JACKSON COUNTY LIBRARY DISTRICT (JCLD)
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS RETREAT**
Medford Branch Library
Adams Room
205 S Central Ave, Medford, OR
July 23, 2026, 9:00 a.m.

**MINUTES**

**ATTENDEES**

Present at the meeting were: Board Members Susan Kiefer (President), Kevin Keating (Vice President), Patty Jensen, Marissa Shepherd (Attendance transitioned from in-person to virtual at 2:30 p.m.), and Marta Tarantsey.

Additional attendees: Frank Phillips (Library Director), Kelda Vath (Assistant Director, Support Services), Joan Vigil (Assistant Director, Public Services), Josh Letsinger (Community Engagement Manager), Heather Scott (Finance Manager), Brynn Fogerty (HR Manager) Ginny Auer (Foundation Executive Director), Regina Mannino (Data & Analytics Coordinator) and Yoli Diaz (Executive Assistant).

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

Director Kiefer called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. The Land Acknowledgement was read.

**Library Board Meeting Summary**

**1. Library Workplace Culture**
The Board and administrative team engaged in thoughtful discussions on several governance and organizational topics including the use of the Land Acknowledgement, board-staff relationships, and employee affinity groups. Board members expressed differing perspectives on the Land Acknowledgement discussing its educational value, historical significance, accuracy, and public perception. While no changes were made, there was general support for verifying its accuracy and exploring supplemental educational displays. The team also emphasized the importance of rebuilding trust through clear communication, mutual respect, and maintaining appropriate governance roles, with consensus that the Board should provide strategic direction while the Library Director manages operations. Finally, the Board reviewed the district's legal opinion confirming that employee affinity groups are permissible and discussed their role in fostering inclusion and staff engagement. The Board agreed to continue supporting affinity groups, update the employee handbook to reflect the attorney's recommendations, and establish a clear process for communicating affinity group feedback through administration. Director Keating noted that, per legal counsel, all affinity groups are open to all employees.

**2. Operations**
Regina Mannino, Data & Analytics Coordinator, presented library benchmarking data on collection performance, and the board discussed how to interpret and apply the findings. The data showed that collection spending per person is higher than most comparable libraries, although the collection budget represents only 10% of the total budget, below the industry guideline of 12–14%. The board also discussed balancing a current collection with a diverse range of publication dates and reviewed the significantly higher cost per visit associated with one-on-one appointments, recognizing that the current service model may need to be adjusted.

**3. Finance**
The Board discussed financial and operations information presented by Heather Scott, Finance Manager. It was a detailed financial breakdown by organizational unit, branch, and department, including cost-per-visit, cost-per-circulation, staffing comparison and salary analysis and facilities planning.

**4.Committee Meetings**
The Board discussed committee assignments, with members electing to remain on their current committee assignments for FY27. The Board also discussed the frequency and sequencing of quarterly committee meetings. It was agreed that some committees will meet twice per year, while others will continue to meet on a quarterly schedule (four times per year). The board further discussed whether committee reports and recommendations should be presented to the full board by board committee members rather than staff committee members. Board members agreed that staff can prepare supporting documents such as redlined policy docs, memos for packets, but committee recommendations should come for the committee chair or a designated board member.

**5. Relationship JCLS & JCLF**
The Board discussed strengthening the connection between the library board and the foundation by rotating board members, so more members gain firsthand knowledge of the Foundation's work. Foundation Executive Director Ginny Auer shared that its current funding priorities include early childhood literacy initiatives such as Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, childcare partnerships, technology and the library Pollinator Garden.

**6. Governance**
The board had a thoughtful discussion about its governance responsibilities, emphasizing the need to balance oversight of policy, strategy, finance, and organizational performance. Board members agreed that strategic planning should include clearer financial plans and funding sources. The board also discussed improving board education and meeting effectiveness. Lastly, board members highlighted the importance of encouraging in-person participation while exploring ways to reduce barriers to board service.

**7. Library Director**
Board members discussed the key qualities they want in the next Library Director. They emphasized strong leadership, financial understanding, emotional intelligence, empathy, trust, and collaborative approach. The Board agreed that the ideal candidate should be a team builder who values relationships, encourages open communication, and creates a workplace where employees feel connected and supported. Several board members noted the importance of fostering trust across the organization. The board expressed optimism about the candidate pool and agreed that selecting someone who can strengthen organizational culture and unify the admin team will be critical to the library’s future success.

**Open Discussion**
The board requested that the Interim Library Director help with a board self-evaluation, noting that it has been approximately one year since members last assessed their effectiveness and how they work together as a governing body. Board members discussed developing a 20-question self-assessment, identifying five key focus areas for evaluation. They also requested that the Interim Library Director provide candid feedback on the board's performance before his departure.

The retreat concluded with Board Directors expressing their appreciation for a well-organized, detailed, and productive retreat.

Director Kiefer adjourned the JCLD Board Retreat Meeting at 3:28 p.m.

/s/ Yoli Diaz

Recording Secretary