Law Library Board of Trustees Minutes

Annual Meeting – May 29, 2025 (held in person)

Present: Hon. Patrick Robben (President of the Board), Tom Walsh (Vice-President of the Board), Lisa Buck, Hon. Nelson Peralta, Hon. Joseph Klein, Commissioner Kevin Anderson

Absent: Jessica Sharpe

Also Present (Non-voting): Karen Westwood (Law Library Director), Char Kimber (Hennepin County Library CFO), Scott Duimstra (Hennepin County Library Director), Courtney Ward-Reichard (new board appointee, effective July 2025)

Judge Robben called the meeting to order at 12:07 p.m.

Adoption of Minutes
Tom Walsh moved for approval of last year's minutes (dated June 7, 2024); Commissioner Anderson seconded. Approved.

Thanks for Lisa Marie Buck's Service

Judge Robben thanked Lisa Marie Buck for her two terms of service on the board as one of the Hennepin County Bar Association appointees. Ms. Buck shared her confidence in the work of the law library and the board of trustees.

Election of Officers
Commissioner Anderson nominated Judge Robben to continue as President. Judge Peralta seconded. Approved unanimously. Lisa Buck nominated Tom Walsh for Vice-President. Judge Peralta seconded. Approved unanimously.

Approval of 2024 Receipts and Disbursements and 2026 Budget Request
Judge Peralta moved to approve 2024 receipts and disbursements and the 2026 budget request. Commissioner Anderson seconded. Director Westwood explained the Law Library's multiple revenue streams and explained some of the larger expenses. CFO Kimber explained how the law library budget is included in the public library budget process and gave assurances of the public library's commitment to the law library. Approved unanimously.

Greetings from Hennepin County Library Director Scott Duimstra
Library Director Scott Duimstra brought greetings from the public library system and celebrated increases in circulation and continued heavy use of library facilities. He described several initiatives with the law library and reasserted the mutual benefits of the public and law library's cooperative agreement.

Discussion of Hennepin County Personnel Status
All Hennepin County Law Library personnel are classified as "temporary" and HR Business Partners in the library recommend changing this status to "regular." Board members had questions relating to whether there would be financial ramifications from this change and why this temporary classification was initially chosen for law library staff. Judge Robben and Commissioner Anderson suggest moving forward with the change if research into these questions does not reveal

reasons to retain the status quo. Director Westwood will be in communication with Judge Robben with the information she uncovers (see memo). The Board will be informed if it is believed a Special Meeting is necessary to further address the employee classification issue.

Director's Report

Director Westwood reported on 2024, emphasizing ongoing and deepening partnerships with the public library, the County Attorney's Office, the Fourth Judicial District, and other county departments, including the County Assessor's Office and the Service Center.

Potential new partners are being developed around treatment centers. Outreach Coordinator Audrey Cashmore has made regular visits to two recovery centers in 2025 to provide information about law library services. People in recovery find that problems from their time of active addiction still need to be addressed – these problems include evictions, issues with driver's licenses, criminal expungement, and family law issues. Her presentations have been well-received, and the law library is interested in continuing to build on this service area.

Director Westwood continues to present at national conferences; she was recently on a panel at the Equal Justice Conference speaking to legal aid and public defender audience members about collaborative models between libraries and legal aid. She will speak at the American Association of Law Libraries Annual Meeting in July as part of a panel on how law libraries can play a role in post-incarceration success.

Director Westwood announced that she plans to take a leave of absence for nine months to participate in a Fulbright award in North Macedonia. She will teach Legal Research and Writing and consult with a local court on how to make its website more accessible to non-attorneys. Edward Carroll will act as Law Library Director during this time and the public library will continue to support law library operations as they have been.

Judge Peralta moved to adjourn, Commissioner Anderson seconded and the meeting adjourned at 1:08 p.m.