

# Bethalto Public Library District Board Meeting

November 13, 2025

The meeting was called to order by Andrea Kramer.

Present: Stephanie Allshouse, Pamela Collman, Andrea Kramer, Patricia Stemmley, Kristy Walker, Shana Wright

Absent: Elizabeth Newton

Also present: Mary Brewster – Library Director, Paula Tretter – Assistant Director

Motion 1: It was moved by Collman and seconded by Walker that the minutes of the meeting of October 9, 2025 be approved as written.

Ayes: Allshouse, Collman, Kramer, Stemmley, Walker, Wright

Nays: none

Absent: Newton

Motion 2: It was moved by Collman and seconded by Wright that bills in the amount of \$60,920.07 be paid.

Ayes: Allshouse, Collman, Kramer, Stemmley, Walker, Wright

Nays: none

Absent: Newton

## **REPORTS**

The Financial report was presented by Pam Collman, Treasurer.

The Librarian's report was presented by Mary Brewster, Director. (See File)

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

## **COMMITTEES**

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Discussion of Ordinance 2025-4.

Prohibited Gifts Policy – first reading.

Discussion of Illinois Public Library Standards – programming.

Other items:

Discussion of Giving Tuesday,

Discussion of complaint of marijuana smell.

Motion 3: It was moved by Wright and seconded by Kramer to approve Ordinance 2025-4, Levying and Assessing Property Tax for Bethalto Public Library District for FY26.

Ayes: Allshouse, Collman, Kramer, Stemmler, Walker, Wright  
Nays: none  
Absent: Newton

Motion 4: It was moved by Kramer to adjourn the meeting at 9:28pm.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT – for November 13, 2025 Board Meeting**

### **Director's Report**

1. The Illinois General Assembly passed a bill amending OMA and FOIA, with changes to become effective on January 1, 2026. *(See enclosed page with details.)*
2. Library received a \$500 gift from the Collman Charitable Fund for the purchase of large print editions.
3. Walmart is no longer offering their Community Credit Card account. This change became effective on October 31, 2025. I will be looking at their Walmart Business account options to pay by invoice.
4. The 2025 Library Crawl was a great experience. We enjoyed hearing visitors talk about their travels around the state and hope that our patrons had enjoyable adventures too.
  - 281 visiting Crawlers came from 37 different towns. *(See enclosed page with list of towns.)* There were 195 visitors last year. This is a lot of growth!
  - 59 Bethalto patrons picked up passports to go crawling.
5. The 13<sup>th</sup> annual Spooktacular happened on Sunday, October 26, 2025. Rain did not stop this fun event! We estimate 150 patrons came through the library. The library seemed crowded until the very end of the event. Perhaps because of the rain, patrons stayed longer than in past years.
  - Haunted House with a Stranger Things theme
    - A donation bucket at the Haunted House entrance brought in \$34.00
  - Free food – hot dogs, nachos, chips and ghouls
  - Treat bags with 13 pieces of candy – handed out 133 bags
  - Chili Cook-off Potluck with 5 chili entries
    - 40 tasters paid \$1.00 each to vote for the people's choice
  - Music by the Wrights
  - Halloween crafts for the kids
  - 3 Guessing games with a small prize for the winner of each
    - How many pumpkin seeds? Answer 405 – 44 guesses
    - How many pieces of candy? Answer 157 – 77 guesses
    - How many insects? Answer 241 – 74 guesses
  - Library Staff pumpkin decorating contest – 6 pumpkin entries, 128 votes
  - Halloween blow-up decorations and balloons for a photo area
  - Little kids hangout area with a rice dig in the lower level
  - 13 games for the kids to play and win tickets

- Kids then turned in their tickets at the prize table – we handed out 736 fun prize items (this area was busy all night and ran out of all but the smallest prizes!) Thanks to the Trustees’ suggestion to contact Principal Newell at the High School, we were connected with the National Honor Society students and had more volunteers than ever before to run all of the games. I hope to make even better use of this resource next year for event setup and cleanup too.
6. Library staff participated in the Bethalto Halloween Parade on October 27, 2025. We had enough candy this year! We also threw 450 Halloween squishies and 100 coupons for a free book taped to a piece of candy. One family came right in to the library the next day to claim a book. Thank you to Billy and Kristy Walker for the use of their truck and trailer and driving our float safely there and back!
  7. Through social media, we also offered the free kids books to anyone stopping by the library on the Bethalto trick-or-treat days. Several families stopped in before 7:00pm on October 30<sup>th</sup>. As October 31<sup>st</sup> was a Friday, the library closed at 4:00pm so we did not have many trick-or-treaters this day. 30 books were handed out altogether.
  8. Looking towards 2026, I shopped at Walmart stores on November 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> to find items at 50% off for next year’s Spooktacular prize tables, haunted house and pumpkin decorating contest, as well as a Fall Reading Challenge “HalloRead.”
  9. For 2026, please consider closing the library the day of the Spooktacular. This would make it much easier to setup the event and also allow us to extend it from two to three hours long (4:00-7:00pm). With the Library Crawl also happening in October, we could be open on Columbus Day to benefit crawlers. (This change would affect the vacation days of the full time staff. Perhaps a personal day could be given instead?)

### **Programming Report (for October 2025)**

*From Mary:*

#### Book Clubs

The Original Book Club (Tuesday night) – 11 attendees

Just Another Book Club (Wednesday morning) – 7 attendees

#### Year Long Reading Challenge

Ages 0-15 | 3 new registration, 83 total registered, 15 books read in October 2025

Ages 16+ | no new registration, 95 total registered, 69 books read in October 2025

*From Amy:*

#### Preschool Storytimes

10/7- 10 am: 7 kids, 6 adults; 1 pm: 3 kids, 3 adults

10/14- 10 am: 7 kids, 4 adults; 1 pm: 5 kids, 4 adults

10/21- 10 am: 2 kids, 2 adults; 1 pm: 5 kids, 5 adults

10/28- 10 am: 3 kids, 2 adults; 1 pm: 5 kids, 5 adults

#### Baby/Toddler Playtimes

10/2- 2 babies, 2 adults

10/9- 1 baby, 1 adult

10/16- 7 babies, 8 adults (if only every week was this way!)

10/23- 4 babies, 5 adults

10/30- 2 babies, 3 adults

#### Family Fun Thursdays

10/2- Tiny pumpkin decorating- 16 kids attended

10/9- Halloween STEM activities- 15 kids attended

10/16- Kids in the Kitchen: Spooky Treats- 14 kids attended

10/23- Tie dye event- 20 kids signed up to receive a free "I Survived Bethalto Library Spooktacular" t-shirt. A few other patrons brought their own shirts to dye as well.

10/30- Not-So-Spooky Movie Day- 4 or 5 families watched small parts of the movie and had some popcorn, but because this was a trick or treating night, none of my regular families showed up, and those that did, did not stay long. Despite this, I think movies in the Kid's Area will prove to be popular, and I plan to continue them throughout the rest of the year at least.

#### Other Events

Spooktacular Tie Dye Event- Jim Barboza from Gateway Shirts generously offered to print some truly awesome shirts for our Spooktacular this year. He donated several, and offered staff shirts at a great discount. The library purchased several more, and Jim opened an online store where we sold some others. Patrons ages 3 yr old-6<sup>th</sup> grade were able to sign up to receive a free shirt at one of 2 tie dye events we held. On October 19<sup>th</sup>, 15 shirts were given away and dyed. We also dyed Staff shirts that day, and several patrons brought their own items to dye as well. It was a great success, and it's been fun to see everyone's shirts!

Read with Maui- 10 kids read with Maui this month.

Family Movie Night- 0 attendees

True Crime Book Club- 2 attendees (watch for changes to this book club in the new year!)

Adult Art Night- cancelled, due to only 1 registration

Adult Bingo- 13 attendees

Puzzle Race- 3 teams (10 total puzzlers) raced to be the first to complete their puzzle.

Spooktacular- This may have been the best attended Spooktacular yet! It's hard to know how many attended, but I would guess around 150 patrons. I heard nothing but praise and compliments from all.

Passive Program- Creep Crawly Scavenger Hunt- I set this up the second week of October in honor of the Library Crawl. 42 answer sheets were returned to me throughout the month.