



Town of Clayton
Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library Advisory Board Regular
Meeting Agenda
Thursday, January 15, 2026 at 5:30 PM
Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library
446 E. Second Street

1. Call to Order

2. Approval of Minutes

a. Adoption of Minutes

- November 20, 2025

3. Old Business

a. Library Mural Update

Presenter:

Julia Curran, Library Advisory Board

4. New Business

a. Introduction of New Member

Presenter:

Sam Johnson-Phillips, Deputy Town Clerk

b. Community Information Policy

Presenter:

Melissa Poole, Library Manager

POTENTIAL ACTION: Approval of Adoption of Policy

c. Material Delivery Policy

Presenter:

Melissa Poole, Library Manager

POTENTIAL ACTION: Approval of Adoption of Policy

5. Observations from the Library Board

a. Observations from the Library Board Members

6. Update on Friends of The Library

a. Update on Friends of The Library

Presenter:

Julia Curran, Library Advisory Board

7. Librarian's Report

a. Librarian's Report

8. Other Business

9. Adjournment

- a. **POTENTIAL ACTION:** Motion To Adjourn



Town of Clayton
Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library Advisory Board Minutes
Thursday, November 20, 2025 at 5:30 PM
Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library
446 E. Second Street

Board Members Present:

Julia Curran, Chair
Jill King
Eugene Wheeler
Amanda Gawthorpe
Amber Revels-Stocks
Lucy Bianchi
Sarah Chera
Miriam Herrell

Staff Present:

Gretchen Williams, Council Liaison
Mel Poole, Library Manager
Kate Tompkins-Gross, Circulation Supervisor
Sam Johnson-Phillips, Deputy Town Clerk

Board Members Absent:

Makayla Noel Walden
Meredith Sewell
Victoria Privette

Pursuant to N.C. General Statute § 143-318.10(e), these minutes provide a general summary of the Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library Advisory Board meeting and do not represent a verbatim transcript.

1 CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair Curran called the meeting to order at 5:29 p.m.

2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) Adoption of Minutes

- September 18, 2025

Presenter: Sam Johnson-Phillips, Deputy Town Clerk

Adoption of Minutes

RESULT:	CARRIED 8-0
MOVER:	Amber Revels-Stocks
SECONDER:	Lucy Bianchi

YES:	Julia Curran, Jill King, Eugene Wheeler, Amanda Gawthorpe, Amber Revels-Stocks, Lucy Bianchi, Sarah Chera, and Miriam Herrell
NO:	None
ABSENT:	Makayla Noel Walden, Meredith Sewell, and Victoria Privette

3 OLD BUSINESS

4 NEW BUSINESS

- a) 2026 Meeting Schedule
Presenter: Sam Johnson-Phillips, Deputy Town Clerk

The 2026 Meeting Scheduled was given to each board member that was present, and it was also emailed to all board members. The Deputy Town Clerk explained that the Library Advisory Board will meet the third Thursday of every other third month at 5:30 p.m. It was explained that the meetings will continue to meet at the temporary location: 100 S. Church Street, the Deputy Town Clerk asked if there were any questions or concerns regarding the 2026 meeting schedule. Having none, a vote was taken.

Approval of 2026 Meeting Schedule

RESULT:	CARRIED 8-0
MOVER:	Amber Revels-Stocks
SECONDER:	Sarah Chera
YES:	Julia Curran, Jill King, Eugene Wheeler, Amanda Gawthorpe, Amber Revels-Stocks, Lucy Bianchi, Sarah Chera, and Miriam Herrell
NO:	None
ABSENT:	Makayla Noel Walden, Meredith Sewell, and Victoria Privette

- b) Library Mural
Presenter: Julia Curran, Chair

Ms. Curran suggested to Ms. Poole the idea of initiating a mural project and what would be the initial steps and the recommended approach for pursuing the mural project. It was stated that a mural would offer the library a meaningful visual rather than serving solely as a landmark.

The next step would be to contact the Public Art Advisory Board and the DDA for recommendations and directions. Ms. Poole stated she would

reach out to Ms. Holland, Town Clerk, in hopes of establishing a partnership with the Public Art Advisory Board. Board Members expressed unanimous support for the mural project.

Further discussion centered on which wall to have the mural placed, the frequency of how many times the mural could be updated, any time limits for how long a mural could remain, ensuring that it would be a library themed mural and anticipated costs. It was also mentioned that the Friends of the Library are currently seeking a project, with the hope that they may be able to contribute funding support.

5 OBSERVATIONS FROM THE LIBRARY BOARD

a) *Presenter:* Julia Curran, Chair

Ms. Curran spoke with a Riverwood resident who expressed concern that many of the e-books offered are primarily focused on women's interest. Ms. Curran informed the resident that she would share his concerns at the next Library Advisory Board meeting. She explained that purchasing decisions are guided by demand, and the resident agreed and understood. Ms. Poole mentioned that the publishing industry is currently largely female-driven and stated that she will continue to explore opportunities to expand the library's e-book offerings.

Ms. Curran inquired about e-book sharing with Cardinal from E-iNC and Libby. Ms. Poole explained that E-iNC is a digital sharing consortium and clarified that North Carolina has two digital consortia: the eastern portion of the state is served by E-iNC, while the western portion uses a different consortium. She also noted that the NC Kids Digital Library and NC Kids Level UP are provided through the State Library. Ms. Poole further explained that the library does not necessarily purchase books for E-iNC, but instead pays an annual fee to the consortium, which largely drives the collection.

Mr. Wheeler and Ms. Curran shared that the most common question he receives from the public concerns the reopening of the library. Ms. Poole responded that the library has conducted extensive outreach throughout the year, including newsletters, social media posts, signage, and other communication efforts.

She stated that she prioritizes communication and works closely with the Communications Department to ensure the public is consistently informed and updated.

Ms. Curran asked whether Ms. Poole had noticed a decline in library usage due to the current political climate at the federal level. Ms. Poole responded

that there has been a decrease; however, she noted that it is expected and is attributed more to the ongoing library renovations than to political factors.

Ms. Curran asked whether the library had experienced any direct impacts to its funding. Ms. Poole responded that the library remains in good standing and that the current fiscal year's budget is on track. She also noted that she has not heard of any discussions regarding budget cuts for the upcoming fiscal year.

There was discussion regarding a recently passed legislation requiring schoolteachers to catalog all books kept in their classrooms. Ms. Poole stated that all public schools must provide a list of every book available to students, and before any new materials are purchased, a list must be made available if any of the materials are challenged.

6 UPDATE ON FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

a) *Presenter:* Julia Curran, Chair

Ms. Curran reported that the Friends of the Library will begin working with Better World Books, an online retailer of new and used books. The organization will accept outdated Library materials and attempt to sell them, eliminating the need for a traditional book sale. Given the Library's current storage limitations, partnering with Better World Books was identified as a practical and beneficial option.

Ms. Curran also announced that on December 11, 2025, from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., the Friends of the Library will host a fundraiser night at Panera in Flowers. A percentage of the sales will be donated to the Friends of the Library, provided a minimum of \$150 in sales is met. It was noted that while Flowers is outside the service area of the Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library, the Friends of the Library acknowledge this consideration. Patrons must present a flyer upon arrival, and an online ordering option will be available using a special code included on the flyer. Ms. Curran stated that the flyer will be distributed to the Board as the event date approaches.

It was further reported that the Friends of the Library have established a Fundraising Committee. Ms. Curran indicated that individuals interested in serving on the committee should contact her, and she will facilitate communication with the appropriate committee representative.

Additionally, the Friends of the Library are in the process of reviewing, revising, and updating their by-laws to ensure compliance with North Carolina nonprofit statutes. Once finalized, the updated by-laws will be distributed to members via email.

7 LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

a) Librarian's Report

Presenter: Mel Poole, Library Manager

Ms. Poole shared that Town Council members and Library staff recently toured the library building, which is approximately halfway through its renovation. Feedback from the tour was positive, with a potential reopening anticipated in summer 2026. Discussions are underway regarding a ribbon-cutting ceremony and an open house. Plans were also shared to enhance the exterior of the building through landscaping improvements and to bring the parking lot and sidewalks into ADA compliance.

Ms. Poole also reported that the library supports a Wellness Committee for Town staff, and that a monthly book club has been established within the Town over the past few months. Additionally, all new full-time Town employees receive a complimentary library card.

Ms. Poole provided updates on the Historical Collection, noting that Ms. Pam Taylor has been working with members of the black community and churches within the Town of Clayton. It was shared that these communities have historically been underrepresented in archival records, a gap reflected in the Library's Historical Collections. Through community collaboration, the project aims to collect oral histories and assist in identifying historically Black homes and businesses. Plans include hosting "Community Scanning Projects," during which community members may bring materials to be scanned, receive digital copies, and allow the library to retain copies for research purposes. Participants will also have the opportunity to help identify individuals, locations, and facts depicted in the materials. Ms. Poole expressed enthusiasm for the initiative, noting that it is in its early stages and is planned as an ongoing project. She further shared that community partners have responded positively to the library's outreach.

Ms. Poole stated that approximately 15–20 oral histories recorded on cassette tapes in the early 2000s have been digitized. The long-term goal is to make these recordings available online; however, they must first be transcribed to ensure ADA compliance and provide accessible, inclusive formats. AI transcription software is being used, with staff reviewing and correcting the transcripts as needed.

September 2025

Visits: 1,856; New Patrons: 194; Physical Checkouts: 10,342; Digital Checkouts: 3,481; Public Computer Sessions: 270; Early Literacy Program/Attendance: 0/0; Children Program/Attendance: 0/0; Teen

Program/Attendance: 1/3; Adult Program/Attendance: 7/93; Meeting Room Usage Total Reservations/Total Attendance: 0/0

October 2025

Visits: 2,032; New Patrons: 210; Physical Checkouts: 9,663; Digital Checkouts: 3,211; Public Computer Sessions: 332; Early Literacy Program/Attendance: 1/14; Children Program/Attendance: 4/115; Teen Program/Attendance: 1/8; Adult Program/Attendance: 6/96; Meeting Room Usage Total Reservations/Total Attendance: 0/0

Outreach Events

- 11 outreach events during September and October

Popular Check Outs on Libby

- The Book Club for Troublesome Women - Marie Bostwick
- Broken Country - Clarke Leslie Hall
- The Women - Kristin Hannah
- Atmosphere - Taylor Jenkins Reid
- The Hunting Wives - Mary Cobb
- My Friends: A Novel - Fredrik Backman

Upcoming Programs

- 11/15/2025 - 12/15/2025: Letters to Santa (children)
- 12/1/2025 - 2/28/2026: Cozy Up Reading Challenge (adults)
- 12/9/2025 - 12/12/2025: Wrap it Up, gift wrapping station (adults)
- 12/29/2025 @ 9:00am - 3:00pm: Cheer Throughout the Year Cardmaking (intergenerational)
- 1/7/2026 @ 5:15pm: Fiber Arts Connection (teen/adults)

b) Circulation Supervisor Report

Presenter: Kate Tompkins-Gross, Circulation Supervisor

Ms. Tompkins-Gross introduced herself to the Board and shared that she has been in her current position since late January. She provided an overview of her professional background, including experience with the Public Library, as a School Librarian, at the State Library, at UNC Chapel Hill, and with the Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library.

Noteworthy Numbers

- 11,564 active patron accounts (the highest in many years).
- Circulation numbers for physical items are down slightly.
- Digital circulation numbers are up.

New Items

- Library of Things has officially launched
 - Technology
 - Board games and outdoor games
 - Seed Library

Trends We're Watching

- What are people reading?
 - "Romantasy" (romantic and fantasy) and Horror on the rise
- What are libraries offering?
 - Expansion of our Library of Things
 - Focus on local entrepreneurs

Future Projects

- Gentrification of adult fiction collection
- Sign up for our Cozy Up Winter Reading Challenge at hocuttellington.beanstack.com

8 OTHER BUSINESS

- a) There was discussion about getting a book mobile, and the expensive cost associated with it. The conversation also included the idea of establishing pop-up book locations, noting that coordination with local businesses and other partners would be required.

9 ADJOURNMENT

- a) Motion to Adjourn

With nothing further, the meeting was adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

Motion To Adjourn

RESULT:	CARRIED 8-0
MOVER:	Julia Curran
SECONDER:	Lucy Bianchi
YES:	Julia Curran, Jill King, Eugene Wheeler, Amanda Gawthorpe, Amber Revels-Stocks, Lucy Bianchi, Sarah Chera, and Miriam Herrell
NO:	None
ABSENT:	Makayla Noel Walden, Meredith Sewell, and Victoria Privette

Duly adopted this 15th day of January 2026.

Julia Curran
Board Chair

ATTEST:

Sam Johnson-Phillips, CMC, NCCMC
Deputy Town Clerk

Community Information Policy

Policy

This policy shall remain in effect until such time as amended by the Town Council

Purpose

As a resource for local information and community activities, the Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library (“Library”) may provide display space for the posting of non-library materials of general community interest. The Library will have first priority to the use of all display areas. The Community Information Policy sets guidelines for the posting of information on the library’s display areas and for the distribution of free publications by area organizations and publishers within the library buildings.

Posting Guidelines

1. The community bulletin board and pamphlet display area(s) are designed and intended to provide information to the Library’s patrons about events or services of a cultural, educational, or community service nature. Community events occurring within or immediately adjoining the boundaries of the Town of Clayton will be given priority.
2. Materials acceptable for posting include, but are not limited to course, school, and educational announcements; special non-profit events and activities; author appearances and/or book signings; and activities and services available through municipal, state, and federal offices.
3. Items that have been on display longer than four weeks or past the date of the event will be removed unless arrangements are made in advance and approved.
4. All materials for potential display must be reviewed, approved, and posted by the Library Manager, or designee.
5. Materials will only be placed in designated locations.
6. Due to limited space, the Library reserves the right to prioritize the items posted based on community interest and timeliness of event. Some approved items may not be posted due to space limitations.

The following types of materials will not be displayed:

- Items that advertise or sell personal or commercial items or services
- Items promoting political parties or candidates
- Items that violate any local, state, or federal law, including but not limited to those concerning copyright, fraud, privacy, and obscenity

- Items that incite violence or that promote hatred toward or discrimination against any individuals or groups of individuals

Materials posted or left for free distribution without approval from the Library will be discarded.

Endorsement

The use of the Library's posting areas does not imply endorsement by the Library or its staff; nor will the library accept responsibility for the content of the statements made in such materials.

Damages and Liability

The Library is not responsible for making arrangements for any posted items to be returned and accepts no responsibility for the loss of or damage to any item displayed.

Failure to Comply

Failure to comply with the Community Information Policy may result in a loss of public posting privileges.

DRAFT

Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library Material Delivery Service Policy

Purpose of Policy

The Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library (“Library”) offers delivery services of library materials to homebound individuals and institutions/facilities serving community members with limited or no access to the public library. The library’s service area includes the Town of Clayton city limits and extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ).

This policy shall remain in effect until such time as amended by the Town Council.

Home Delivery

The Library offers home delivery services to library patrons residing in the Clayton service area and who are unable to visit the library. Patrons are eligible for home delivery service if they are confined to their residence either temporarily, due to illness or accident, or permanently, due to transportation, disability, or other mobility issues.

Patron Eligibility

A patron applying for home delivery services must reside within the Town of Clayton city limits or ETJ and have a Clayton library card in good standing or be eligible for a library card. Patrons are eligible for home delivery service, regardless of age, if they are confined to their residence either temporarily or permanently, due to transportation, illness, accident, disability, or other mobility issues.

Patrons who participate in home delivery should not be visiting the library on a regular basis, as it demonstrates lack of need for the service.

Application Process

To apply for home delivery, patrons must submit an application online via the Library’s website. Upon approval, patrons will be contacted to confirm acceptance of the application and discuss the library drop-off and pick-up schedule. If a library card is needed, library staff will assist with registration over the phone or email.

The library reserves the right to establish a limit on the number of patrons served via home delivery due to staff and resource limitations.

Delivery Schedule

Deliveries will generally be scheduled once a month, depending on the availability of library resources, staff, and the preference of the patron.

Materials Available for Home Delivery

All library materials are available for home delivery, with the exception of technology items. Patrons may call or email the Library, or use the Library’s online catalog, to request to borrow

specific titles. Patrons may request that library staff select materials based on the patron's preferences. Deliveries are limited to one bag per delivery.

Lost and Damaged Materials

Patrons are responsible for all library materials while in their custody and will be responsible for lost or damaged items. The Library's standard fee will apply for lost and damaged items.

Deliveries will be suspended until the fees are resolved and the patron's account is in good standing. Continual damage or loss of library materials may result in the suspension of home delivery services.

Conditions for Home Delivery

The Library is committed to ensuring that all patrons receiving home delivery services are treated with dignity, respect, and impartiality. In addition, the Library is committed to ensuring that library staff and volunteers are treated with respect and that they are safe while serving the public. To that end, we have established a set of guidelines that home delivery patrons must follow:

1. Deliveries and exchanges of materials will take place at the patron's front door or porch area. No library staff or volunteers are permitted to enter the patron's residence.
2. Home delivery patrons and the persons in or around the patron's home must speak and act courteously to library staff and volunteers at all times. Any words or acts of intimidation will not be tolerated and may lead to the Library suspending access to home delivery services for that patron.
3. Patrons requesting home delivery services must provide a safe and appropriate environment for library staff and volunteers who make deliveries to their residences. Staff and volunteers may choose to immediately leave the patron's residence, and/or recommend suspension of service if any of the following conditions exist:
 - Any person in the residence uses abusive or obscene language, makes obscene gestures, or displays obscene images
 - Any person in the residence harasses the Library's staff or volunteers
 - Any person in the residence exhibits threatening behavior
 - Any person in the residence is not dressed properly and/or is dressed in revealing attire
 - Any person in the residence exhibits signs of illness that may jeopardize the health and safety of the Library's staff or volunteers
 - Any person in the residence is engaging in illegal activity at the time of delivery
 - Pets are not confined (with the exception of service animals trained to assist a disabled person)
 - Pets behave aggressively to or bite library staff or volunteers
 - There is not a clear and safe pathway to the home
 - Conditions in the home or on the property are unsafe and unsanitary
 - Other conditions or circumstances in which the Library's staff or volunteers are not being treated with dignity, respect, or feel unsafe.

Institution Courier Service

Eligible institutions, including childcare centers, preschools, senior centers, civic centers, and other community organizations, may apply for an institution library card. Institutional organizations in Clayton town limits and ETJ are eligible to register as borrowers and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

- By completing an Institution library card application, you agree to the following policies:
The institution accepts fiscal responsibility for borrowed materials, including replacement costs for lost and damaged items.
- At least one person of contact is listed on the account. It is the responsibility of the institution to provide accurate and up-to-date contact information.
- Only institution staff listed on the account may checkout materials by presenting the library card or their photo ID.
- Any items checked out from the library are subject to the Library's Circulation Policy.
- Institution library cards are valid for one year and can be renewed annually.
- Lending limit up to 50 items. Technology items are excluded from checkout.

As a service, the library offers monthly delivery of library materials to support institutions and their existing book collections. Courier service availability is subject to staff capacity and library limitations. The library reserves the right to establish a limit on the number of institutions eligible for the service.

The following policies apply to courier delivery:

- Institutions are required to complete a courier service application, which will be reviewed to verify eligibility.
- Participating institutions must have a Clayton library card in good standing.
- Institutions must be accessible to library staff at delivery time.
- Lending Rules
 - All checked out items are intended for resident/client use and must remain in the facility.
 - Items can be checked out for 4 weeks. They may be renewed as needed.
 - Institutions may check out up to 50 items at a time.
 - Materials from the 7-Day collection, technology, and resource sharing services are excluded from courier service.
 - Individual titles cannot be requested, however reading levels or genre categories will be considered.
- Library staff have the right to terminate courier services if the environment where delivery is to be made is deemed dangerous or unsuitable for their safety and wellbeing.

Suspension of Delivery Services

If library staff or volunteers must leave the residence or institution, deny service, or recommend suspension of service due to the occurrence or any of the above, the library staff or volunteer shall provide the Library Manager with notice of why such action occurred. Failure to comply with Library policies and rules will be grounds for suspension and/or discontinuation of the home delivery service.

The Library Manager shall send written notice to the patron of the reason for, and the length of, and continuing suspension of service. Any patron who feels their home delivery or institution courier privileges have been wrongly limited or suspended may request in writing that the suspension be reviewed by the Library Advisory Board at the next regular board meeting.

DRAFT