

MEETING MINUTES
ORANGE COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM BOARD OF TRUSTEES

February 12, 2026 6:00 p.m.

Orlando Public Library
101 East Central Boulevard
Orlando, Florida 32801

Library Board Present: Crockett Bohannon (2/0); Nicole Benjamin (4/1 – City);
Ashley Cisneros Mejia (4/1 – City);
Sharon Smoley (2/0)

Library Board Absent: Venessa Tomlin (2/1)

Administration Present: Steve Powell; Bethany Stone; Kris Shoemaker;
Yvonne Hartley; Danielle King; Lynette Schimpf;
Erin Sullivan; Leasha Tavernier; Sara Gonzalez;
Milinda Neusaenger

Administration Absent: Erica Grant

- 26-022 I. Call to Order**
President Bohannon called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.
- 26-023 II. Public Comment Policy & Procedures**
- 26-024 III. Approval of Minutes: January 8, 2026, Library Board of Trustees Meeting**
Vice President Benjamin, seconded by Trustee Smoley, moved to approve the minutes for the January 8, 2026 Library Board of Trustees Meeting.
Motion carried 4-0
- 26-025 IV. Staff Presentation: Master Plan Consultant Group 4**
The consultants, Group 4, gave the Board an overview of their process to facilitate OCLS in creating and implementing a Master Plan.
- 26-026 V. Financial Statements and Summaries: Kris Shoemaker**
> **January 2026 Reports**
Chief Financial Officer Shoemaker reported that the Horizon West Branch project costs to date are \$17,229,143 or 63.2% of the \$27,275,000 budget. He also reported that the Lake Nona Branch project costs to date are \$1,664,069 or 6.4% of the \$25,965,000 approved project budget. He further clarified that the City of Orlando is paying the construction portion of the cost (approximately \$20,183,864) up front, and the library will reimburse actual costs to the City within one year of receiving the certificate of occupancy for the facility.
- 26-027 VI. Dashboard: January 2026: Sara Gonzalez**
Chief of Lifelong Learning Gonzalez reported to the Board that the door count was up by 2% over last January, and that checkouts were up 3%.

She also reported that the events and classes offered were down 6%, from 2,400 last year to 2,300 this year. Event & Class attendance dropped by 4%. Fewer events were offered this year because of vacancies in key positions at multiple locations, including multiple Youth Program Specialists. Many of these are staff who are moving into open positions at new branch locations. This doesn't reflect true staff loss, just a shift in personnel locations.

Last month, the Board asked for a comparison of attendance numbers between virtual, offsite and in-person programs. Last year, OCLS offered 1,873 in-person programs, and this year 1,801 were offered, representing a 4% decrease. Attendance for in-person programs declined from 24,153 to 20,240, a 16% decrease. Last year there were 331 virtual programs compared to 217 this year, a 34% decrease, while virtual attendance dropped from 5,851 to 4,544, a 22% decrease. Offsite programs increased from 200 last year to 243 this year, a 21% increase, and attendance at offsite events rose from 8,801 to 12,588, reflecting a 43% increase.

Offsite Contacts: Website visits are down 2% and Questline interactions are down 17% from 2025. It is expected that website visits will continue to trend downward as the OCLS app grows in popularity. The app has been downloaded 32,806 times. Regarding Questline, the days immediately following the New Year holiday generated a higher contact volume in 2025 compared to 2026. In 2025, most organizations reopened in the days following New Year's Day, whereas in 2026, the days after the holiday fell on a Friday and Saturday. Many businesses were closed these days, and staff believe some customers assumed the library was closed as well. As a result, the second day after New Year's Day in 2026 saw 106 fewer calls than on the same day in 2025.

CLL Gonzalez highlighted a comment received from some Windermere Branch customers. They said, "*Charles (Windermere Branch Librarian), has done so much for kids at the library, especially through Dungeons & Dragons programs.*" He said that Charles has been incredible with his child who is autistic. *He feels so comfortable coming to events and is so happy there is someone like Charles in the system.*"

Comments like this reflect the dedication of OCLS staff and the positive impact the library continues to have on the community.

26-028

Annual Plan Update: January 2026: Sara Gonzalez

Staff continue to make progress across all primary goals of the strategic plan, and the highlighted item this month is included in the primary goal of *Be Welcoming*:

In partnership with the Florida Children's Museum & Orlando Health, OCLS coordinated a series of mobile museum events at four branches, serving 108 customers. These events are scheduled to continue throughout the spring.

26-029

VII. Action Items: Consent Agenda

Vice President Benjamin, seconded by Trustee Cisneros-Mejia, moved to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. Motion carried 4-0.

26-030

Request to Serve Alcoholic Beverages at the 19th Annual Southwest Author Series Event: Leasha Tavernier

The Board approved the serving of alcoholic beverages in accordance with the Board-approved policy at the event on April 24, 2026, at the Southwest Branch Library.

26-031

Orlando Public Library Front Entry Door Replacement: Bethany Stone

The Board authorized the Director/CEO to execute a contract with Gomez Construction Company for \$337,222, and they approved the project budget of \$375,828, which includes a \$23,606 contingency.

26-032 VIII. **Action Items: Non-Consent Agenda - None**

26-033 IX. **Discussion and Possible Action Items**

26-034 X. **Information**

26-035 **Director's Evaluation: 1st Quarter Update: Sharon Smoley**

This agenda item was tabled until next month.

26-036

Director's Report

OCLS in Tallahassee

On January 22, Florida Library Association hosted Library Day in Tallahassee. Assistant Director Bethany Stone and Chief Marketing and Public Relations Officer Erin Sullivan attended and visited ten members of the Orange County delegation to talk about the library's work in the community. They shared copies of the Annual Report, as well as updates about the bookmobile, Horizon West and Lake Nona. They were received warmly by legislators, some of whom shared photos of the visit on their social media pages, highlighting the library as a community resource.

Stakeholder Props

Last week, staff received an email from Rep. Rita Harris, who wrote: "We truly appreciate the work you do every day to serve our community, expand access to learning, and create welcoming spaces for people of all ages. We are grateful for your partnership and for everything you do to strengthen our neighborhoods."

Bookmobile

The Bookmobile is on track to arrive in Orlando next month. It is anticipated there will be a ribbon-cutting and unveiling in April. Details about when and where that will take place are forthcoming.

Annual Report FY 2024-2025

In January, the Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 was released. As part of the effort to showcase OCLS's impact, both print and video versions of the report were released. Here is the [video](#).

January event highlights

- **Lillian Louise Pharr Author Series: An Evening with *New York Times* Bestselling Author Nicholas Sparks** drew more than 500
- **OCLS Writers Conference** had more than 500 virtual attendees
- **Meet the Author: Dhonielle Clayton**, who was part of the 2026 ZORA! Festival Education Day was held at Eatonville Branch and drew more than 50 people

Friends of the Library End-of-Year highlights

- End of Year Appeal raised more than \$35,000
- January book sale raised more than \$5,000
- As of December 31, 2025, the FOL had more than 800 members

Upcoming dates:

- **Feb. 15: African American Read-In** at the Melrose Center

26-037

Public Comment: Non-Agenda Items**XI. Adjournment**

Trustee Smoley, seconded by Trustee Cisneros-Mejia, moved to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 4-0. President Bohannon adjourned the meeting at 7:08 p.m.

Next Meeting Dates:

March 12, 2026: Orlando Public Library, 101 East Central Boulevard, Orlando, Florida 32801;

April 9, 2026: 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.

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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.