

MEETING MINUTES
ORANGE COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM BOARD OF TRUSTEES

September 11, 2025, 6:00 p.m.

**Orlando Public Library
101 East Central Boulevard
Orlando, Florida 32801**

Library Board Present: Crockett Bohannon (8/1); Ashley Cisneros Mejia (10/0 – City); Venessa Tomlin (8/0); Sharon Smoley (8/3)

Library Board Absent: Nicole Benjamin (10/4 – City)

Administration Present: Steve Powell; Bethany Stone; Kris Shoemaker; Yvonne Hartley; Lynette Schimpf; Leasha Tavernier; Erica Grant; Erin Sullivan; Milinda Neusaenger

Administration Absent: Danielle King; Sara Gonzalez

- 25-126 I. Call to Order**
President Bohannon called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- 25-127 II. Public Comment Policy & Procedures**
- 25-128 III. Approval of Minutes: August 14, 2025 Library Board of Trustees Meeting**
Trustee Smoley, seconded by Trustee Tomlin, moved to approve the minutes for the August 14, 2025 Library Board of Trustees meeting. Motion carried 4-0.
- 25-129 IV. Staff Presentation: Summer at Your Library 2025 – Claudia Piper**
- 25-130 V. Financial Statements and Summaries: August 2025 – Kris Shoemaker**
CFO Shoemaker reported that the library budgeted \$73,425,000 for ad valorem taxes and so far, this year OCLS has received \$73,861,449, or 100.6% of the budget, which is in line with year-to-date expectations. Brief discussion ensued regarding transferring funds to the capital projects fund for future improvements and projects.
- 25-131 VI. Dashboard: August 2025 – Erica Grant**
Chief of Neighborhood Services Grant shared some highlights from the August statistics, along with some insights.
- Visits to the library were down 3% compared with last year. This decline was anticipated. In August 2024, OCLS hosted early voting at ten locations. This year, only one location hosted an early voting special election, and it had a low turnout. Early voting last year also boosted new card registrations, which dipped this year without the additional traffic. In addition, the library was closed an extra day this August for the Labor Day holiday, which did not occur in 2024. While visits were slightly lower, circulation continues to grow. Checkouts rose to 725,236, up 7% from last year. August was also a record-setting month for digital use, with a 19% increase compared to last August. Already this year, there have been nearly 2 million checkouts through OverDrive.

Program attendance was down 10% compared with August 2024. A variety of factors contributed to this decrease. Last year, OCLS participated in two large community events that added to program attendance. This year, staff were unable to attend those events because the Community Outreach Department lost four of its Branch Outreach Specialists to other departments, limiting their staffing capacity. In addition, the Eatonville Branch was closed for two weeks during a restroom refresh, which accounted for a reduction of just over 500 program and event attendees.

Internet Access remains strong. In August, over 71,000 computer sessions and nearly 230,000 Wi-Fi sessions were logged, both slightly higher than last year. There has also been a strong adoption of the new OCLS app. In August, there were 5,609 downloads, bringing the total since it launched in May to over 21,500.

Overall, these statistics reflect the library's continued role as a vital community resource while also showing the expected variations tied to elections, holiday schedules, and staffing shifts.

CNS Grant shared the following comment from Jamie H., a South Creek customer, who said: "*OCLS is the best.*" He and his children regularly enjoy digital titles on Libby and Hoopla, especially *The Spiderwick Chronicles*. He also praised the new app, saying the library has everything he needs.

25-132

Strategic Plan: August 2025 – Erica Grant

CNS Grant highlighted the following strategic plan accomplishment, which supported the goal of "Be Welcoming:"

In August, youth programming staff advanced *Be Welcoming* goal by improving how staff present program information to customers. Script templates for new youth programs were updated with detailed short and long descriptions, including learning objectives and activities. This ensures families can make better-informed decisions when signing up for programs. Staff have already assessed more than 800 scripts in the digital repository and are actively updating content to meet these new standards.

25-133

VII. Action Items: Consent Agenda

25-134

VIII. Action Items: Non-Consent Agenda

25-135

IX. Discussion and Possible Action Items

25-136

X. Information

25-137

Director's Report

OCLS Mobile App Success: In addition to the downloads of the OCLS app remaining strong, with more than 21,500 users downloading it, there has been an average of 300 more holds per day. Last month we saw 17,500 holds placed via the app.

Major Milestone Achieved: In August, OCLS has crossed 100,000 unique authenticated users in a single month for the first time. This represents significant growth:

- Current FY 2024-2025 average: 93,700+ unique users per month
- Previous record (FY 2011-2012): 86,000 average unique users per month

- This metric tracks users who authenticate their library card at least once per month and has been steadily rising over the past four years

Connecting with Legislators

Monitoring Legislative Activity: Staff are closely monitoring developments in Tallahassee regarding property taxes, as most of our operating revenue comes from ad valorem property taxes. Any reductions will directly impact our budget.

Proactive Advocacy Efforts: Chief Marketing and Public Relations Officer Erin Sullivan and Director Powell have been actively meeting with Orange County delegation members to ensure they understand OCLS' community value. Despite increased property values generating more tax revenue, staff continue expanding the system and improving facilities without raising the millage rate.

Completed Meetings:

- **August 11:** Sen. Kristen Arrington at Orlando Public Library
- **August 28:** Rep. Rita Harris near her district office

Scheduled Meetings:

- Reps. Johanna Lopez and Anna Eskamani

Working to Schedule:

- Reps. Paula Starke and Doug Bankson

Upcoming Dates

October 21: Orange County Delegation meeting

Director Powell will be presenting at the annual public meeting of the delegation, during which government entities present testimony on issues important to county residents.

Public Budget Hearings:

- September 16 at 5:01 p.m.
- September 30 at 5:01 p.m.
- Location: Orange County Administration Building
 - Available for in-person attendance or viewing on Orange TV

On August 21, WESH 2 interviewed Youth Services librarian Elena Gonzalez to talk about the wide range of support tools and services available to kids to help prepare them for the school season. [The video can be found here.](#)

25-138

Public Comment: Non-Agenda Items

XI. Adjournment

Trustee Smoley, seconded by Trustee Tomlin, moved to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 4-0.

President Bohannon adjourned the meeting at 6:31 p.m.

Next Meeting Dates:

October 9, 2025: Orlando Public Library, 101 East Central Boulevard, Orlando, Florida 32801

November 13, 2025: Orlando Public Library, 101 East Central Boulevard, Orlando, Florida 32801

Section 286.0105, Florida Statutes, states that if a person decides to appeal any decision made by a board, agency, or commission with respect to any matter considered at a meeting or hearing, he or she will need a record of the proceedings, and that, for such purpose, he or she may need to ensure that a

verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

La Sección 286.0105 de los Estatutos de la Florida establece que si una persona decide apelar cualquier decisión tomada por una junta, agencia o comisión con respecto a cualquier asunto considerado en una reunión o audiencia, necesitará un registro de los procedimientos y que, para tal fin, es posible que deba asegurarse de que se haga un registro literal de los procedimientos. cuyo expediente incluye los testimonios y las pruebas en que se basará la apelación.

Seksyon 286.0105, Lwa Florida, deklare ke si yon moun deside fè apèl kont nenpòt desizyon ki te pran pa yon tablo, ajans, oswa komisyon ki gen rapò ak nenpòt pwoblèm konsidere nan yon reyinyon oswa yon odyans, li pral bezwen yon dosye sou pwosedi yo, e ke, pou rezon sa yo, li ka bezwen asire ke yon dosye vèbal nan pwosedi yo fèt, ki dosye gen ladan temwayaj ak prèv ki montre apèl la dwe baze.

Orange County does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, disability or family status. Those with questions or concerns about nondiscrimination, those requiring special assistance under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and those requiring language assistance (free of charge) should contact the Title VI/Nondiscrimination Coordinator at access@ocfl.net or by calling 3-1-1 (407-836-3111). If you are hearing or speech impaired, you may reach the phone numbers above by dialing 711.

El Condado de Orange no discrimina por motivos de raza, color, origen nacional, sexo, edad, religión, discapacidad o situación familiar. Aquellos que tengan preguntas o inquietudes sobre la no discriminación, aquellos que requieran asistencia especial según la Ley de Estadounidenses con Discapacidades (ADA) y aquellos que requieran asistencia lingüística (gratuita) deben comunicarse con el Coordinador de No Discriminación/Título VI en access@ocfl.net o llamando 3-1-1 (407-836-3111).

Si tiene problemas de audición o del habla, puede comunicarse con los números de teléfono anteriores marcando 711.

Orange County pa fè diskriminasyon sou baz ras, koulè, orijin nasyonal, sèks, laj, relijyon, andikap oswa sitiyaasyon fanmi. Moun ki gen kesyon oswa enkyetid konsènan non diskriminasyon, moun ki bezwen asistans espesyal dapre Lwa Ameriken andikape yo (ADA), ak moun ki bezwen asistans nan lang (gratis) ta dwe kontakte Kowòdonatè Tit VI/Nondiscrimination nan access@ocfl.net oswa lè yo rele 3-1-1 (407-836-3111). Si w gen pwoblèm pou tande oswa pou w pale, ou ka kontakte nimewo telefòn ki anwo yo lè w konpoze 711.