return on investment by the third year.

CTLS would commit to a one-year contract with the development contractor, with the expectation of a three year relationship. Due to the long-term nature of making contacts, identifying philanthropic organizations and individual donors, and building relationships, it will take time to see a return on investment.

CTLS will meet with Emily Cheramie-Walz's contacts to develop a framework for a development contractor and to understand the practical annual expenses to expect. The Board deliberated the potential contract format, including setting clear expectations and goals, establishing a supervisory structure, and determining travel and cultivation expenses. Jessika McLaughlin emphasized that the development consultant's work should also result in products and systems that the library system can continue to use in perpetuity.

In terms of the consultant's compensation, Emily Cheramie-Walz recommended an annual fee range of \$18,000-\$25,000, and CTLS leadership suggests that CTLS aim for around \$20,000. Based on the usual hourly rate of \$125, that annual fee works out to 12-20 hours a month. The Board committed to using \$18,000 annually from the Restricted Fundraising fund in the fund balance to pay a development contractor's fee for one year, with the expectation of some additional cultivation and travel expenses to be determined at a future date. Upon seeing results, this payment could be renewed for a total of three years.

The Board agreed to continue to explore engaging a development consultant on a consultancy basis with clear terms. Mary Kay Moran and Nicole Lynch will follow up with Emily Cheramie-Walz on the next steps.

Internal Affairs:

FYE 2025 Audit: The Internal Affairs Committee recommends that the Board approve the 2025 audit by Maillie. CTLS received a clean audit with no adverse findings.

- **Motion:** Jesse Gallagher moved to approve the 2025 audit, Thom Estilow seconded, and the motion carried.

2027 Budget Discussion: Mary Kay Moran and Julie Haywood met with Commissioners Emily Cheramie-Walz and Matthew Areman to start the budget discussion earlier and make clear that CTLS is working in partnership with the commissioners to provide services to township residents in a fiscally responsible way. Mary Kay Moran outlined the cost-saving measures the library system has put in place for 2026-27, and informed the Commissioners that the township finance director had again requested a cost estimate for operating out of only one of the existing library buildings. The Commissioners did not deem that necessary, but Mary Kay Moran can create a budget estimate for a future centralized library. Mary Kay Moran will use the budget of another local, similarly-sized, nonprofit library to create that budget. Janice Salerno also requested the budget for operating CTLS in its current status for the next 5 years, which Mary Kay

Moran has already written. The Commissioners were not sure what the township's budget will look like going forward, but are hopeful that the new township manager will be making some changes and working on the facilities plan.

Mary Kay Moran is planning on meeting with Alyson Elliott and Janice Salerno to present a flat-funded budget and CTLS's cost-saving efforts. The library system will not be filling two open staffing vacancies at the end of the summer, and will be incorporating \$60,000 from the 2025 operating surplus into the budget. Despite cost-cutting efforts, some expenses have outpaced inflation. electricity supplier fees have increased 30% this year. The oil bill will be \$30,000 this year if prices do not fall. A flat-funded budget would allow a 2% increase for staff with no service or staffing cuts this year. Mary Kay Moran should have a working copy by the middle of next week.

The Township has previously expressed that CTLS could do more to reduce costs. In this meeting, Commissioner Areman specifically mentioned staffing cuts before Mary Kay Moran said that the library system would not be filling the vacancies. Julie Haywood hopes that the conversation confirmed that the library system is doing enough to reduce costs, and that supporting libraries includes financial support. The Board discussed the Township's budget process and the low level of communication between the commissioners and the finance director until the budget is presented publically. In their meeting, Julie Haywood told the commissioners that if library services or programs are impacted by a proposed cut, CTLS would make that clear to patrons, who could then communicate their feelings to the commissioners. Between the Internal Affairs Committee meeting and the next board meeting, Mary Kay Moran will have the initial budget meeting with the finance director, and will report back.

Community Advisory Committee: Attendance at Community Advisory meetings has been thin over the past months. Jesse Gallagher hopes to renew interest by sharing an agenda a week ahead of time recruiting new members. All are welcome to join!

Strategic Plan:

2026-28 Implementation: The Strategic Plan Implementation Team met this afternoon to review the 57 proposed action items, some of which are ongoing from the previous plan. The SPLIT Team assigned priority and weight to the action items, and will revisit the plan quarterly to determine which items to work on each quarter. The team will be working on 5 items this quarter, including the foundation for purchasing items in other languages, a digital patron suggestion/comment form, reader's advisory book carousels, and a L.O.T. resource spotlight. Once a patron has borrowed 10 items from the Library of Things, they will earn a special sticker for their library card. Staff will also be looking into using the library meeting rooms for study or quiet spaces.

Facilities: Mary Kay Moran updated the Board on a number of facilities concerns. The updated facilities report has been uploaded to the board drive.

- **EP Roof:** As of Monday the Elkins Park Library roof is finished! The library did have to close for a couple of hours on Friday and Monday due to strong adhesive fumes. Allen Brown said the township, roofing company, warranty company, and fire marshal, will be out on Friday to inspect the roof. The roof will have a 20 year warranty.
- **EP HVAC Leak:** The Elkins Park Library had another HVAC leak. A blockage in the reservoir of the air conditioners on the roof, caused it to fill up and spill over into the EP work room and the ladies bathroom. Allen Brown took down the damaged tiles and cleared the drain. When the roof repair is approved, they will replace the tiles.
- The storm drain in the Glenside Library parking lot is being replaced, and should take about a week to fix.
- The Township cleared the clogged gutters, and said they would do it more often.
- The Glenside Library also had a clogged AC reservoir and overflow, which has been fixed.
- Two cast iron pipes at the top of the ceiling in the Glenside Library basement are leaking a tiny bit of sludge at the top of ceiling. The township sealed them, but they are still leaking a little, and will keep an eye on the situation.
- The Elkins Park Library doors were repaired on the 24th of June.

Board Comment: None.

Public comment: None.

Upcoming Meetings:

- The next External Affairs Meeting will be held on Monday, August 3 at 6:00 PM.
- The next Governance Committee Meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 11 at 6:00 PM.
- The next Internal Affairs Committee Meeting will be held on Monday, August 10 at 4:00 PM.
- The next Community Advisory Meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 11 at 7:00 PM.
- The next Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 23 at 7:00 PM at the Elkins Park Free Library.

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