

West Hartford Public Library Board Agenda

Monday, June 23, 2025 - 6:30 p.m.

Noah Webster Board Room

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment
3. Approval of the Consent Agenda (Items 3a, 3b, and 3c)
 - a. Approval of the Minutes of the May 19, 2025 Meeting
 - b. Library Administrative report
 - c. Budget report
4. Chair's Report
5. Business Items
 - a. SB1271 and Library Policy Requirements – Laura Irmscher
 - b. Library Board summer meeting dates (July 28 & August 25) – Gail Crockett
 - c. 2025 Holiday Schedule – Laura Irmscher
6. Director's Report
7. Adjournment
 - a. Next Meeting is TBD

Anyone requiring auxiliary aid or service for effective communication or modification of policies or procedures to participate in a meeting, service, program or activity of the Town of West Hartford, should contact Suzanne Oslander, ADA Coordinator, at suzanneo@westhartfordct.gov or (860) 561-7580, as soon as possible, preferably seven days beforehand.

Public Comment Instructions: Individuals who wish to comment on an agenda item, may do so by sending an email with the subject “public comment” to Board@westhartfordlibrary.org on or before June 20, 2025, or by attending the meeting in person.

WEST HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES
Monday, May 19, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gail Crockett called the Library Board to order at 6:35p.m. Present, Board members Kim Cohen, Eileen Daly, and Natalia Menjivar, Library Director Laura Irmscher, and Heidi Reagan, recorder. Member EJ Greenspan was absent. Present from the Town of West Hartford Corporation Counsels Office, Cynthia Lauture.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT - none

3. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA (Items 3a, 3b, and 3c)

- a. Approval of the Minutes of the April 28, 2025 Meeting
- b. Library Administrative Report
- c. Budget Report

MOTION: On a motion made by Eileen Daly and seconded by Natalia Menjivar, the Board unanimously approved a correction be made to the minutes from the meeting of Monday, April 28, 2025, to show that the minutes from the previous month were for March 24 rather than March 25.

MOTION: On a motion made by Kim Cohen and seconded by Natalia Menjivar, the Board unanimously approved the Consent Agenda.

4. THE MEETING MINUTES of April 26, 2025 were approved as part of the consent agenda.

5. LIBRARY BOARD HEARING PROCEDURES – Cynthia Lauture, Assistant Corporation Counsel

- a. Cynthia Lauture led a discussion of hearing procedures she recommended the Board use in the event of a future hearing.
- b. She recommended the Board to revise their current By-laws, which have not been updated since 2009
 - i. She will present suggested updates to the Board in July or September, 2025

6. CHAIR’S REPORT – Gail Crockett

- a. Gail wanted to recognize the library staff for the wonderful job they are doing with programming

7. NEW BUSINESS – Laura Irmscher

- a. Ebook bill (SB1234) was approved by the Connecticut House
- b. The FY26 budget was approved by the Town

8. DIRECTOR’S REPORT – Laura Irmscher

- a. The new eCard is now available
 - i. Patrons may register online

- ii. A temporary number is issued so they may have immediate access to eMaterials
- b. The Bishops Corner Study Room is up and being used daily by patrons
- c. Faxon Fun will be held again this summer
- d. Babies Love Books will be offered again in June.
 - i. Literary program for immigrant families, caregivers, and children.

9. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: The Library Board Meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:29pm. The next scheduled Board Meeting is June 23, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen Daly
Board Secretary

May 2025 Administrative Report

New Art Show

Curator Joe Bun Keo partnered with Kevin Hernandez Rosa for our newest art show. Check it out in person and learn more [here](#). The show runs May 2 – June 28.

More than a Phone

The West Hartford Public Library participates in a collection of smartphones to be sent to the *More Than a Phone* organization. The mission of *More Than a Phone* is to support survivors of domestic violence to stay connected and find freedom with their own safe line. They can stay in touch with personal contacts, search for employment and gain independence without their abuser tracking them. In the past few months, the West Hartford Public Library has collected 11 phones as well as phone cases and other phone accessories that have been shipped to the *More Than a Phone* headquarters. Our collection boxes will remain in place at the reference desks in the three library buildings for future collections and deliveries.

Recent Media

Follow the links below for recent media coverage about the library's programs and services.

[CT book clubs offer everything from the classics to cookbooks and Shakespeare to Stephen King](#) (Hartford Courant)

[West Hartford Garden Club Welcoming Season With Plant Sale](#) (we-ha.com)

[West Hartford man's \\$25K gift to the town's library continues to enrich the children's department](#) (CT Insider)

Staff Updates

June GOAT – Karen Thomson

It was an honor to be named GOAT for the month of May 2025, and a pleasure having Billy in our home for the month! Spring is my favorite time of year by far, and even though it was an inordinately wet and cold month of May, we had a lot of fun hanging out (or in) with Billy.

A few examples of our activities: He proved quite helpful in the lawncare department when weather did permit, (although I had to keep a close eye on him around my lovely lilac bush), and our patrons got a charge out of seeing him at Faxon, where he soon rooted out our many flowers and plants, including our May Flowers book display! In the evenings we watched lots of hockey, as Springtime also means NHL playoff time, and Billy got quite a kick out of it! And of course, we shared ice cream together every night. (His favorite flavor is Moose Tracks.)

But without further ado, it is my pleasure and privilege to name the GOAT for the month of June -- my colleague here at Faxon -- Karen Thomson!

I have worked with Karen for a lot of years, and there are many reasons why I believe Karen is deserving of GOAT status, not the least of which is her genuine dedication to the library and our patrons. She goes out of her way to make Faxon an attractive and welcoming place for all, takes tremendous pride in keeping it neat and tidy, and pays attention to little tasks that need undertaking, the likes of which might not occur to most staff, but which make a big difference when completed.

She is also an excellent 'detective', often tracking down library books and items which have been misfiled or misplaced and whose whereabouts have perhaps baffled the rest of staff.



Her memory for names, dates, places, and times is near-photographic, and our patrons' appreciation of this is obvious in their conversations with Karen. She also goes to extra lengths to reunite patrons with inadvertently 'returned' items often found in bookdrop, items ranging from potentially cherished bookmarks and photographs and greeting cards to sensitive pieces of mail. (She often puts those previously noted detective skills to use when attempting to return a mistakenly-included personal copy of a book to its rightful owner.)

I have learned a lot from Karen through her guidance and instruction, as well as through simple observation.

As far as the aforementioned dedication goes, the fact that she has traveled nearly ninety miles a day round trip to work every day for over 32 years alone would serve to prove that point!

Away from the library, Karen is quite active with the Jaycees, and has enjoyed serving on the judges' panel for many beauty pageants over the years. As a teenager she was a hair-model (I've seen some of the photos -- stunning!), and there is a definite twinkle in her eye when she mentions her only nephew, Preston, who lives in California.

One other item I'd like to mention before I wrap this up -- I was touched to find out, purely by chance, that she makes donations of small toiletry kits, each of which she puts together herself on her own time and delivers in person, to various Ronald McDonald Houses around the country for the families staying at said locations, whose children are undergoing local treatment. When I expressed my surprise (and indeed near-awe) upon learning this, she just gave a small shrug and smile and said that doing it was her 'relaxation'.

That's Karen.

-- Aprill

From Our Patrons

The patron feedback form has been a helpful tool for gathering feedback about the library and, since its launch, we've received compliments on the study pod, tax form offerings, notary service, the foreign film collection, staff assistance with Libby, and our ILL service, which has received numerous comments. Patrons have shared their appreciation for the service and said it's a great cost-saving resource.

Adult Services & Programs

Featured Programs

Westmoor Park Arboretum Tour

Attendees enjoyed a sunny day at Westmoor Park, joining tree naturalist, writer, and photographer Bill Gleason on a 2-hour walking tour of the [Westmoor Arboretum](#).

West Hartford Tabletop Game Club: Season 5 Game Day

This club is halfway through its second year and going strong. This season will see games such as Root, Dungeons & Dragons (with our own Jordan!), and many more.

Film & Discussion

We saw the biggest turnout yet for our Film & Discussion Series, on which we partner with the West Hartford Office of Employee Development & Community. This month, we honored Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month by watching and discussing the film *And Then They Came for Us* about the internment of Japanese Americans during WWII.

Edith Bruck: One of the Last Great Chroniclers of the Holocaust

Literary translator and West Hartford resident Jeanne Bonner read from her translation, *This Darkness Will Never End*, a short story collection written in Italian by Hungarian-born writer Edith Bruck.



ADULT PROGRAMS BY THE NUMBERS (NWL, FAX, BC)	
STANDALONE Programs	7
Attendance	233
Avg. Attendance	33
RECURRING Programs	27
Attendance	319
Avg. Attendance	12
TOTAL Programs	34
Attendance	552
Avg. Attendance	16

STUDIO 20

Mother's Day & Father's Day Audio Archive Workshops

To honor parents this spring, we have been inviting patrons to participate in the very special workshops 'Mother's/Father's Day Audio Time Capsule: A Parent-Child Interview Experience' where kids can interview their parents and keep the recorded interview as a family keepsake. Topics discussed at the Mother's Day workshop included first jobs, traditions, and whatever else curiosity demanded, sparking soulful

conversations recorded with our equipment. The [Father's Day workshop](#) will take place on Saturday, June 14.



Local History

Visitors: 18 in-person and 10 off-site requests

Patron interest areas: House history

Collection additions: Hall High School 1927 yearbook

May Highlights:

- Brett was a judge in the History Day CT Finals. He helped judge the senior exhibition group and one of his team's selections ended up being the winner that will represent CT at the National History Day Finals this summer.
- General work continued on the Town Annual reports rehousing and rehousing/interfiling items into WH History Collection from discovered items hidden in boxes.
- Local History has a new volunteer, Shelby Lukaszczyk, an English teacher in Enfield and lives in New Britain. She is working on a project to sort and rehouse the postcards in the Barbara Girard Collection. She is also putting them into an inventory for the first time so we will be able to make this more accessible to researchers, staff, the Town, whomever. It is a great visual archive for West Hartford and Hartford.

Branch Libraries

Bishops Corner

Consultants from the Institute for Human Centered Design came to Bishops Corner on Friday to conduct an ADA compliance site visit. They will submit their report, once completed, to West Hartford Social Services.

Faxon

In person Faxon Fun registration took place on May 14. Staff are now recruiting teen volunteers as well as assistants paid through the grant. Faxon Fun will be held Monday through Thursday from July 7th to July 31st.

Children's Services & Programs

Programs

Cool Mixtures and Magical Potions with *Cool-ology*® took place on Saturday, May 31. Children in grades 3-6 learned about discovering the wonders of atoms, molecules, and elements while concocting cool mixtures and magical potions and creating mini-explosions, mesmerizing slime and Play-Doh using simple household ingredients.

Updates

Carol connected with the State Education Resource Center, a quasi-public agency looking for assistance connecting with families to support educational equity and excellence. The organization provides professional development and information dissemination in the latest research and best practices to educators, service providers, and families throughout the state, as well as job-embedded technical assistance and training within schools, programs, and districts. They have requested partnership with public libraries holding children's events to maintain a presence and hand out goodie bags and make connections with people in our community. They will be attending the summer reading kickoff to be held on June 18 at the West Hartford Conference Center and other events throughout the year.

Teen Services

Programs

- D&D Campaigns
- Candle Making Workshop @ WeHa Candle Co
- MYC QPR Training at Hall High
- Teen Writing Group



Updates

- WHiT members Yimin Wu and Ana Veriienko were featured in a Trout Brook Tales [podcast](#).
- The [teen volunteer](#) mailing list was updated and Summer Volunteering Sign Up Genius was sent out.
- Immigrant Youth Activist (formerly WHiT) applications are due 5/23 and Mayor's Youth Council applications are due 5/31.
- Mayor's Youth Council members had a final meeting and celebration on the evening of May 27. The meeting included a review of this past year's projects, a visit from the two West Hartford Registrars of Voters, a discussion about membership for the next school year and a party with pizza and dessert.

Library Financials - General Fund**June, 2025**

Year	Period	Rollup Code Description	Period Actuals	YTD Actuals	Original Budget	Available Budget
2025	12	GF-Library-Personal	122,487.99	2,852,297.41	2,821,945.00	-30,352.41
2025	12	GF-Library-NonPers	14,551.43	600,590.62	671,637.00	71,046.38
2025	12	GF-Library-Sundry	8,553.37	198,582.41	211,667.00	13,084.59