

DOWNINGTOWN LIBRARY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

15 October 2025, 7:00-8:00 PM Library Krapf Room

PRESENT: Amy Kelly, Beth Valocchi, Carol Klein (Secretary), Debbie Shupp, Emily Interrante, Francine Dague (President), Jack Hines, Jasmine Smith (Library Director), Kelsey Houdeshel, Mark DeWitte, Ron Dankanich (Treasurer), Mary Beth Hudak (Friends).
ON ZOOM: Marcy Hessinger (Vice President)

ABSENT: Desiree Threadgill, Jennifer Breton (SAC Rep), Josh Young, Whitney Kalmbach

Approval of Minutes: At 7:00 PM, President Francine Dague called the meeting to order and called for approval of September Minutes. Amy Kelly moved to approve; Jack Hines seconded. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

Library Director's Report & Monthly Statistics—Jasmine Smith reported that the system-wide outage is over! Phones, internet, and email were all down, with email down for three weeks. All 18 CCLS libraries stayed open. At Downingtown Library, our patrons could check out/return materials. Jasmine commended the staff's resourceful problem-solving as they worked without systems and mentioned that patrons were very understanding.

Jasmine reported healthy **September STATISTICS:** Open 25 days in September 2025, the Library's increases over September 2024 included Total Year-to-Date Circulation (157,661 vs 148,821); Total Card Holders (12,839 vs. 11,815) with 106 New Patrons; Total Programs (83 vs. 74); Total Live Program Attendance (1,491 vs. 1,299; and Monthly Patron Visits (9,731 vs. 8,850)—an 881 "door count" increase. Juvenile and Teen Live Attendance were 1013 vs. 714 and 9 vs. 2 respectively, reflecting new Teen guidelines. Currently there isn't a way to record Teen volunteers' efforts in the State Reports. Adult Live Attendance was 372 vs. 296.

The CCLS new or refresher **TRUSTEE ORIENTATION PROGRAM** will be Saturday, October 25 (10:00 – 12:00).

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS. The Library will close at 3:00PM Friday, October 17, and reopen at 4:00PM for the Fall Book Sale (during which there will be no library services).

Popular programs/events (many of which have been sold-out events) continue, including Youth Services Coordinator Rebecca Viola's **Baby Play Time, Drop-In Family Storytime, Toddler Time, Ballet & Storytime**, and **Sensory-Friendly Storytime** (piloted with 5 one- to four-year-old children). The **Dungeons & Dragons Campaign** for Young Teens beginning October 25 is waitlisted. **Lego** continues on October 27. The **Not-So-Spooky Storytime Costume Parade** will be October 30, followed by **Halloween Games & Activities** on October 31. **I Love Dogs—a Local Author Family Event** will be November 1. Coordinator Sarah Barker keeps Teens/Adults engaged with programs such as **Nature Journaling** (2 sessions), **Solar Viewing Drop-In** (October 18 and November 1), **Board Game Night, Knitting/Crochet/Fiber Arts, Writer's Group, Monthly Book Clubs, Conversational English, Chair Yoga, Local Author Event with C.J. McGroarty, Mah Jongg 101** and **Free Play. Horror Trivia Night with Lady Raven** September 19 sold out.

FACILITIES/PROPERTY. Lowes gave the Library a nice discount for the **new tables in the Program Room** as well as for those for the Friends' Book Sales. A **new black & white/color**

printer, printing on regular (8½ x 11), legal (8½ x 14), and ledger-sized (11 x 17) paper, leased from Copy Systems PA (vs. a \$10,000 purchase) is installed. Copy Systems will provide maintenance and supplies.

In the face of funding cuts, Jasmine submitted all actions for **Silver Level** and **Gold Star** for the **PA Forward Star Program**. The Library awaits the certificates. Funding for some county databases has already been cut.

Jasmine completed her visit to Uwchlan Township, the final **MUNICIPAL VISIT** for 2025.

Treasurer's Report—Ron Dankanich's September 2025 financial reports will be provided once available and then presented for approval. The report will reflect a correction concerning West Bradford's donation.

Committee Reports

The Board Governance/Nominating Sub-Committee—Beth Valocchi reported that the committee continues its review of **Board Policies**. Beth introduced **Meghan Zeigler as a Potential Board Member**. Meghan has signed her commitment to serve and has met with Beth, Mark DeWitte, and Debbie Shupp. Meghan has already volunteered to work all day at the BrewDown. Governance recommends that Meghan be approved to be on the Board. Amy Kelly will be Meghan's mentor. In addition, Beth requested Board Members update the **Committee List for 2026**, with every Board Member serving on at least one, ideally two committees. Governance encourages increasing Community Involvement for the Committees. Debbie Miles currently serves on Governance; a community member is needed for the Expansion Committee.

Finance/Property—Ron Dankanich had no additional report.

Personnel—Ron Dankanich. There was no Personnel Committee meeting this month; there were no personnel changes and no updates. A Personnel Meeting is planned.

Community Outreach, Fundraising, and Major Gifts—Emily Interrante.

- Outreach had tables at the October 5 **Downingtown Fall Fest** (with the popular Capsule Machine) and **East Brandywine Fall Festival** (with Kelsey Houdeshel's give-away books). The weather was lovely. Children were excited about being able to keep the give-away books.
- The October 25 **D-town Brew-Down** at Minquas Fire Company event website is accepting sponsorships, with \$5,000 already raised. 60 tickets have sold. Staff will receive two Brew-Down tickets each. Suburban Food Service's food truck is hired. 16-18 Brewers are registered with 40 to 50 beers. Five to six judges are in place. Ron Dankanich, Amy and Claire Kelly sold Beeramid tickets at Lione's Pizza, raising \$4,000+ to-date. Thanks to Amy's persistence and persuasion, there are 11 cases of beer! Emily bought a ticket drum for the Beeramid raffle drawing.
- The **2nd Annual Puzzle Contest** will be November 14. Two teams have registered with space for seven to nine.
- Emily requested names to add to the **December 4 Donor Party** invitation list as well as donations of food and wine.
- Beth Valocchi reported that the **150th Anniversary Committee** met September 29. Elyse Ford (Valley Garden Club) donated her services to decorate for the **December 4 Donor Party**,

when the **150th logo** will be revealed. Beth contacted the Library's municipalities and other community organizations about the opportunity for a **one-month display** in the Library (using the bookshelves just inside the main door) during 2026. The committee will provide displays for any unclaimed time slots. All but one slot are filled. A **Downingtown Library History Display** will be in place throughout 2026. The Library's **February 11th afternoon 150th Birthday Party** will follow a morning Birthday Storytime/Children's Party. Ron Dankanich is building three tiers to display 150 homemade cupcakes. Sarah Barker and Jasmine Smith are finessing BeanStack to collect and tabulate patrons' votes for **DL's Top 150 books survey**, kicking-off in December and ending in time for Summer Reading. The **next meeting is October 27.**

- **East Brandywine Neighbors** monthly magazine's February issue will spotlight Downingtown Library's 150th Anniversary. A photographer has completed the photo shoot.
- **The Christmas Parade is December 13**—Kelsey Houdeshel will set up a competition for children to ride on the float.
- The 2026 **Whisky Tasting** will be held February 7 at the Northbrook Market Place, at the corner of Route 842 and Northbrook Road, West Chester, in the upstairs event area. (See online photos.) Jack will round up sponsors for beer, wine, etc. The whisky will be donated. Jack requests Silent Auction Items and will share more information shortly.

The System Advisory Council (SAC)'s next meeting is November 11—**Jennifer Breton.**

The Expansion Committee—Jack Hines is encouraging the Library's communities to commit to Expansion donations. Jack asked for Uwchlan Township's support; they are very positive about the Expansion. Francine Dague and Jasmine Smith provided Board Members updated Expansion Project Plans and reported that the System Board met and voted to approve Downingtown Library's Expansion. Jasmine created a strong purpose statement for the Expansion to use in presentations.

Friends Report—Francine welcomed Mary Beth Hudak. Mary Beth reported that the Book Sale Collection continues, making great use of the new Storage Shed. About the same number of books are being donated this fall as for previous sales, with more puzzles and games. A local school has donated books. The Friends thanked Jack Hines for lending his tables, and they also purchased 10 new tables, eliminating the need to borrow tables from Minquas Fire Company. They thanked Ron Dankanich for the new Storage Shed ramp. The Sale begins October 17, with 30+ Friends committed to helping. The Bag Sale will follow. Downingtown Strong Volunteers are assisting with the Book Sale; the Friends especially need individuals for the heavy lifting. Friends held back three bags of books for Outreach to use at the township fairs. West Bradford's fair in May is the first.

There being no **New Business**, at 8:00 PM, Francine Dague requested a **motion to adjourn**. Ron Dankanich so moved; Jack Hines seconded. All approved, and the meeting was adjourned.

The Board's next meeting will be November 19 in the Krapf Program Room.

Respectfully submitted by Carol S. Klein, Secretary