

- The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Pottawatomie Wabaunsee Regional Library was held on Wednesday, March 26, 2024 at the PWRL St. Marys Library.
- CALL TO ORDER: Alicia Matson, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. Bill Flannigan was appointed Secretary. Lela Riley was appointed Treasurer. Board members Peggy Adams and Joan Johnson attended via phone. Others present were Judith Cremer, Director, Ashley Araiza, Assistant Director, and Terry Force, Pottawatomie County Commissioner.
- Bill Flannigan moved to approve the meeting agenda, Lela Riley seconded the motion, and the motion carried.
- PUBLIC COMMENT: None.
- APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA: Bill Flannigan moved that the Board approve the consent agenda with corrections, including the adoption of the meeting agenda, approval of minutes of the February 26, 2025 board meeting, correspondence and communication, report of the treasurer, approval of the February financial reports and payment of the March bills. Lela seconded the motion and the motion carried.
- NCKL REP. REPORT: An NCKL Director's meeting was held on March 26th via zoom. It was reported that there has been discussion on State Aid to Libraries in the Kansas Legislature. An increase to State Aid was approved last year for the 2025 distribution that included the addition of \$1,000 to the State Aid base amount. An added .06 cents per capita for the served service population was also approved. The removal of this increase is now being debated. It is likely that State Aid to Kansas Libraries will revert to 2024 levels in 2026. There is some possibility that the legislature could recommend even deeper cuts.
- Judith will attend an NCKL Executive Committee Meeting tomorrow at the new NCKL Office in Topeka. They have completed their move from their space at the Manhattan Public Library and are now located at 2316 Sky View Lane in Manhattan.
- The next NCKL Director's meeting will be held on April 23rd in Manhattan. There will be a special program on Ethics in Libraries presented by staff from North Central Kansas Regional System incorporated into this meeting.
- DIRECTORS REPORT: An executive order signed two weeks ago by President Trump could cut funding to the Institute of Museums and Libraries (IMLS). The IMLS draws less than .003% of the annual federal budget but the funds have an enormous impact on the quality of life provided by libraries in communities across the county. The Kansas State Library depends on federal funding for 30% their expenditures. This 30% pays for critical infrastructure that supports library service statewide. The loss of federal funding will severely impact library service at local libraries across the state. Library positions responsible for managing statewide services and the federal talking books program are

at risk. Statewide databases, the electronic authentication system for E-books and audiobooks, library training, and Summer Reading Program grants are all in jeopardy. Other agencies and organizations that partner and support Kansas libraries are also being threatened with the loss of funding. The Kansas Humanities Council is facing the cancellation of federal grant funds and a lawsuit questioning continued operations has been brought against the FCC's Universal Service Fund which provides funding for the federal E-Rate program for schools and libraries.

- PWRL held a staff meeting at the St. Marys Headquarters Library on March 21st. Library Staff member were asked to brainstorm on new idea to bring people into the library. Staff members will work out a more detailed plan and bring it to the next staff meeting on May 2nd.
- Judith has communicated with Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas and, at this point, they still have approval from the USDA to partner with the library to offer children 0-18 5 meals & Milks each week in a single Grab n Go pickup. The program will be conducted in conjunction with the annual Summer Reading Program in June and July at seven PWRL Locations. The St. Marys Headquarters Library is still ineligible because the local school district will be offering this service in this community. The required annual training for the Summer Food Program will be held at the upcoming May 2nd staff meeting.
- PWRL Onaga Branch Librarian Jordan Abitz is a new first time author. Her new book The Magic of Light was release on March 5th and is now available for sale at Amazon in print and as a Kindle ebook.
- The St. Marys Headquarters Library hosted an adult program offering attendees the opportunity to work hands on to create their own Pysanky egg using a multistep wax and dye process. The completed projects are now on display along with information about the history and art of Ukrainian eggs.
- The St. Marys Library hosted a second adult program featuring a gardening program by a local speaker from the K-State Extension Master Gardener Program. The program was held in conjunction with the launch of a new seed library that will be open free to the public at this location.
- PWRL was recently able to acquire a new playpod furniture unit. The Manhattan Public Library offered it for free to any Kansas Library on the statewide library email list. Genevieve Hagenmaier, the PWRL Bookkeeper / Secretary, was able to use her truck to pick the large piece up in Manhattan and bring it back to St. Marys. The playpod retails at \$8,600 so it was a good deal.
- Collette Goldade, PWRL Collection Manager, and Roberta Summers, the Processing Clerk, have been working on collection review and weeding. Judith gave an overview of the process and progress. The team were working at Eskridge today. They have already finished work on the current sections under review at St. Marys and Onaga.
- Judith reported that she worked last week on replacing patron computers at Alma and Eskridge. She arranged for an electrician to replace a 2 x 2 LED light fixture that the Library had installed at Alma when work was being done there after the ceiling collapse.

- Judith asked the electrician to follow her to Eskridge and investigated the outstanding electrical issues at that location. He put together a list of needed repairs which was then forwarded to the building owner. There was one immediate concern that involved an unsupported conduit that carries wiring from the electric meter at the back of the building into the inside breaker box. The condition of the strained wires created a fire hazard. Judith authorized the electrician to complete immediate repairs to correct that problem. A list of electrical problems remain, including the main breaker box listed for indoor use exposed to outdoor elements including water that freely runs into the panel, 4 non-functioning light fixtures in the main part of the library, and at least one non-function electrical outlet. Communication with the building owner remains difficult. The Board asked that Judith approach the City of Eskridge and make them aware of the conditions of the building at that location.
- The Library was informed the same day that the city of Onaga had given tentative permission for a local resident to install a 10 x 12 shed on city property and stock it with books from her late husband's collection. There were apparently discussions about this project at several city meetings but this was the first time we had heard about it. The Onaga Branch Librarian had discussions with the individuals involved and voiced some concerns we have about safety and security for both the collection and individuals accessing it. She suggested some alternative ideas, including partnering with the school to create multiple little free library boxes and distributing them throughout the county in locations that do not have a physical PWRL library nearby. We are preparing information that highlights the resources and services currently available at the Library and plan to attend an Onaga City Council Meeting on Tuesday, April 1st to talk with them about it.
- UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
ST. MARYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE: The St. Marys Advisory Committee met on Friday, March 14th. Bill Flannigan delivered the monthly statistics packet and the new book list to the city for the St. Marys City Commission packets following the Advisory Committee Meeting.
- Two young adult books by AdriAnne Strickland were brought to the Advisory Committee for review. One of the books, Beyond the Black Door, contains non-binary character which is what brought it to their attention.
- Bill Flannigan reported that the St. Marys City Commission voted at their March 4th city Commission Meeting to increase the rent charged to PWRL for the rent on the building housing the St. Marys Headquarters Library from \$650 per month to \$1,600 per month.
- ST. MARYS LEASE AGREEMENT RENEWAL – 2026: The St. Marys City Commission at their March 18th City Commission Meeting approved the 2026 lease agreement for the building housing the St. Marys Headquarters Library. The lease agreement has been delivered to the Library for the Board's consideration. The only change in the agreement was the change in the rental amount which will increase to \$1,600 on January 1, 2026.

The Board agreed by consensus to table the matter and add the St. Marys lease renewal to the discussion of the 2026 Library Budget at the April Library Board Meeting.


- **DIRECTOR EVALUATION:** After discussion the Board agreed by consensus to wait to collate individual Board member responses on the Directors evaluation until the April Library Board Meeting. They agreed to move the start time for that Board meeting to 4:00 pm to allow additional time to complete this process.
- **E-RATE APPLICATIONS:** PWRL has completed two applications Category 1 services through the Universal Services Administrative Companies E-Rate program for Schools and Libraries. If approved PWRL will be eligible for a reimbursement of 70% of the amount paid for internet costs under the first application. The second application takes advantage of the FCC's new approval for funding to support the purchase of Internet Hotspots and accompanying unlimited high speed data plans. These devices are intended to be loaned at no cost to patrons with a need for the devices. PWRL was forced to discontinue the Internet hotspot loan program that we conducted with devices purchase with funding through the Emergency Connectivity Fund when we lacked the funds to renew the high speed data plans.
- The total cost for the proposed Internet Hotspot loan program is \$17,960. If approved PWRL will be eligible for a 70% discount amounting to \$12,572. PWRL would be responsible for paying the remaining 30% amounting to \$5,388. PWRL has been approved to receive \$7,944 in reimbursement funding for internet costs paid in 2024 in 2025. A portion of this funding could be allocated to cover the \$5,388 cost of the Hotspot lending project. This is the same pattern that was followed in 2024 to pay PWRL's 30% portion of the Networking upgrade project conducted at the St. Marys Headquarters Library.
- **VEHICLE REPLACEMENT:** A check for \$500 was included with the March bills. This check can now be added to a new CD for vehicle replacement on the maturity of the current CD intended for this purpose. The current rate for a 12 month CD is 4.30%. The Board agreed by consensus to move forward with opening a new CD for vehicle replace at this rate.
- **BOARD POSITIONS:** Peggy Adams will be completing her current term on the Board at the end of April. Peggy is eligible to serve a second term and has graciously agreed to do so. Judith told the Board that she would send a letter to the Wabaunsee County Commission asking that Peggy be re-appointed for a second term on the board effective May 1, 2025.


NEW BUSINESS:

- **2024 ANNUAL REPORT:** Judith shared a draft of the 2024 Annual Report. A number of new staff members have new READ Posters in this report. Board members were welcome and encouraged to sit for pictures so that READ Posters could be made for

them as well. The posters are a great tool for marketing the library and a love of reading. The Board was asked to look at the draft of the Annual Report and provide feedback. A final version of the Annual Report will be ready in time for the April Library Board Meeting.

- 2026 LIBRARY BUDGET – APRIL 30, 2025 @ 4:30 P.M. The Board made changes to the meeting date and time for the April Library Board Budget Meeting. That meeting will start at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 1, 2025 and will be held at the PWRL St. Marys Headquarters Library. Judith promised to do her best to put together the budget proposal and will send it along with the regular monthly Board Meeting Packet.
- BOARD MEETING DATES FOR 2025: The Board made changes to the meeting date and time for the April Library Budget Meeting. As mentioned above, the Board Meeting will start at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 1, 2025 at the PWRL St. Marys Headquarters Library.
- ADJOURNMENT: Alicia moved that the Board Meeting be adjourned. Bill Flannigan seconded the motion and the motion carried. The Board Meeting was adjourned at 7:49 p.m.


Chairman


Secretary