

RECEIVED

By Michele Urch at 9:58 am, May 15, 2026

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF
THE KENT MEMORIAL LIBRARY COMMISSION**

May 12, 2026

7:00 PM

Suffield Town Hall Meeting Room

Hybrid Meeting

OPENING/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Sparzo explained that he neglected to include an agenda item and asked for a motion. Commissioner Tartsinis MOVED to add agenda item "X. Unfinished Business." Commissioner Kawalec SECONDED. The motion PASSED unanimously.

Chair Sparzo called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. Commissioners recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Present: Julie Bodnar, Denise Boutin, Ray Dalrymple, Claire Kawalec, Nina Kendrick, David Sylvestre, Christine Sinopoli, Greg Sparzo, Fred Sweitzer, Despina Tartsinis

Absent: Michael Alexopoulos, Aaron Marcavitch

Also present: Library Director Amy Vessella, Associate Library Director Liz Bologna

PUBLIC COMMENT

Neill Hornish pointed out that there was a notification showing on Zoom for a personal request to record the meeting. This request was dismissed.

COMMISSIONER OPENING COMMENTS

Commissioner Tartsinis inquired about middle schoolers and unruly kids at the library, and asked for an update. Director Vessella commented that KML policy states children under 10 need adult supervision, while CT Law states that children under 12 need adult supervision. The Policy Subcommittee should address this in the future.

Chair Sparzo commented on the order of the agenda and the by-laws pertaining to it. There was disagreement amongst commissioners if the word "shall" in the by-laws is considered an imperative and if it's exclusive. Chair Sparzo would like this referred to the Policy Subcommittee.

Approval of the minutes from the April 14, 2026 Regular Meeting of the Kent Memorial Library Commission

Commissioner Dalrymple MOVED to approve the minutes from the April 14, 2026 regular meeting of the Kent Memorial Library Commission. Commissioner Bodnar SECONDED. The motion PASSED unanimously.

Approval of the minutes from the March 19, 2026 Personnel Subcommittee Special Meeting

Commissioner Sinopoli MOVED to approve the minutes from the March 19, 2026 Personnel Subcommittee Special Meeting. Commissioner Kawalec SECONDED. The motion PASSED unanimously.

Approval of the minutes from the March 25, 2026 Finance Subcommittee Special Meeting

Commissioner Tartsinis MOVED to approve the minutes from the March 25, 2026 Finance Subcommittee Special Meeting. Commissioner Dalrymple SECONDED. The motion PASSED unanimously.

Approval of the minutes from the March 31, 2026 Community Relations Subcommittee Special Meeting

Commissioner Dalrymple MOVED to approve the minutes from the March 31, 2026 Community Relations Subcommittee Special Meeting. Commissioner Boutin SECONDED. The motion PASSED unanimously.

Approval of the minutes from the April 30, 2026 Community Relations Subcommittee Special Meeting

Chair Sparzo MOVED to approve the minutes from the April 30, 2026 Community Relations Subcommittee Special Meeting. Commissioner Boutin SECONDED. The motion PASSED unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS

None

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR

Director Vessella shared recent statistics and mentioned that she will include “New Library Cards Issued” as a new category. Nearly 500 surveys have been submitted to date. She highlighted programs including family game night, baby goats at the library, and Passport to CT Libraries. Library staff members attended the Connecticut Library Association annual conference April 27th-28th. The fire alarm had a follow up inspection. The hardscape has been completed for the atrium project.

Director Vessella informed the commission that the building will be lit with rainbow colors on June 8th, and with red, white and blue colors for Flag Day (and through that weekend).

There was further discussion about middle schoolers at the library during after school hours. Director Vessella commented that while they can be loud, disruptive and need constant

supervision, they have not been willfully destructive. If the students violate the behavior policy, they are asked to leave. Further discussion included the possibility of school administration involvement and the presence of a resource officer. Chair Sparzo offered to bring this up to the Board of Education, since he is a board member.

Recent focus groups were discussed. Director Vessella commented that only two focus groups had met so far: Parents of School-Age Children and LGBTQ, both with only two attendees. The other scheduled focus groups have been postponed due to no sign-ups. Director Vessella shared that concerns were raised by attendees about the content of the youth collection. Other discussion at the focus groups included programming.

Chair Sparzo inquired about lists of materials to possibly be included in each director's report. Director Vessella stated that when a book is weeded it is completely deleted from the record. Commissioner Sinopoli requested that data be shared with the commission including a list of materials acquired, materials weeded, and patrons' requests. Director Vessella explained that formulating these specific lists would be time-consuming. Commissioner Sweitzer questioned the reason for these requests. Commissioner Sylvestre stated that the commission should be aware of the library's inventory. Commissioner Sinopoli added that this information would be helpful to address proper balance in the collection, since that has been an area of concern. There was discussion about trusting library professionals and the commission's duty for oversight. Using her almost super human ability to keep nearly everyone mostly happy, Director Vessella expressed her willingness to send out a complete inventory list quarterly, and the issue was settled.

Commissioner Kendrick inquired about data from the surveys. Director Vessella commented that a librarian's professional experience is vital to understanding community needs data and it would be best to offer the commission her executive summary. Commissioner Dalrymple commented on his survey experience with the Suffield Observer, and thinks the commission should have access to the comments.

REPORTS OF STANDING SUBCOMMITTEES

Community Relations

Commissioner Boutin commented on some plans for the upcoming Suffield On The Green event, including a prize wheel and on-site library card sign-ups. They need volunteers for the booth. She is seeking approximately \$500 to cover the costs for this event. Commissioner Tartisinis will circulate a sign up sheet for booth coverage.

Commissioner Tartisinis MOVED to approve \$500 for the Suffield On The Green expenditure. Commissioner Dalrymple SECONDED. The motion PASSED unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

John Gracey (48 Devine Road) questioned the commission on the reasons for asking the director about inventory lists, and encouraged the commission to spend more time discussing the day-to-day operations of the library.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Boutin MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 p.m. Commissioner Kawalec SECONDED. The motion PASSED unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Nina Kendrick
May 15, 2026