

**Milford Public Library
Board Meeting Minutes
March 16th, 2026**

President Ya'nelle Powell called the meeting to order at 10:02AM.

Present: Ya'nelle Powell, Joe Zurzolo, Patti Calhoun, Meredith Wise, and Averi Richards

Staff Present: Lea Rosell

Previous Meeting Minutes: Patti made a motion to approve the minutes. Joe seconded.

Director's Report: There were only statistical updates provided due to the short turnaround since the last meeting and the time spent at Legislative Hall. Despite the library being closed multiple days in February, daily traffic was still up 19.5% over FY25 as of the end of February. Program attendance was also up 31%, which is noted was significant. During the City Council presentation, the library received compliments rather than questions, and council members had heard positive feedback from the public regarding how welcoming the library feels, the depth and breadth of programming, and patrons' ability to find the books they want. Current efforts are working well.

Financial Reports: Income generation is in good shape. The library received its second payment for library standards, bringing that line to 100% under government funding. The city payment was also received. Exterior maintenance is at 72.2%, primarily due to snow and ice removal. Significant work was required to keep the main entrance and lower area safe and accessible during winter weather. The unusual negative amount under fines and fees in operating income was noted. Two cash deposits from Friends sales were mistakenly deposited into the library's account rather than the Friends account because of a bank error. Once identified, the money was returned to the Friends, creating the negative entry. Meredith made a motion to accept the financial reports. Patti seconded.

New/Old Business: Discussion continued regarding county funding, library advocacy, and the need to communicate effectively with different demographic groups about taxes and public services. It was noted that Lea would attend County Council the following morning and planned to arrive early to ensure she could speak during public comment. Continuing postcard and public support efforts was discussed and emphasized the importance of advocating for library funding.

Lea reported that she had spoken with Candace that morning and would continue discussions regarding impact fees, a possible working group, and broader library funding strategy. It was discussed whether libraries should align with schools and fire companies regarding impact fees, while also preparing alternative strategies if that approach does not gain support. There was also discussion about disparities between county libraries and independent libraries, particularly around fundraising expectations and county support for capital improvements.

Lea shared that she had received a draft of the state budget and that the reduction was not as severe as anticipated. She stated that she assumes no increase in revenue and rising expenses

when preparing the library budget. Health insurance costs were discussed. There was an inability to obtain a quote from the newer Dana program in time for renewal, which means the library will remain with Highmark for the coming year. Health insurance was kept at \$42,000 in the draft budget, though the actual cost to maintain current coverage would be approximately \$49,000. The board agreed that maintaining health insurance should remain a priority and that other budget lines could be adjusted as needed. Lea also noted that book and program expenses may decrease somewhat next year because there will be less available space during construction.

The board discussed the timing of upcoming budget conversations and agreed to continue that discussion at the April 20th meeting, with a vote expected in May and the possibility of an amended vote in July once county funding is better known.

The Longwood site visit was firmly scheduled for April 1 at 9:30AM. This stage is a positive sign in the grant process and follow up questions from Longwood would be shared with the board as soon as they are received. It was suggested that Patti, as Treasurer, and Joe attend if possible, with others available as backup. Lea noted that the visit was scheduled from 9:30AM to 11:00AM.

Senator Wilson remains supportive and Representative Postles office continues to be an important contact for future funding requests. Angel McGee, who is supportive of the library, would be moving into a legislative aide role with Representative Postles, which should be beneficial for future advocacy. Thank you emails were sent and Lea will continue maintaining those relationships.

Regarding design documents, Lea confirmed that they were received. She stated that she and Heather had reviewed them and identified some issues, including missing access panels for grinder toilets in the bathroom walls if the toilets are mounted off the floor. Additional concerns included flooring choices, long term maintainability, and design details that may prioritize appearance over function. Lea stated that she and Heather would continue reviewing the documents closely and would send the board a list of identified concerns prior to the upcoming meeting with Craig and the construction team. The meeting with Craig was scheduled for Monday at 9:00AM, and board members were invited to attend in person or by Zoom if they wished.

There was also discussion of HVAC documentation and the need to confirm what CMTA still owes regarding the HVAC system, including final details for the DOAS unit so ordering can move forward without further delay.

Executive Session: Executive session began at 11:35AM. The executive session ended at 12:00PM.

Administrative Matters & Public Comments: None.

Adjourn: Joe made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:00PM. Patti seconded.

The next regular board meeting will be held at 10:00AM on Monday, April 20th, 2026, in the Bailey Room at MPL.