

**Minutes of the Special Meeting of the  
JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
March 12, 2026**

**CALL TO ORDER – SPECIAL MEETING**

The special meeting of the Jefferson County Public Library Board of Trustees was held online via ZOOM and in-person in the Lakewood Library meeting room on March 12, 2026. Library Board of Trustees Chair, Kim Johnson, called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Other Trustees present: Emelda Bing Walker (Vice-Chair), Pam Anderson, Renny Fagan, and Jill Fellman.

Absent: Nikki Jain Brown and Charles Jones.

Staff present: Donna Walker, Executive Director; Bernadette Berger, Chief Information Officer; Lisa Smith, Chief People & Culture Officer; Kirsten Ruiz, Chief Strategy & Operations Officer; Cynthia Kiyotake, Chief Libraries and Inclusion Officer; Elise Penington, Director of Communications and Engagement; Julianne Rist, Library Planning & Policy Senior Advisor; Jessica Paulsen, Assistant Director of Public Services for Customer Experience; Lizzie Gall, Assistant Director of Public Services for Resources and Programs; Amy Bentz, Assistant Director of Library Design Projects and Planning; Brad Green, TDI Systems and Security Manager; Cheryl Murphy, TDI Service Manager; Amber Fisher, Executive Assistant; Katie O’Loughlin, Administrative Coordinator Supervisor; and Ryan Turch, Technology and Innovation Operations Supervisor.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Jill Fellman moved that the Library Board of Trustees approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Pam Anderson, the motion passed by unanimous vote of all Trustees present.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

At 5:31 pm, the Chair called for a motion to recess the special meeting and reconvene in Executive Session.

**MOTION:** Emelda Bing Walker moved to recess the Special meeting of the Library Board of Trustees and reconvene in Executive Session. Topic and Statutory citation authorizing an executive session are:

Executive Director Position:

- Pursuant to 24-6-402(4)(f) Personnel Matters.
- Pursuant to 24-6-402(4)(b) Conferences with an attorney for the local public body for the purposes of receiving legal advice on specific legal questions.

Seconded by Jill Fellman the motion passed by unanimous vote of all Trustees present.

The Chair announced a 5 minute break to allow the Board and staff to clear the room, leave the existing ZOOM meeting and then join the Executive Session.

The Chair called the Executive Session to order at 5:37 pm with the following Trustees present: Emelda Bing Walker, Renny Fagan, Pam Anderson and Jill Fellman. Also present were Donna Walker, Executive Director; Kurt Behn, County Attorney's Office; Lisa Smith, Chief People & Culture Officer; Elise Pennington, Director of Communications & Engagement; and Amber Fisher, Executive Assistant.

It is noted that the session was recorded and that the recording will be retained for the required 90 days.

## **CALL FOR ADJOURNMENT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**MOTION:** Emelda Bing Walker moved to adjourn the executive session and reconvene the Special meeting. Seconded by Jill Fellman the motion passed by unanimous vote of all Trustees present.

The Chair adjourned the executive session at 6:02 pm.

It is noted that the Library Board of Trustees met in Executive Session concerning Executive Director Position:

- Pursuant to 24-6-402(4)(f) Personnel Matters.
- Pursuant to 24-6-402(4)(b) Conferences with an attorney for the local public body for the purposes of receiving legal advice on specific legal questions.

The Trustees held those discussions, and this summary is provided as required by Colorado Statute.

The Chair reconvened the special meeting at 6:10 pm.

### **Emerging Issues**

The Chair announced that on behalf of the Board of Trustees, she wanted to share that Donna Walker has informed us of her decision to retire later this year. Donna's steady leadership and expert guidance have strengthened JCPL's work and our impact on the community. She will leave behind an extraordinary legacy, and big shoes to fill.

In the coming weeks, the Board will begin the important work of developing a thoughtful and transparent process to identify our next Executive Director. We are committed to providing a smooth transition and will keep our staff and community informed as we move forward.

For now, we hope you will join us in expressing our deep appreciation for Donna and help us wish her the very best as she prepares for a well-earned retirement.

The Chair noted that in general, the Board has some things to discuss. The Chair suggested that the Board asks the Executive Director to work with Lisa Smith, Chief People and Culture Officer, to identify some search firms and provide suggestions for a selection process for the Board. The Chair asked for and received consensus from the Board on that direction.

The Chair noted that she is inclined to wait until the Board has information from some search firms on how long the recruitment process will take and once the Board knows that information then the Board can have discussions on what that looks like for the Board. The Chair noted that in her experience each firm has their own process. There will likely be options for the Board to discuss including the formation of a Board committee to work directly with a search firm and the structure and time commitment of that committee.

In response to requests for clarification, the Board advised the Executive Director that the identification of search firms would include soliciting proposals from recruitment firms specialized in public libraries to support this effort. The Library will include in the solicitation a minimal scope of work including pricing, recommended process with timeline, working with the Board to confirm the job description, meeting with the committee to review initial applicants for qualifications, assistance in narrowing down to semi-final candidates and a public process for finalists. The scope of work would be minimal in acknowledgment of search firms innovations in executive recruitment processes that the Board would want to know about. The Board would like information back next month to get started with the process.

The Chair noted that in the morning she will be advising the Board of County Commissioners via email about the retirement of the Executive Director and will copy the Board on that communication. At about the same time, Elise Pennington, Director of Communications and Engagement will post a letter on the Chair's behalf to the entire staff and is developing a communication plan for internal and external audiences when more information is available to be shared.

The Chair advised the Board and the Executive Director to reach out to her with any additional input, questions or requests for clarifications.

On behalf of the Board the Chair expressed deep appreciation to the Executive Director and they are looking forward to hearing more about her future plans.

The Executive Director thanked the Board and noted that it has been an honor to serve and be a part of the achievements we accomplished together. The Executive Director further noted that she is happy to support the Board in a smooth transition and celebrating our work together as she prepares for what's next.

There were no other emerging issues.

### **BOARD SCHEDULE – NEXT MEETINGS**

Location of meetings of the Library Board of Trustees are being determined in cooperation with guidelines from Jefferson County. Information on meeting location will be posted at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting date.

#### 2026 Board Meeting Schedule

- March 19, 2026 – Board Meeting – 5:30 pm Hybrid: Virtual via ZOOM. In-Person Location: Lakewood Library Meeting Room
- April 9, 2026 – Study Session – 5:30 pm Hybrid: Virtual via ZOOM. In-Person Location: Lakewood Library Meeting Room
- April 16, 2026 – Board Meeting – 5:30 pm Hybrid: Virtual via ZOOM. In-Person Location: Lakewood Library Meeting Room

The Chair adjourned the special meeting at 6:23 pm

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles Jones". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Charles" and the last name "Jones" clearly distinguishable.

Charles Jones, Secretary