Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the
Springfield City Library Board of Commissioners

Place:	Central Library Community Room
Date:	May 6, 2026
Attending:	Stephen Cary, Krysta Fyntrilakis, Matthew Reilly, Tim Moriarty
Absent:	Rachel Sanders, David Maynard, Meghan Lunghi,
Staff:	Molly Fogarty, Library Director Jean Canosa Albano, Assistant Director Khristy Lord, Business Manager Jamillah Medina Nova, Community Relations Coordinator Rachel Gravel, Manager of Adult and Youth Information Services
Call to order:	Meeting called to order at 5:34 p.m. by Commissioner Cary

1. Presentation: Rachel Gravel, Manager of Adult and Youth Information Services

Rachel Gravel, Manager of Adult and Youth Information Services, presented updates regarding the Library's seed programs and summer reading initiatives.

Ms. Gravel discussed partnerships with High Mowing Seeds, the Alliance of Native Seedkeepers, and the UMass Amherst Common Seed Program. She reported that free, organic seeds are available at all library locations and are being distributed regularly. Two branches have already distributed their full supply and are receiving additional seed shipments.

Commissioner Tim Moriarty asked what participating companies gain from the program. Ms. Gravel explained that the program supports sustainability efforts by distributing viable seeds from previous seasons that can no longer be sold commercially. She also noted that the Alliance of Native Seedkeepers aims to spread native seeds throughout the country.

Discussion followed regarding encouraging participants to share photographs of their gardens once plants begin growing. Ms. Gravel stated that the program is currently at approximately the four-week mark and staff are hoping to begin receiving photographs soon.

Ms. Gravel also discussed the Summer Reading theme, "Plant a Seed, Read," through the iRead program, including publicity efforts for upcoming programs.

She reviewed Summer Reading statistics, goals, and outcomes, and noted that promotional materials are available in 11 languages.

	Commissioner Tim Moriarty discussed city reading initiatives and Shriners Children's programming related to disabilities. He also noted opportunity to cross-market with Springfield Technical Community College and its free school program. Commissioner Matthew Reilly asked whether the Library has noticed increased foreign language reading participation. Ms. Gravel stated that there has not yet been a noticeable increase, but that remains a goal of the initiative.
2. Approval of draft Minutes from the April 8, 2026 Library Commission Meeting	Commissioner Tim Moriarty suggested changing a word in the draft minutes to "revitalized." Commissioner Krysta Fyntrilakis made a motion to accept the April 8, 2026 meeting minutes as edited. Commissioner Matthew Reilly seconded the motion. All Commissioners were in favor, and the motion passed.
3. Commission Committee Reports	There was appreciation expressed to Commissioner Krysta Fyntrilakis and Commissioner Tim Moriarty for attending the East Springfield Branch press conference. Staff shared that they were excited to see Commissioners present and supporting the project. Discussion noted that the event generated significant television, print, and social media coverage surrounding the rebuilding of the East Springfield Branch. Congressman Richard Neal was also recognized in connection with the event.
4. Chairman's Report	Commissioner Stephen Cary recognized Jean Canosa Albano, Assistant Director, and Jamillah Medina Nova, Community Relations Coordinator, during the Chairman's Report. Ms. Canosa Albano was awarded Alumna of the Year by University of Rhode Island Graduate School. Ms. Medina Nova was voted into the Business West 40 Under 40 Class of 2026. Commissioner Cary thanked them both for their continuous efforts for The Library and the community. Commissioner Cary also mentioned Barry Smith from the Department of Public Works and recognized his support of the Library of Things initiative. Discussion included how Library of Things materials are being distributed alongside the seed program. Soil blockers, shovels, soil testers and more are all available for checkout to support gardening the free seeds. Commissioner Cary reported he has saved a total of $61.63 on books since January by using his library card.
5. Director's Report	Director Fogarty provided updates regarding the East Springfield Branch project. She reported that the April 13 press conference occurred on the same day as the City Council vote approving the $12 million project funding. Ms. Fogarty stated that Mike Fenton gave a supportive presentation and that all 13 City Councilors voted unanimously in favor of the project. She noted that the approval resulted in the first disbursement of funding, placing approximately $1.7 million into the project account.

Ms. Fogarty shared that the tentative timeline for final schematics and construction documents is January 2027, with groundbreaking anticipated approximately one year from now. Meetings related to the project will begin occurring every two weeks starting the following week.

She also reported that the $500,000 secured through Congressman Richard Neal is included in the HUD budget, and staff are currently working with partners in Washington, D.C. to obtain an official award letter.

Ms. Fogarty reviewed the Fiscal Year 2027 budget submitted by Mayor Domenic Sarno on May 1, noting that the Library was level-service funded with a 2.5% increase. She stated that vacancies are continuing to be filled.

She announced that the City Council budget hearing for the Health and Human Services Division is scheduled for Tuesday, May 19. Budget hearings will begin Monday, May 18, with the final budget vote scheduled for May 28.

Ms. Fogarty also provided updates regarding the Springfield Library Foundation. She stated that at the April 22 Board meeting, the Fiscal Year 2027 budget was approved, allocating $425,000 toward programs, staff development, hotspots, and Summer Reading initiatives.

She noted that Staff Appreciation Day was held on April 24 and that the Friends of the Library and Springfield Library Foundation provided tote bags and breakfast for staff. Ms. Fogarty offered kudos to Jamillah Medina Nova and Khristy Lord for their efforts and support.

Ms. Fogarty additionally reported that the Fiscal Year 2026 audit plan includes an evaluation of the Library's cybersecurity systems, with the first meeting scheduled for the following Tuesday.

6. New/ Other Business-	
7. Public Comment	
8. Executive Session	Not Needed
9. Adjournment	**6:40PM**

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, *Secretary*