

Millard Oakley Public Library Board

Minutes

May 19, 2026

Attendees:

Board Members: Jerry Schetterer, Deb Newkirk, Brenda Winningham, Thelma Danner, Lori Morris, Bruce Godfrey.

County Commissioners: Philip Talley, Cindy Robbins, Gail McCowan, Shane Walker.

Library Staff: Judith Cutright, Chelsea Patterson, Eysha Smith.

Regional Staff: Matt Kirby

Friends of the Library: Sara Bilbrey

Guests: Sam Norrod, Keri Burnette, Cameron Weiss

Agenda:

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Jerry Schetterer. Motion to approve the meeting minutes was made. Thelma asked the minutes to be corrected to reflect that Jerry seconded the motion to accept a Board Member policy. This correction was made. Bruce made the motion to accept the minutes with these changes. Lori seconded. All in favor. Lori Morris commented that her name was wrong in the minutes. This change was noted in the minutes. Bruce made the motion to accept the minutes with these changes. Lori seconded. All in favor.

Board discussion:

Helen Carter has resigned from the board. It was noted that the two new members have different expiration terms. Rita Regan-Underhill's term would expire in 2026. Cindy Robbins term would expire in 2027. A discussion was had concerning the terms and why new members cannot serve a 3-year term. Matt explained that, since they are completing unexpired terms, they would finish out the terms of the two board members, then they could be reappointed to two additional three-year terms. This is TCA 10-3-103. Bruce volunteered to take Rita's term, expiring in 2026 and Lori to take Cindy's term in 2027. Thelma stated that the County Commissioners want a Commissioner on the board. She nominated Philip Talley. Bruce stated that he heard that Philip was nominated by the Library Committee. Cindy stated that Philip was voted to be Chair of the Library Committee. He would still have to be approved by the entire County Commission before taking a seat on the Library Board.

Jerry stated that there are several openings/reappointments that will need to be made. Thelma's term expires this year. Thelma disagreed, stating that she had until September. Matt will check into whether Thelma's term was filling an unexpired term or to replace someone who rolled off the board. He stated that terms run from July to June. This was changed by the state in 2022. Brenda Winningham's term is also due to expire. Cindy stated that the commission committee wants Philip to serve on the board. Jerry asked for a motion to put Philips name before the Commissioners. Brenda made the motion to nominate Philip. Bruce seconded the motion. All in favor. While the board approved, the commissioner's still need to approve.

Jerry stated that with Rita and Helen off the board, two board members need to be put on the signature at the bank. Deb made the motion to put Jerry on the signature. Brenda seconded. Thelma made the motion to put Lori on as a signature. Jerry requested she wait until after the motion on the floor was voted on. Jerry asked for a vote. Deb, Brenda, Lori, and Jerry voted yes. Thelma and Bruce said nay. Jerry asked for a second nomination. Thelma stated she preferred to wait until after the elections. Jerry stated that the bank requires two signatures. Judith stated that a deposit needs to be made with the trustee. Deb nominated Lori to be the second signature. All in favor. Jerry asked about setting a date to do the signatures. Judith stated we would need to take a copy of the minutes to the bank for them to change the signatures. This needs to be done as soon as possible to get finances straight with the trustee and auditors. Minutes will need to be approved. Matt stated that a called meeting can be set. Jerry asked for a date for the called meeting. With the holiday and notice to the public, the best date for the meeting would be June 3. Bruce stated that he will not be in attendance, but all other current members will be able to attend. Deb made the motion for a special called meeting on June 3. Brenda seconded. All in favor. Jerry then asked Lori when would be a good day for her to meet at the bank. They agreed on June 5 at 10:00 a.m.

Jerry stated that there was a proposal to change the by-laws to reflect the election of officers. Bruce asked what changes were to be made. It was stated that the current by-laws state officers were to be elected in June and the board does not meet in June. Thelma made the motion to change the elections to May rather than July. It was explained that board members change in the fiscal year so members that are sitting in May may not be there in July. Jerry stated there is a process to changing the by-laws. He stated that this is a "clean-up" of the by-laws. Lori stated that these changes have not been provided to the members in writing. Bruce stated that public comment must be allowed for by-law changes. A discussion followed concerning public comment. Bruce made a motion to table the changes. Thelma seconded. Motion tabled.

Further discussion was had concerning public comment. Matt made the suggestion to move public comment to the beginning of the meeting. He also recommended speaking to the county attorney.

Jerry stated that in order to send out the changes, the motion cannot be tabled. He explained that by tabling the motion, it will need to be presented in July as it was presented

at this meeting. It was suggested to mail out the changes and discuss them at the special called meeting in June. Bruce made the motion to discuss the changes at the special meeting. It will be added to the agenda for June and voted on in July.

Bruce had asked to place an item "Library Board Membership" to the agenda. Jerry asked Bruce to explain what he wanted. Bruce stated there were three items. He asked why there was currently not a county commissioner on the board. It was explained that there had been until Cindy's resignation in November. Bruce asked why Philip Talley was not currently sitting. Matt explained that, even though Philip was nominated by the library board, he still has to be approved by the County Commission. Bruce asked about the availability of a seat for a city appointee. Thelma explained that the city provides no funding for the library. Livingston City could have a member if they wished. Bruce then asked concerning Deb being a member of the Friends of the Library and a member of the board. Matt explained that it is common for Friends to be members of the Board. He stated that, unless there is a conflict of interest, or handling of funds, it is permitted. This was discussed at length when Deb was appointed. Matt had brought up the issue of conflicts and the fact that multiple libraries do have Friends involved. Matt also encouraged all board members belong to the Friends. Deb explained that Friends and the library board are totally separate. She explained that she personally does a great deal for the library, including purchasing story time supplies, purchasing memorial books, running errands, and multiple other duties and does not receive any compensation from either the Friends or the Board. County Commissioners were made aware of the fact that Deb was on the Friends at the time. Cindy stated she did not recall. Bruce reiterated that he did not believe it was appropriate for Deb to serve both. Jerry reiterated that it was discussed before Deb's appointment. Bruce then asked Deb if she would be willing to resign from the Friends of the Library. Deb stated that she would not. There are a variety of things that Deb does due to funding and staff time. Thelma asked if, in the upcoming Friends report, it would reflect what Deb does. Deb stated that it would not due to the fact that the Friends are a separate entity and finances are kept separate from the board. Jerry asked what Bruce wanted with his question. Bruce stated that he was concerned with the appearance of impropriety. He stated that a member of the Friends could request funds for the Friends or influence the board to benefit the Friends. Jerry stated that the board itself makes those decisions, not one individual. Bruce stated that there is an appearance of impropriety. He made the motion to remove Deb from board. Thelma seconded. Lori voted yes. Jerry, Brenda and Deb voted no. Motion failed.

Friends of the Library:

Sara Bilbrey stated that the Friends of the Library meets on the third Thursday of every month. Everyone is welcome. The Summer Reading Program will begin in June. She stated that she is very impressed with the staff. Several memberships have been received recently which helps with funding, as well as the book sale. Another book sale will be planned in the next couple of months.

Regional Report:

Matt stated that he will provide a copy of the state standards to all board members. He will also set up an online certification program for Trustees which should be completed within the first year. This helps the library with grants. The Regional Library is at the end of the fiscal year and training for library staff has also been completed for this fiscal year. The Regional Library will also be providing annual documents, including the Library Service Agreement and the Maintenance of Effort agreement, which states that the library will be funded at the same level or more each year.

Matt reported on legislator bill 2449 has been tabled. This mandated that all libraries in the state have a reconsideration policy. All libraries currently have a reconsideration policy. A reconsideration policy states that, if a patron comes in and wants a book removed, there is a process to review the material in question.

Library report:

Connie has been hospitalized and has not sent the county financial report. Judith reported that she does have a check for \$338.15 to deposit, which cannot be deposited until the signatures at the bank have been taken care of. She also provided the State Standards survey, library circulation and attendance reports, and the calendar for the Summer Reading Program. Matt stated that State Standards are not minimal standards, more aspirational goals to aspire to. Lori asked about the deposits with the checks. Judith clarified that two signatures are required on any check written.

Public Comment:

Cameron Weiss questioned the appointment of Deb Newkirk and what the state law says concerning members of the Friends sitting on the board. He wanted to know what guidance the state offers concerning this matter. A discussion occurred concerning the legality and transparency of a member of the Friends serving both. Lori questioned how the board is to discuss items without violating the Sunshine Law. Jerry stated that an item on the agenda should be made a little more specific so items can be researched before the meeting. Matt asked Bruce what he had quoted and where in T.C.A. it could be found. Bruce could not quote the T.C.A. chapter and verse it came from. Matt will do more research on the topic. Jerry stated that he will meet with Matt, as well as talk with Tre Hargett and State Librarian Jamie Ritter on this matter. Jerry stated that he was not provided with the law pertaining to Friends sitting on the board.

Lori noted that on the website several past board meeting minutes were published. This list is incomplete. She asked where past minutes could be found. Judith explained that due to difficulties with the website not all minutes were included, but they were available at the library. Judith also stated that once the county website was functioning, she would see if it would be possible to post them there.

Keri Burnett spoke up and asked Bruce how long he had lived in Overton County. He stated he has been here 7 years. She stated that she wanted the best for the library. She is a

member of 22 different child-related organizations in the county. There followed a discussion on how Bruce and Lori were selected to sit on the board. Keri asked if either new member volunteers at the library. Both stated that they do not. Keri stated that she believes that people who volunteer at an organization are invested in that organization. Bruce stated that he is on the board to restore traditional values back to the library.

Thelma made the motion to adjourn. Judith asked for clarification on the agenda for the Special Call meeting on June 3, 2026. The agenda will include reading and approval of the minutes to allow the bank changes, consideration of changes to the Library By-Laws, and approval of board member appointments to be submitted to the County Commission.

Deb made the motion to adjourn. Brenda seconded. All in favor.

The next meeting will be the special call meeting on June 3, 2026 @ 4:30.

The next regular schedule meeting will be on July 20, 2026 @ 4:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Deb Newkirk.