

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting for September 8, 2026

Location: Hybrid

Attendees: Maria McCauley, Jim Roosevelt, Michael Baenen, Liz Werby, Karen Kosko, Joy Kim, Irene Monroe and Carson McGrath

Absent: Risa Mednick

Guests: Marc Levy and Toni Bee

1. Public Comment: None

2. Approval of Minutes

Chair Jim Roosevelt opened the floor for corrections or comments to the minutes from June 9, 2026. No corrections were made, and the minutes passed unanimously.

3. Strategic Planning

Director Maria McCauley and Deputy Director Joy Kim presented the draft strategic framework to the Trustees for approval. They noted that the previous six-year plan led to major accomplishments including the fine-free policy and expanded branch hours. There is familiar language in the updated framework as the previous one, with refinements to the vision and values; the mission is the same. In the previous framework there were eight total values; the draft framework notes five while still touching on all previous concepts. Public service has been listed more strongly as a goal in the framework. The draft framework shows continuity with community feedback during the strategic planning process indicating overall satisfaction with the Library. Strategic priorities include patron experience, lifelong learning, community resilience, and organizational excellence.

Joy and Maria shared several community insights that emerged through the planning process as well, such as sustained community engagement with the library, social isolation and mental health challenges, and more.

Trustee feedback included refining wording, recommending stronger examples of partnerships between the schools and our libraries, and praise for the plan. A motion

was passed unanimously to approve the framework in principle with the understanding that final edits will be incorporated and reviewed.

4. Library Updates

Director McCauley provided brief updates on recent library programs and events, her American Library Association presidency, new hires and more. She shared a video recapping her ALA Annual Conference experience in June, including her presidential inauguration celebration at the Harold Washington Library Center in Chicago. In June and July, the Library hired three new staff members. In late August, the Collins Branch welcomed their new Branch Manager, Emily Gonzalez.

The Library hit a new record high for number of adult participations in summer reading bingo this year with a 16% increase over last year. The Boudreau Branch held various summer reading events such as hosting Land's Sake Farm for the Reading with a Rabbit program. The Central Square team completed outreach at the Central Square farmer's market this summer as well as at the Y2Y and Harvard Square Homeless shelters. Over 132 patrons stopped by the Collins Branch for the Summer Reading Kickoff Black Party.

This summer the O'Connell team launched several new programming series including a weekly Baby Lapsit. The Mayor's opening reception for the Cambridge City Nature Art Challenge was held at O'Neill and had over 90 attendees. The Valente Branch celebrated the last day of school with an ice cream party that 230 children, caregivers and school employees attended. The Collections team are busy processing new materials as they arrive and deployed the first CD players as part of takeout tech offerings. In partnership with AARP's Older Adult Technology Services, the digital equity team is holding multiple programs including Getting Started with Canva.

The Library held a Summer Fitness program which included a program for patrons to enjoy yoga in the park. In partnership with Innovators for Purpose and The Hip Hop Transformation, over 50 teen interns called the Library home for the summer as they developed skills in multimedia production, client-centered design, and critical research and application of artificial intelligence. The Youth Services team held several fun events this summer including a Juneteenth Workshop with Wee the People and Family Combat Robotics with Guild Hall. We recently wrapped up our Summer Sundays at Valente and welcomed many patrons during the nine weeks. The Library's Social Worker continues to develop the Resource Center Space at Central Square with new partnerships, furniture and supplies.

Maria closed her updates with offering a few save the dates for upcoming programs including a CPR Class for Parents and Caregivers on September 12 and the Library's annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day Lecture on January 14, 2027.

The meeting adjourned at 6:09 pm.