

WEST HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES
Monday, March 23, 2026, 6:30 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair EJ Greenspan called the Library Board to order at 6:32 p.m. Present were Board members Kim Cohen, Eileen Daly, Gail Crockett, and Breton Boudreaux, Library Director Laura Irmscher, and Heidi Reagan, recorder.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT - none

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

- a. Minutes of the February 4, 2026, Special Meeting
- b. Library Administrative Reports (January and February)
- c. Budget Reports

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

4. CHAIR'S REPORT - None

5. BUSINESS ITEMS:

- a. ILS (Catalog) Migration
 - i. The Library Catalog will be moving from Sierra to Polaris, and the public catalog will be moving from Encore to Vega.
 - ii. The LCI consortium is managing the migration for the 31 member libraries.
 - iii. Pop-up messages are alerting patrons that the mobile app will expire on April 7, 2026.
 - iv. Services will start shutting down in May, during that time patrons will be given extended check out periods.
 - v. The system will be completely shut down for eight days, starting June 3.
 - vi. The hold function will not be operating during the shutdown period, but patrons will keep their place in line for holds already placed.
- b. Request to close at 3pm on Friday, July 24 to help staff prepare for the BookWorm Festival the following day.

MOTION: On a motion made by Eileen Daly and seconded by Brett Boudreaux, the Board unanimously approved the request to close the library at 3 p.m. on July 24, 2026.

- c. Legislative Update – BorrowIT program
 - i. The Governor's budget includes a 20% cut to the State Library's BorrowIT program.
 - ii. Laura contacted the West Hartford delegation to express our concern that this cut would result in a reduction in vital services.

6. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- a. FY27 Budget Update
 - i. Community conversations are being held (as we speak).
 - ii. The Town budget includes maintenance budget for the Library.
 - iii. The Human and Community Services committee meeting will be on March 26 when Laura will be presenting the Library's budget.
- b. Staffing Update
 - i. We are currently recruiting for a full-time Library Specialist position for Faxon.
 - ii. The Town approved a position upgrade from Library Assistant.
 - iii. We are looking ahead to the needs of the new Community Center and Library building.
- c. Annual Storytelling Celebration Honoring Gertrude Blanks
 - i. Information is available on our website
 - ii. There will be an exhibition in the NWL Gallery in April – Gertrude Blanks' Life and Legacy.
 - iii. This year's event will celebrate the "Nations of West Hartford".
 - 1. There will be a poster exhibition from now through April 30 at Faxon.
 - 2. This is a result of an initiative by local teen, Linnea Knox who has been sharing stories of people from all over the world who call West Hartford home.
 - 3. Once Upon a Story: Storytime will be held in honor of Gertrude Blanks for children ages three and up at Faxon.
 - 4. A link is available to the video of last year's celebration

7. EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: On a motion made by Gail Crockett and seconded by Kim Cohen, the Board went into Executive Session to discuss Laura Irmscher's annual review at 7:12 p.m.

Board members EJ Greenspan, Kim Cohen, Eileen Daly, Gail Crockett, Breton Boudreaux and Library Director Laura Irmscher attended the executive session.

The board returned to the regular meeting at 7:23 p.m.

8. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: The Library Board Meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:24 p.m. The next scheduled Board Meeting is April 27, 2026.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen Daly
Board Secretary