



MINUTES

**Henderson District Public Libraries
Board of Trustees**

Date: May 29, 2025 | **Time:** 7:45am

Place: Paseo Verde Library
280 S. Green Valley Parkway, Henderson, NV 89012

Also accessible via Zoom

Click here for information on accessing the video conference:

https://hendersonlibraries.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Sqd-6yaDSJ2h6VXKigIWDQ

Notice is given that items on the agenda may be taken out of order. Two or more agenda items may be combined for consideration; items may be removed from the agenda or discussion delayed relating to an item on the agenda at any time. Public comment will be taken on each item as it is heard. There will be a 3 minute per person time limit during the public comment portion of the meeting.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Angela Brommel at 7:46 am

Roll Call

Board present: Jennifer Andricopulos, Angela Brommel, Katie Gehrke, Jodi Gilliland, James Green, Gerri Schroder, Bette Silverman

Board present (via Zoom): None

Board absent: None

Staff present: Marcie Smedley, Christina Ayala, Leslie Doyle, Elaine Estrada, Viveca Grinstead, Joy Gunn, Sean Hill, Betsy Johnson, Tawana Keels, Shakita, Kirkland, Shannon Light, Lisa Phelan, Vivian Tufano, Kristina Wang

Others present: None

Staff present (via Zoom): None

Others present (via Zoom): None

Approval of Agenda

Jennifer Andricopulos made a motion to approve the agenda, and Katie Gehrke seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda

These items are not expected to be controversial and will be considered together and approved in a single motion. Any person desiring to remove an item for separate consideration should so request before approval of the agenda. Items pulled from the Consent Agenda will be considered separately. All other consent items will be approved as one item.

CA-1 Review of Minutes

March 20, 2025

CA-2 Review of Paid Invoices

March 2025 – April 2025

Gerri Schroder made a motion to approve the consent agenda, and James Green seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Executive Director's Report

Possible Board discussion of reports summarizing staff and administrative activities since the last meeting.

Executive Director Marcie Smedley introduced Dr. Leslie Doyle, People and Culture Coordinator, to deliver the People and Culture Report.

Dr. Doyle reported that the findings were based on 89 employee interviews conducted since September 2024. A one-page summary in the Board packet provided key insights from an 18-page comprehensive report detailing analysis and recommendations.

Statistically significant themes were identified, highlighting both organizational strengths and areas for improvement. Employees broadly affirmed Henderson Libraries as a community- and patron-focused organization and expressed deep commitment to public service.

High levels of collaboration were noted, particularly during the recent restructuring, which strengthened teamwork around new responsibilities and roles. Additionally, 95% of employees described the organizational culture as a "family" or "close-knit community," reflecting strong unity and support.

Dr. Doyle recognized the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and talents of staff and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to work alongside such a committed team.

Communication emerged as a universal concern, with 100% of employees indicating a need for increased transparency and more effective communication. Additionally, 80% of employees cited the need for more formal training, particularly scenario-based learning, to enhance problem-solving skills.

Organizational changes were a frequent topic of discussion. Many part-time employees promoted to full-time roles expressed enthusiasm, while others encountered challenges in adjusting—an expected response to transition. Staff demonstrated empathy, balancing excitement and concern with mutual respect.

Dr. Doyle addressed psychological safety, a key element in the organization's strategic plan. When asked to define the term, many employees expressed uncertainty, underscoring the need for a shared understanding of psychological safety in both theory and practice.

Morale was reported to be low across all library branches. Staff described a cultural shift from a "family-like" environment to one marked by feelings of disconnection. Concerns were also raised regarding difficult interactions with patrons, as well as broader safety and environmental challenges in the workplace.

Administration is actively addressing these concerns, with related actions and recommendations to be outlined in the following section.

One initiative introduced to improve internal communication is *Coffee and Connections*, a program designed to foster informal engagement between staff and leadership. As part of this effort, the Executive Team visits each branch to connect with employees. Staff members are invited to stop by, enjoy coffee or tea with light refreshments, and participate in open conversations with leadership—providing the meaningful, informal interactions employees have expressed a need for.

Dr. Doyle highlighted a joint collaboration between the City of Henderson and Henderson Libraries: the *Unity in Words* Book Club. This internal book club fosters discussions on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) among staff from both organizations. A formal reading list is in development to support ongoing conversations.

Other successful initiatives have included a book study of *The Fearless Organization* by Amy C. Edmondson, which explores psychological safety through organizational case studies; the well-attended and positively received Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon; a cohort of our team completing the Mental Health First Aid course offered through the National Council for Mental Wellbeing to support both team and community mental health needs; and a joint connection event hosted by Henderson Libraries and Staff Association at Chicken N Pickle.

Jennifer Andricopulos inquired whether staff interviews included discussions on the impact of library closures during the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting decrease in opportunities for socialization. Dr. Doyle responded that several employees referenced the pandemic, expressing appreciation for the organization's leadership and adaptation efforts. Despite challenges, staff felt grateful to have retained their positions and described a strong sense of teamwork during that time.

Gerri Schroder asked whether staff had provided suggestions for organizational improvements. Dr. Doyle confirmed that employees were encouraged to share ideas, many of which are reflected in the report's recommendations.

Angela Brommel expressed appreciation for the one-page summary provided by Dr. Doyle and requested a copy of the full report for the Board's review. Dr. Doyle confirmed that the full report would be made available.

Marcie Smedley thanked Dr. Doyle for the thoughtful engagement with staff and the insightful report presented to the Board.

Marcie Smedley introduced Elaine Estrada, Outreach Coordinator, to present a progress report.

Elaine Estrada expressed appreciation for the opportunity to present the *Outreach Impact Report*, highlighting how the department has positively affected the community. The Outreach Team is driven by passion, creativity, experience, and skill, with a strong commitment to expanding efforts and exploring new ideas. Since August 2024, Outreach has introduced *Leo the Library Truck* at more than 115 outings throughout the City of Henderson. Elaine Estrada also acknowledged the contributions of Marketing Specialist Alicia Bridgewater, who has developed promotional flyers to enhance awareness of Outreach services and programs among community partners.

Outreach efforts have significantly increased Henderson Libraries' presence, with the department hosting over 70 events, attending 110 regularly scheduled programs, and serving more than 25,000 community members to date.

Outreach programs have prioritized underserved communities, with 64% of initiatives directed toward individuals with limited or no access to transportation, education, or technology. Additionally, 34% of targeted programming has served seniors over 55 or individuals experiencing memory or mobility challenges.

The Outreach team currently conducts recurring visits to six senior centers, three preschool classes, three adult day care centers, two learning centers, two Veteran support organizations, two senior apartment complexes, one women's shelter, one residential community, and one low-income apartment complex. Based on growing interest, the number of low-income residential sites served is projected to increase by the end of the year.

Outreach efforts have resulted in 315 public service hours devoted to programming and events. Under the current strategic plan, the department's outreach footprint has expanded by 400%. Circulation through the Outreach bookmobile has increased by 104% compared to the previous year, and overall community engagement has grown by 161%.

Elaine Estrada concluded by thanking the Board and staff for their continued support and trust in the department's work.

Angela Brommel requested clarification on the distinction between a regularly scheduled program and an event. Estrada explained that regularly scheduled programs consist of recurring visits to specific locations, such as monthly services at Nevada HAND apartment complexes. By contrast, periodic events are more infrequent, occurring on a quarterly or semiannual basis based on community needs.

Marcie Smedley asked whether periodic events include opportunities for Henderson Libraries to host informational tables at community gatherings. Elaine Estrada confirmed that they do.

Jennifer Andricopulos commended Outreach's strong presence in the community and emphasized the value of reaching individuals unable to visit the library in person. Elaine Estrada provided the Board with letters of support from various community organizations, with Angela Brommel requesting digital copies for review at the Board's convenience.

Bette Silverman suggested posting the one-page Outreach report on the Henderson Libraries website to highlight the impact of services. Marcie Smedley agreed, adding that a dedicated "Impact" page could showcase library programs, including Outreach and Youth Programming initiatives.

Elaine Estrada reiterated that Outreach aligns with the Strategic Plan's focus on expanding access to library resources. Programs traditionally offered within branches are now extending outward to reach community members, particularly during summer months.

James Green inquired about the meaning of "Leo." Elaine Estrada explained that *Leo the Library Truck* derives its name from the Spanish word "leo," meaning "I read."

Jennifer Andricopulos asked about media coverage of Outreach initiatives, suggesting that press representatives be invited to attend upcoming events. Elaine Estrada confirmed that some events had received media attention, notably *Leo*, *Lions*, and *LV Raiders*, which was covered exclusively by the Las Vegas Raiders. However, Henderson Libraries did not receive direct press coverage.

Gerri Schroder recommended inviting local news outlets to participate in library programs, particularly during community events where news anchors serve as emcees. Noting that weather anchors frequently engage in community outreach and could be receptive to collaboration, potentially bringing media crews to increase visibility.

Elaine Estrada emphasized that Outreach is actively seeking partnerships to further expand *Leo the Library Truck's* reach, including collaboration with Henderson Parks and Recreation. Plans also include working with vendors such as Park Pals and The Coffee Press to provide refreshments, encouraging greater community participation.

Jennifer Andricopulos underscored the importance of media attention to highlight the impact of library services, particularly in underserved communities.

Marcie Smedley introduced Betsy Johnson, Youth Programming Coordinator, to provide an update on youth programming.

Following the recent team restructuring, five staff members now oversee all in-house programming across Henderson Libraries, while the Outreach Department handles off-site initiatives. Since September, the in-house programming team has conducted 626 programs, including storytimes, school field trip visits, and teen programming.

Among the department's large-scale events, a special author visit with Jan Brett attracted nearly 200 attendees. The event required collaboration with the City of Henderson's Multigenerational Center to accommodate the crowd. Author Jan Brett engaged extensively with families and stayed longer to autograph books.

The annual *Yule Ball*, held in December, remains a highly anticipated event within the community. Due to scheduling conflicts during the holiday season, the team is considering shifting the event to January in future years to increase attendance.

Another successful initiative was the clothing swap event at Gibson Library, where families donated gently used children's clothing in exchange for tickets. Participants later attended the swap event, using their tickets to "shop" for clothing in their child's size. Given the positive response, the program will now be held twice a year—at Gibson Library in February and Paseo Verde Library around back-to-school season in early August.

The *Teen Writing Contest and Reception* was successfully held again this year, providing creative expression opportunities for teen participants.

The *Summer Reading Program* launched on May 15th, with kickoff parties scheduled for the upcoming Saturday. Several community partners have contributed to its success through event participation and prize donations.

Illuminarium donated family passes as grand prizes to incentivize engagement. Dinosaur Outpost, located in Town Square, partnered with the library for an interactive program featuring lifelike dinosaurs, which was well received by families. The organization will return for the kickoff event and has contributed family passes to the prize pool.

Additionally, the Smith Center donated two packs of tickets to *The Lion King*—one designated for Youth Programming participants and another for Adult Programming.

Betsy Johnson emphasized that Youth Programming remains highly active, tailoring initiatives to meet the unique needs and demographics of each library location. Given the diversity of Henderson Libraries' branches, program customization continues to be key in fostering successful community engagement.

Gerri Schroder inquired about the Winter Reading Program and requested clarification on the 87 blackouts referenced in the report. Betsy Johnson explained that the program utilizes a bingo card format, and 87 participants achieved a full blackout by completing all listed activities.

Angela Brommel acknowledged the dedication of Betsy Johnson and the Youth Programming team, noting the high demand for children's programming and the challenges posed by limited space. Angela Brommel shared a recent conversation with a parent of a two-year-old who had difficulty registering for programs due to capacity constraints. Angela Brommel emphasized the popularity of Youth Programming events and expressed appreciation for Betsy Johnson's efforts in expanding the department's reach and impact.

Marcie Smedley shared a card received from an attendee of the *Yule Ball*, expressing appreciation for the program's success:

*"Library Staff, I just wanted to take a moment and tell you how impressed I was with your Yule Ball this past weekend. You all did a wonderful job and everyone (young and old) had a lovely time! Your décor, prizes, Grand Hall, raffle, and interactions were wonderful! I would like to volunteer next year—keep up the wonder that you keep creating! Thank you!"**

Marcie Smedley provided an update on federal funding and its impact on library resources. The Nevada State Library, Archives & Public Records received a notice of award for 50% of its Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grants to States allotment, with funds available for use through September 30, 2026.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) has indicated the remaining 50% may still be distributed, though no timeline or additional details have been provided.

With the awarded LSTA funds, the Nevada State Library will continue to support several statewide databases that Henderson Libraries had planned to fund through contingency resources, including ABC-CLIO, EBSCO, TeachingBooks, and World Book. However, the Learning Express Library, a frequently used academic and professional exam preparation resource, will not be renewed. Internal research will assess patron demand to determine if contingency funds should be used to continue this resource.

At this time, no updates are available regarding LSTA subgrants or potential project funding, though staff expressed appreciation that the majority of databases will remain state-funded.

On April 10, 2025, Marcie Smedley and Joy Gunn visited Carson City to meet with state legislators and advocate for library funding. Both in-person and virtual meetings were productive, with legislators expressing strong interest in supporting libraries. Preliminary discussions have begun regarding potential future state funding for a full-sized library in West Henderson. While opportunities exist, funding is not currently available.

Bette Silverman received recognition for outstanding service to Henderson Libraries, during this final meeting as a trustee. Bette Silverman's thoughtful gesture of providing coffee and treats for the group was noted with appreciation.

Through dedicated service as a trustee for eight years, including two terms as Board Secretary, Bette Silverman has demonstrated unwavering commitment to the library system and its mission throughout her tenure. In addition to Board service, Bette Silverman has also made volunteer contributions with the Friends of Henderson Libraries including assisting with book sales and strengthening various community initiatives.

In recognition of Bette Silverman's contributions, an acorn in her honor will be added to the Henderson Libraries Giving Tree.

Angela Brommel reflected on Bette Silverman's impact, describing Bette as "thoughtful" and recalling a personal memory of receiving a card from Bette Silverman upon being named Poet Laureate. Angela Brommel emphasized Bette Silverman's kindness, dedication, and commitment to fostering a welcoming environment, especially during Angela Brommel's early tenure on the Board.

Deep gratitude was expressed for Bette Silverman's service, acknowledging the meaningful impact on both the Board and the organization.

Bette Silverman reflected on her time as a Trustee of Henderson Libraries. Gratitude was expressed to the current and former Mayors of Henderson for the opportunity to serve on the Library Board. The experience has been an honor. A lifelong connection with libraries began in the *BCE* era—*Before Computers Existed*—when book searches relied on card catalog systems. The shift toward digital resources has been embraced, despite initial caution in adopting new technology.

Libraries serve as vital intellectual hubs, providing access to truth, knowledge, and community engagement. Despite modern misconceptions that libraries are mere book repositories, their role remains essential. ALA President Emily Drabinski emphasized this in a statement affirming the value of library services in building communities, expanding literacy, and fostering meaningful connections.

Key contributions of Henderson Libraries include:

1. Providing accessible information to support digital, media, and information literacy.
2. Functioning as a true community hub, offering programs for all ages.
3. Preserving local history and culture.
4. Partnering in education to enrich and support local schools.

Acknowledgment was given to the Friends of Henderson Libraries for continued dedication to sustaining library services through book sales, craft markets, and other initiatives.

Bette Silverman commented on serendipitous moments throughout life that have reinforced the enduring significance of libraries and literature.

Bette Silverman expressed heartfelt appreciation for the opportunity to serve and contribute to an institution that holds deep personal and community significance.

PUBLIC HEARING

Angela Brommel formally opened the Public Hearing for discussion and possible Board action regarding the approval of the Fiscal Year 2025–2026 (FY 2026) Final Budget.

Chief Financial Officer and Human Resources Director Tawana Keels presented the Fiscal Year 2026 Final Budget for Henderson Libraries. In compliance with Nevada Board of Taxation regulations, the required Public Hearing was publicly noticed in the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* on May 17, 2025. Printed copies of the proposed budget were made available to both the public and the Board of Trustees for review.

The Fiscal Year 2026 Budget covers the period from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026, reflecting Henderson Libraries' ongoing commitment to financial stewardship, strategic investment, and alignment with the organization's mission. The budget supports the goals outlined in the five-year Strategic Plan and incorporates recommendations from the recent spatial assessment conducted by TSK Architects.

Projected revenue from Ad Valorem property taxes for Fiscal Year 2026 is \$10.3 million, representing an 8.63% increase over the current fiscal year. Consolidated tax revenue is projected at \$3.5 million, reflecting a minimal increase of less than one-quarter of one percent, resulting in essentially flat growth for the upcoming fiscal year.

Total General Fund revenue—including grants, fines, fees, interest, and other income—is estimated at \$14.1 million, with total expenditures projected at \$16.2 million. Expenditures include:

- \$6.1 million for salaries and wages, including merit increases and a 4% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA).
- \$2.7 million for employee benefits, including projected increases in employer contributions to the Public Employees' Retirement System of Nevada (NVPERS).
- \$4.7 million for services, supplies, and other charges.
- \$2.5 million for capital outlay.

The budget also introduces a new Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for all full-time and part-time staff, designed to support employee wellness, improve retention, and enhance overall productivity.

Capital outlay includes funding for library books and materials to support the continued development and maintenance of Henderson Libraries' collection.

The FY 2026 budget includes a \$2 million transfer from the General Fund to the Capital Construction Fund. The Capital Construction Fund Budget allocates \$1.3 million for services and supplies and \$1 million for capital outlay. These funds will support priority projects aligned with the five-year Strategic Plan and findings from the Space Study, ensuring that facilities, technology, and infrastructure continue evolving to meet community needs.

The Fiscal Year 2026 budget is structured to maintain operational stability, invest in personnel and infrastructure, align with the organization's strategic direction, and uphold fiscal responsibility.

Tawana Keels expressed appreciation to the Executive Team, Coordinators, and Accountant Veka Grinstead for their contributions to the development of the Fiscal Year 2026 budget. Tawana Keels also acknowledged Henderson Libraries staff for their ongoing commitment to responsible stewardship of library funding.

The Fiscal Year 2026 Budget was respectfully submitted for approval by the Board of Trustees for submission to the Nevada Department of Taxation, and the floor was opened for questions.

Angela Brommel called for public comments; none were received.

Gerri Schroder thanked Tawana Keels for compiling a comprehensive and well-organized report and commended the clarity and transparency of the presentation. Gerri Schroder noted that the report clearly outlined how library funds are allocated and spent, making it easily understandable for both the Board and the public.

Angela Brommel expressed appreciation for receiving budget briefings in advance, noting that additional preparation time allowed for more detailed discussion and informed decision-making.

As no public comments were received, Jennifer Andricopulos made a motion to approve the FY 2026 budget. The motion was seconded by Bette Silverman and the motion passed unanimously.

Angela Brommel closed the Public Hearing and proceeded to New Business.

New Business

1. Discussion and possible Board action regarding nominations of Board Officers (election to take place at the June meeting)

Angela Brommel outlined the officer roles: Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. Board members were invited to submit nominations, either for themselves or others, with nominees having the option to accept or decline. A call for public comment yielded no response. Before opening the floor for nominations, an opportunity for Board discussion was provided, with no discussion occurring.

Angela Brommel expressed interest in continuing as Chair and accepted the nomination. No additional nominations were presented. Jennifer Andricopulos conveyed enthusiasm for serving another term as Vice Chair and accepted the nomination, with no further nominations offered. Gerri Schroder confirmed the desire to remain as Secretary of the Board of Trustees and accepted the nomination, with no additional nominations submitted. James Green acknowledged the strong performance of current officers.

A motion was made to accept the slate of officers to be voted on at the June meeting: Angela Brommel as Chair, Jennifer Andricopulos as Vice Chair, and Gerri Schroder as Secretary. James Green made a motion to accept the nominations of the Board Officers. Jodi Gilliland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Discussion and possible Board action regarding the biennial review of the Board Bylaws

Angela Brommel requested two Board members to form a subcommittee to review the Board Bylaws in collaboration with Marcie Smedley and the library team. Jennifer Andricopulos and Katie Gehrke volunteered to serve on the subcommittee. As no vote was required, Angela Brommel expressed appreciation for their willingness to contribute.

Old Business

1. Discussion and possible Board action regarding the Executive Director evaluation

Angela Brommel requested updates from the Personnel Subcommittee regarding the evaluation. Gerri Schroder reported that a meeting was scheduled for Friday, June 6th to review the materials received. Katie Gehrke noted that all surveys and the evaluation from Marcie Smedley had been received and would be reviewed at the upcoming meeting next week.

Announcements

The next Board meeting will be **June 26, 2025**, at the **Paseo Verde Library, 280 S. Green Valley Parkway, Henderson, Nevada.**

Public Comment

Note: Pursuant to Nevada’s Open Meeting Law, action may not be taken on matters presented during this period until included on a future agenda as an action item.

Angela Brommel called for public comments; none were presented.

Adjournment

James Green made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Jennifer Andricopulos seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:43am.

Pursuant to NRS 241.020, written notice of the meeting of Henderson District Public Libraries Board of Trustees was posted by May 23, 2025. Posted at the Nevada Public Notice website, hendersonlibraries.com, Paseo Verde Library, Green Valley Library, and West Henderson Library.