



Town of Clayton
Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library Advisory Board Agenda
Thursday, May 21, 2026 at 5:30 PM
Town Hall, Four Oaks Room
111 E. Second Street

1. Call to Order

2. Approval of Minutes

a. Minutes

- March 19, 2026

POTENTIAL ACTION: Approval of Minutes

3. New Business

a. Strategic Plan Update

Presenter:

Dolores Gill, Chief of Staff and Strategic Initiatives

b. Meeting Room Policy

Presenter:

Melissa Poole, Library Manager

POTENTIAL ACTION: Adoption of Policy

c. Summer Reading Program

Presenter:

Melissa Poole, Library Manager

4. Old Business

a. Library Renovation Update

Presenter:

Melissa Poole, Library Manager

5. Observations from the Library Board

a. **Presenter:**

Eugene Wheeler, Chair

6. Librarian's Report

a. **Presenter:**

Melissa Poole, Library Manager

7. Other Business

8. Adjournment

a. Adjourn

POTENTIAL ACTION: Motion To Adjourn



Town of Clayton
Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library Advisory Board Minutes
Thursday, March 19, 2026 at 5:30 PM
Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library
446 E. Second Street

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.

Present:

Eugene Wheeler
 Amanda Gawthorpe
 Meredith Sewell
 Lucy Bianchi
 Jill King
 Patrice Hardy
 Christine Jernigan
 Sarah Chera
 Miriam Herrell

Staff Present:

Gretchen Williams, Council Member Liaison
 Mel Poole, Library Manager
 Heidi Holland, Town Clerk

Absent:

Makayla Walden
 Julia Curran
 Amber Revels-Stocks

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes

a. Minutes

- September 18, 2025
- January 15, 2026

Approval of Minutes

Result:	Passed 9-0
Mover:	Lucy Bianchi
Second:	Eugene Wheeler
Yes:	Eugene Wheeler, Amanda Gawthorpe, Meredith Sewell, Lucy Bianchi, Jill King, Patrice Hardy, Christine Jernigan, Sarah Chera, Miriam Herrell
No:	None
Absent:	Makayla Walden, Julia Curran, Amber Revels-Stocks

3. CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR NOMINATIONS

- a. Nomination of Chair

Presenter:

Heidi Holland, Town Clerk

Board Member Jernigan nominated Board Member Wheeler for Chair.

Nomination of Board Member Wheeler as Chair

Result:	Passed 9-0
Mover:	Christine Jernigan
Second:	Jill King
Yes:	Eugene Wheeler, Amanda Gawthorpe, Meredith Sewell, Lucy Bianchi, Jill King, Patrice Hardy, Christine Jernigan, Sarah Chera, Miriam Herrell
No:	None
Absent:	Makayla Walden, Julia Curran, Amber Revels-Stocks

- b. Nomination of Vice-Chair

Presenter:

Heidi Holland, Town Clerk

Board Member Gawthorpe volunteered to take the position of Vice-Chair.

Approve Board Member Gawthorpe as Vice-Chair

Result:	Passed 9-0
Mover:	Christine Jernigan
Second:	Sarah Chera
Yes:	Eugene Wheeler, Amanda Gawthorpe, Meredith Sewell, Lucy Bianchi, Jill King, Patrice Hardy, Christine Jernigan, Jill King, Miriam Herrell
No:	None
Absent:	Makayla Walden, Julia Curran, Amber Revels-Stocks

4. Old Business

- a. Community Information Policy

Presenter:

Melissa Poole, Library Manager

This policy was tabled from the last meeting. This draft has been reviewed by the Town Attorney. A Procedure section has been added as requested by the board. It was suggested by the Town Attorney to remove the section of what cannot be posted.

Motion To Approve Policy

Result:	Passed 9-0
Mover:	Patrice Hardy
Seconder:	Miriam Herrell
Yes:	Eugene Wheeler, Amanda Gawthorpe, Meredith Sewell, Lucy Bianchi, Jill King, Patrice Hardy, Christine Jernigan, Sarah Chera, Miriam Herrell
No:	None
Absent:	Makayla Walden, Julia Curran, Amber Revels-Stocks

5. New Business

- a. Library Renovation Update

Presenter:

Melissa Poole, Library Manager

Ms. Poole provided an update on the library renovation. The temporary library is scheduled to close on April 20, 2026. The last day to place items on hold will be March 28, and programs will begin transitioning to Town Hall on April 9, with most held in the Four Oaks Room.

The renovation remains mostly on schedule, with construction expected to be completed in May. Once new furniture is installed, the move-in process will begin. The library plans to close for approximately two months to allow for the full transition, including staff training. The goal is to reopen on July 1, with a more definite date to be announced next month. A ribbon-cutting ceremony will be held, followed by a grand opening to coincide with the summer kickoff.

Improvements include a new ADA-compliant sidewalk, updated landscaping, and more accessible parking. There was also discussion about adding outdoor seating in the future.

The book drop will be closed during the transition; however, materials may be returned to any NC Cardinal location.

6. Observations from the Library Board

- a. Presenter: Julia Curran, Chair

No report.

7. Update on Friends of the Library

- a. Presenter: Julia Curran, Chair

It was stated the Fundraising Committee is currently working through ideas. As the group is no longer conducting book sales or accepting book donations, it has established a book account with a vendor, through which materials are sent and a percentage is returned to the organization. The committee is now evaluating next steps and continues recruitment efforts.

There was discussion referencing a past Council liaison's comment that "increased fundraising by the Friends of the Library (FOL) could positively influence future Town funding for a larger

library facility." Members were encouraged to support the Friends of the Library and refer anyone who may be interested in joining.

The budget survey was discussed, noting that the library typically ranks near the bottom of priorities.

The next Friends of the Library meeting is scheduled for April 23 at 1:00 p.m. It was stated this group continues to contribute to the library's programming budget.

There was also discussion about increasing diversity within Friends of the Library while continuing to honor and recognize current members.

8. Librarian's Report

a. Presenter: Mel Poole, Library Manager

Ms. Poole stated Kate Tompkins-Gross completed the 9-week state-wide Libraries for Entrepreneurial Advancement Fellowship (LEAF) program. She gained a lot of information and created a resource guide that is available online. There was discussion of her communicating with the Chamber of Commerce and doing programming that would target small business owners.

Updates were made to the local history webpage, including the creation of a guide that provides additional information about the collection, such as an obituary and death notice index. The guide will be updated throughout the year. A potential walking tour of the Town was also discussed.

The Summer Reading Program will begin July 1, with the theme "Unearth a Story," focusing on dinosaurs, archaeology, and paleontology, and will run for six weeks. Staff have also discussed potential adult programming collaborations with the NC Museum of History in Raleigh.

Shared were 2026 Library Goals which included:

- Moving the library from the temporary location back to the renovated facility
- Updating policies and procedures to align with new staff workflows, building changes, and initiatives
- Maintaining regularly scheduled programming while leaving an opening for new, innovative events each month

Upcoming Programs include:

- Baby Move & Sing: April 15 (Babies)
- Teen Trivia Competition: April 21 (Teens)
- Roll for a Story: April 23 (3rd - 5th grades)
- NC Reads Book Club, Virtual Author Talk: April 28 (Adult)
- Recycled Bird Feeders: May 14 (3rd - 5th grades)
- Researching Ancestors of Color in NC: June 13 (Teen & Adult)

The numbers were shared for January and February 2026. Visitor numbers have increased slightly in recent months, new library card registrations have risen, circulation remains steady, and digital checkouts continue to grow. Programming was discussed, including challenges in increasing teen participation, while adult programming attendance remains consistent. Upon

reopening, staff plan to designate the meeting room for teen use on Thursdays. The library will also participate with a table at outdoor concert events beginning in May.

January 2026

Visitors: 1,941; Physical Checkouts: 10,209; Digital Checkouts: 3,761; New Patrons: 206; Public Computer Sessions: 274; Meeting Room Usage: 0; Outreach Events: 3

Programming/Attendance

2 Early Literacy Programs (37 attendees); 4 Children's Programs (100 attendees); 0 Teen Programs; 7 Adult Programs (104 attendees)

February 2026

Visitors: 1,912; Physical Checkouts: 9,733; Digital Checkouts: 3,465; New Patrons: 151; Public Computer Sessions: 309; Meeting Room Usage: 0; Outreach Events: 3

Programming/Attendance

1 Early Literacy Programs (26 attendees); 4 Children's Programs (31 attendees); 1 Teen Program (5 attendees); 7 Adult Programs (92 attendees)

9. Other Business

10. Adjournment

- a. Adjourn

With nothing further, the meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Motion To Adjourn

Result:	Passed 9-0
Mover:	Lucy Bianchi
Secunder:	Patrice Hardy
Yes:	Eugene Wheeler, Amanda Gawthorpe, Meredith Sewell, Lucy Bianchi, Jill King, Patrice Hardy, Christine Jernigan, Sarah Chera, Miriam Herrell
No:	None
Absent:	Makayla Walden, Julia Curran, Amber Revels-Stocks

Duly Adopted by the Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library Advisory Board on Thursday, May 21, 2026.

Eugene Wheeler
Chair

Heidi L. Holland, MMC, MCCMC
Town Clerk

MEETING & STUDY ROOM POLICY

Purpose:

The Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library (“Library”) makes its meeting rooms and study rooms available for free to individuals, community groups, and organizations (“user”) for educational, cultural, and informational meetings of public interest*. The restrictions of this policy regarding application and scheduling do not apply to library-sponsored events. The Library shall not discriminate in providing space on the basis of race, religion, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability.

Use of the facility in no way constitutes the Library’s endorsement of any group’s activities or beliefs.

Policy:

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

Use of library meeting rooms and study rooms are made available to all groups on a first come, first served basis subject to the requirements which follow.

General

- Meeting rooms and study rooms are available free of charge to valid Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library cardholders.
- Programs sponsored by the Library, the Library Advisory Board, and other Library and Town-related organizations will be given priority for the use of meeting rooms and study rooms.
- Library staff may ask users to reschedule reservations in the event the Town or Library needs to schedule a special meeting or other event.
- All events held in the meeting rooms must be free and open to the public. The Library’s meeting rooms are not available for individual use or private events such as graduations, weddings, birthday, or anniversary parties.
- Study rooms can be for individual or private use.
- Meeting and study rooms are intended for temporary use and may not serve as a primary base of operations or a permanent place of business for any organization.
- Allowing use of library meeting rooms and study rooms does not constitute the library’s endorsement of the belief or ideas of organizations of individuals using the space.
- The library reserves the right to decline any reservation for any reason.

Restrictions

- Events cannot exceed room capacity. A room’s actual capacity may be more limited due to configuration and set up, or health and safety concerns. Library staff reserve the right to decline use of meeting rooms or study rooms, or to ask patrons to leave if the number of people in the room exceeds its posted capacity.

- Users may only access meeting rooms and study rooms during library operating hours. Users may not access the library building before opening, or after closing, to set up or prepare for events. Rooms are not available if the library must close due to inclement weather or other circumstances.
- Reservations must be concluded, and the room must be vacated by users and attendees, 15 minutes prior to library closing time.
- No fees, dues, or donations may be charged to or solicited by the user for any event or as a requirement to attend events within the library facility. Solicitation for later sales and client contact is not allowed.
- Non-alcoholic beverages and food may be served in meeting rooms. Food and beverages are not provided by the library.

User Expectations

- All users and persons attending events in meeting rooms and study rooms are subject to the Library's Rules and Regulations for Conduct in the Library at all times. The user is responsible for ensuring that each member of their group is aware of and abides by these regulations.
- Events may not disrupt the use of the library by others. The library manager may deny the use of meeting rooms and study rooms for any program or meeting likely to disrupt the use of the library by others.
- Each user is responsible for their own publicity. All advertisements for events must clearly indicate the identity of the sponsoring individual or organization, and in no way imply the event is sponsored by the Library.
- Users shall not distribute personal or group literature, brochures, or other materials to library patrons outside of the reserved room. Users shall not leave printed materials on library property without prior approval from the library manager.
- Materials may not be attached to walls, windows, doors, or furnishings.
- Users reserving a meeting room or study room must assume all responsibility for any damage to the library facility or furnishings.
- Users should notify the library if cancellation is necessary.

Room Reservations

- A valid, full-privileges Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library card is required to reserve a meeting room or study room. Users must be present while the room is in use.
- All requests for the use of meeting rooms and study rooms may be made online or in person. Applications are subject to approval by the library manager (or designee).
- Reservations must include set up and breakdown time as users are not permitted into meeting rooms or study rooms prior to or after their approved time. Library staff are not responsible for setting up the room, and users should return the room to its original state by the end of the reservation.
- **Stipulations**

Meeting Rooms

- Meeting rooms may only be reserved by adults, ages 18 years or older.
- Applications to reserve meeting rooms may be made up to 45 days in advance.
- Applications will be accepted and scheduled in the order received.
- Users can make up to two reservations per month, whether you are booking for yourself or an organization. Both reservations can be used on consecutive days.
- The community space requires a minimum of 8 people for booking.
- Users must check in at the front desk to access the reserved room. Individuals whose library card was used to reserve the room must be present at check-in.
- Meeting rooms will be available for the exact time for which the room has been reserved. If the user does not check-in or notify staff of late arrival within the allowed 15-minute grace period, the user may lose their room reservation if another person or group requests its use.

Study Rooms

- Study rooms may be reserved by teens and adults, ages 15 years or older.
- Applications to reserve study rooms may be made up to 45 days in advance.
- Applications will be accepted and scheduled in the order received.
- Users will be limited to one, two-hour reservation per week.
- Users must check in at the front desk to access the reserved room. Individuals whose library card was used to reserve the room must be present at check-in.
- Study rooms will be available for the exact time for which the room has been reserved. If the user does not check-in or notify staff of late arrival within the allowed 10-minute grace period, the user may lose their room reservation if another person or group requests its use.

Liability:

The Library assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen items or damage to vehicles in the parking lot. Signing of the room booking application by an individual or any representative of the group and/or organization releases the Library of any responsibility for damage or loss suffered during the period of agreement.

Groups, individuals and/or organizations shall indemnify, defend and hold harmless the Library, the Town of Clayton and its officers, agents, and employees from and against any and all claims, suits, actions of any kind, arising and resulting and accruing from any negligent act, omission or error of the group, individual and/or organization resulting in or relating to personal injuries or property damage arising from the organization/group's use of the library meeting room.

Enforcement:

The library manager and town administration have the right to reject any group and/or individual at any time for any present or past policy violations.

*North Carolina General Statute 163-99 requires that our meeting rooms be made available for political parties (as defined by NCGS 163-96) annual or biennial precinct meetings and county and district conventions.

DRAFT