

Jefferson County Library Board

Minutes

January 8, 2026

Date: January 8, 2026

Location: Jefferson City Public Library

Board Members Present: Rex Kitts, Rose Mays, Joseph Payne, Kay Rutherford, Ralph Tucker, Kyndall Guerassio

Library Directors: David Phillips, Donna Phillips, Sarabeth Phillips, Bethany Jones, Madison Hough (in for Matthew from Clinch River Regional)

Guests: Catherine Coalson, John Sonnen, Elizabeth Finchum, James Cubbage, Nancy Crapiz, Debbie Valentine, Carolyn Barrette

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair, Rex Kitts, at 6:02pm.

Kyndall Guerassio, Board Secretary, recorded the minutes.

Comments by Guests:

- Members of the individual Friends of the Library groups presented their annual reports (*See attached.*) They each highlighted the incredible work the Friends are doing in our libraries and in their respective communities.
- Catherin Coalson from the UT Extension office introduced herself and the new youth literacy program they will be starting.
- Elizabeth Finchum read to the Board a letter that she wrote emphasizing Donna's hard work at Parrott-Wood Memorial Library and her notable contributions to the community.

Announcements:

- Review of Previous Minutes: The November 2025 Minutes stand as submitted.

Financial Report:

- Matt Cohen, Treasurer, was unable to attend this meeting but stated over email beforehand that all financials are currently as expected.

Director's Reports:

See all attached reports.

- *Clinch River Regional Report* – Madison

- Madison highlighted some points from her report, including the opening of the new Kodak branch library in Sevier County and Jefferson City's new annual mini-festival of the trees.
- Madison also handed out the new annual training schedule for all library staff in the region with updated requirements and training opportunities.
- Madison brought to the Board's attention that Rex's term is about to expire in the coming months. In response, Ralph makes a motion to reappoint Rex to the JCPL Board; Kay seconds; all vote in favor. David agrees to make sure Rex's reappointment is added to the next County Commission meeting.
- *Dandridge Memorial Library* – Bethany Jones
 - Bethany has finished her collection audit as required by the state.
 - The new library building project is progressing. She is currently waiting for the sign-offs from construction engineers to approve the revised plans, which she expects soon.
 - We are still about \$1 million short of the overall project costs, but Bethany is confident we will be able to fundraise and receive those funds through private donors and other organizations.
- *Jefferson City Public Library* – David Phillips
 - David has emailed the Mayor asking for updates about the salary survey results and expects to receive a response soon.
- *Parrott-Wood Memorial Library* – Donna Phillips
 - Donna added that they received an additional \$2500 donation offer from Modern Woodman.
- *White Pine Public Library* – Sarabeth Phillips
 - Sarabeth spoke with a local White Pine resident about joining the Board and filling our last vacancy and she mentioned she would be willing.
 - Matt completed Sarabeth's director evaluation, which means that all director evaluations are now complete.

Salvage Requests: See attached reports

- N/A

Committee Reports:

- Bylaws/Policy Reviews – Joe Payne
 - The Collection Development Policy has been reviewed and approved.

- Kay also makes a motion to accept and approve the collection reviews and audits as required by the state for all four libraries; Ralph seconds this motion; all vote in favor.
- Director Evaluations – Kay Rutherford
 - All evaluations have been completed and Kay is now just waiting for Matt to send over a copy of the evaluation he has completed on Sarabeth.

New Business:

- We still have one county-wide Board vacancy that needs to be filled.
 - Sarabeth has found someone for this who is interested and we are just waiting for the application.
- The Board discusses the current petty cash amounts on hand and whether or not they need to be increased across all four libraries and to what amount. After some discussion, the Board decides to wait for Matt Cohen, Treasurer, to be in attendance to make any final decisions.

Rex notes that the next Jefferson County Library Board meeting will be March 12, 2026 at the Parrott-Wood Memorial Library.

Kay makes a motion to adjourn the meeting; Rose seconds this motion; the meeting is officially adjourned at 7:12pm.

Rex Kitts

Rex Kitts, Chair

Kyndall Guerassio

Kyndall Guerassio, Secretary

