



**1. CALL TO ORDER**

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a. Adoption of Minutes
- July 17, 2025
- Presenter:* Sam Johnson-Phillips, Deputy Town Clerk  
[July 17, 2025 DRAFT Minutes](#)

**POTENTIAL ACTION:** Adoption of Minutes

**3. OLD BUSINESS**

**4. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Cultural Arts & Library Community Survey  
*Presenter:* Mel Poole, Library Manager  
**POTENTIAL ACTION:** Informational Only
- b. North Carolina Public Library Survey  
*Presenter:* Mel Poole, Library Manager  
**POTENTIAL ACTION:** Informational Only

**5. OBSERVATIONS FROM THE LIBRARY BOARD**

- a. *Presenter:* Eugene Wheeler, Board Vice-Chair

**6. UPDATE ON FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY**

- a. *Presenter:* Ellen Andruzzi, Friends of the Library President

**7. LIBRARIAN'S REPORT**

- a. Librarian's Report  
*Presenter:* Mel Poole, Library Manager

**8. OTHER BUSINESS**

- a. Volunteer Opportunity  
*Presenter:* Mel Poole, Library Manager

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

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



**Town of Clayton**  
**Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library Advisory Board Minutes**  
**Thursday, July 17, 2025 at 5:30 PM**  
**The Clayton Center**  
**Four Oaks Room**  
**111 E. Second Street**

**Board Members Present:**

Julia Curran,  
Jill King  
Eugene Wheeler  
Makayla Noel Walden  
Meredith Sewell  
Amanda Gawthorpe  
Victoria Privette  
Sarah Chera  
Miriam Herrell

**Staff Present:**

Gretchen Williams, Council Member  
Mel Poole, Library Manager  
Sam Johnson-Phillips, Deputy Town Clerk

**Board Members Absent:**

Amber Revels-Stocks  
Lucy Bianchi

**1 CALL TO ORDER**

- a) Ms. Curran called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

**2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a) Adoption of Minutes  
• May 15, 2025

*Presenter:* Sam Johnson-Phillips, Deputy Town Clerk

**Adoption of Minutes**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>CARRIED 9-0</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Amanda Gawthorpe
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Meredith Sewell
<b>YES:</b>	Julia Curran, Jill King, Eugene Wheeler, Makayla Noel Walden, Meredith Sewell, Amanda Gawthorpe, Victoria Privette, Sarah Chera, and Miriam Herrell
<b>NO:</b>	None
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Amber Revels-Stocks and Lucy Bianchi

### 3 OLD BUSINESS

### 4 NEW BUSINESS

- a) Library Strategic Plan Review  
*Presenter:* Mel Poole, Library Manager

Ms. Poole discussed the 2022-2027 Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library Strategic Plan, copies were provided.

The current Strategic Plan, implemented in 2022, is valid for five years and will expire in 2027. Ms. Poole let the board know that copies of the full plan are available if anyone would like one.

Highlights of the Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library Strategic Plan and the three focus areas were discussed. Multiple entities are involved when creating the Strategic Plan, mentioned were Library Advisory Board, Community Input, Town Council, and Library Staff. The process included identifying possible issues and then developing strategies from the identified areas.

The library is focused on three main avenues of service and has set forth goals for each focus area. These focuses align with recommendations made in the Strategic Plan:

- Being a Welcoming Space
- Building Community
- Connecting People to Ideas and Resources

#### Focus 1: Being a Welcoming Space

##### Goal:

Upgrade the library's facility to fulfill all essential indicators as outlined in the State Library of North Carolina Public Library Standards for Facilities and Sustainable Organizations.

##### Action Steps:

- Introduce the SLNC Public Library Standards to Town Administration and the Town Council.
- Work with Town Administration to meet minimum requirements for library facilities and Sustainable Organizations.

##### Goal:

Provide appropriate modern technology and technology instruction for all users.

##### Action Steps:

- Host regular technology teaching and information sessions.
- Lend essential and new technology to the public.
- Use local partnerships to spread information about technology lending and information sessions.

#### Focus 2: Building Community

##### Goal:

Provide consistent, clear, and accurate communication to internal and external stakeholders.

Action Steps:

- Use traditional media to engage the public
- Regularly update website, monitor links, and keep registration links updated.
- Engage all staff in regular, public-facing content creation.
- Create a common place for staff to learn about programs and services in the building.
- Hold regular meetings with all staff and with each department.
- Library staff will visit town departments and host a town-wide open house to spread the word of what's happening in the library.
- Library staff members sit in on and present at library board and council meetings periodically during the year.

Goal:

Keep an open dialogue between library staff and the public.

Action Steps:

- Continue regular interactive posts on Facebook and Instagram, following best practices for posting.
- Give the public comprehensive annual surveys and use results to inform programming and collections.
- Create regular one-question surveys for public input.

Goal:

Build partnerships and provide outreach services to leverage resources and reach the underserved members of the Clayton community.

Action Steps:

- Cultivate and maintain a list of diverse community partners, including Johnston County Public Schools.
- Regularly invite partners to provide programming at the library.
- Maintain a presence at community functions, such as town festivals and markets.
- Take library services to patrons and groups who do not have equitable access to transportation and/or cannot get to the library's facility during open hours.
- Cultivate library champions who promote the goals of the library to the public and public officials.

Focus 3: Connecting People to Ideas and Resources

Goal:

Library collections will cultivate curiosity and inform the public.

Action Steps:

- Use multiple collection development resources to build a collection that includes best-sellers, high-interest titles, new and established authors, and items popular in the media while also collecting across the Dewey Decimal System to have a balanced and informative collection.
- Produce eye-catching, diverse, and creative displays to attract and engage patrons.
- Collect items and create displays to correlate with themed months/movements such as National Library Week, Money Smart Week, Banned Books Week, Earth Day, cultural movements, etc.
- Curate lists to assist in reader's advisory and to help patrons follow their

interests.

Goal:

Library collections reflect our community and are accessible to users of all abilities.

Action Steps:

- Collect library materials in a variety of formats, including print, large print and audiobook, digital titles, titles in Spanish and other languages.
- Continually run reports and engage with the public to gauge how well the collection represents the community and meets its needs.
- Complete regular diversity audits to ensure that our community is visible in our collection.

Goal:

Library programs reach people of all ages and backgrounds.

Action Steps:

- Provide regular programs for the following all age groups, including babies, toddlers, preschoolers, k-6 children, teens, adults, and senior citizens.
- Connect with community partners who focus on persons with disabilities and build programs for those individuals.
- Provide programming presented by diverse community members.
- Provide bilingual and non-English programs, including programs in Spanish.

Goal:

Library programs are high-quality and engaging.

Action Steps:

- All programs' presenters receive training and feedback for their programs.
- Library staff observes programs and gives timely feedback to presenters about engagement in and informative nature of programs.
- The library will periodically poll audience members to gauge satisfaction and engagement with library programs.
- The library pursues opportunities to bring published authors and professional performers to the library annually.

Goal:

Library programs are informative and represent a diversity of viewpoints.

Action Steps:

- Utilize experts to provide programs for the public.
- Invite diverse members of the community to present programs on a regular basis.
- Host informative how-to programs as well as hosted health screenings and tax information sessions from trusted community partners.
- Utilize National Endowment for the Arts, Humanities Council, and other statewide and national grant opportunities to create innovative and far-reaching programs for the community.

- b) Robertson Mule Stable Input  
*Presenter:* Julia Curran, Board Chair

Ms. Curran reported that she and Mr. Wheeler were invited by the Town of Clayton to attend a Public Input Session. She informed the board that the Town had recently purchased the Robertson Mule Stable at 144 Lombard Street and would be conducting an Adaptive Reuse Study to explore potential uses for the

property.

Ms. Curran requested that board members share ideas to contribute to the study, which will be facilitated by Jacobs Consulting Firm—the same team that led the Adaptive Reuse Sessions for the old Town Hall.

The board discussed potential uses for the Robertson Mule Stable, including the possibility of incorporating a multipurpose stage or creating a community center.

Ms. Curran expressed her appreciation for the opportunity she and Mr. Wheeler had to participate in the session.

- c) Library Programming  
*Presenter:* Mel Poole, Library Manager

Ms. Poole discussed library programming and the different challenges that are presented. She stated being in a smaller space requires the need to adapt and she discussed long term planning and implementing the changes now so when the permanent space reopens, things would have been established.

Ms. Poole stated that in the current temporary space, the capacity is approximately 20 people. She is excited on the prospect of using the outdoor area but mentioned that area could only be utilized weather permitting.

It was stated; she would like to diversify the programs that are offered. She stated that she would like to revamp and introduce new programs that are being offered. There was discussion regarding the changes in programming.

## **5 OBSERVATIONS FROM THE LIBRARY BOARD**

- a) *Presenter:* Julia Curran, Board Chair

There was a brief discussion on various methods for displaying information, including the suggestion of using a digital display. Ms. Poole noted that her staff is actively exploring different options to improve information presentation.

## **6 UPDATE ON FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY**

- a) *Presenter:* Ellen Andruzzi, Friends of the Library President

Ms. Andruzzi noted that the move to the temporary location has impacted the Friends of the Library. Despite the challenges, they continue to focus on outreach and fundraising efforts. In June, they participated in the Night Market, which was well-received. The event provided an opportunity to inform attendees about the library's temporary location.

Ms. Andruzzi also encouraged donations of books, particularly children's and adult fiction—to be brought to the September meeting, where Ms. Curran will collect them.

## 7 LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

- a) Librarian's Report  
*Presenter:* Mel Poole, Library Manager

Ms. Poole stated the library opened to the public July 1, 2025, in the temporary location. She stated there were 953 visitors.

The Summer Reading Program began July 1, 2025, and they are on track in comparison to last year.

- 376 registered readers
- 42,997 reading minutes logged

Ms. Poole discussed the launching of the Library of Things collection. The following was stated:

- Rebranding the unconventional item collections under a new name: "Library of Things".
- This new umbrella term brings together all the non-traditional items we lend, such as games, technology, launchpads and more, into one cohesive identity to make promotion and discovery easier for patrons.
- More information and links to items in this collection can be found on our website under Books & Media.

Ms. Poole mentioned that September is Library Card Sign-up month. The Library staff would be at Deep River one night (TBD) and the outdoor concert on September 9, 2025, to promote the library and encourage registration. She stated that she would send a follow-up email once the dates are confirmed if people are interested in volunteering.

The following upcoming programs were discussed:

- July 21 @ 11:00 am: Doodlebot Creations (3rd - 5th Grade)
- July 20 @ 11:00 am: Storytime & Craft (Preschool - Kindergarten)
- August 14 @ 10:00 am: EcoExplore Bugs (Family)
- August 16 @ 1:00 pm: The Queen Anne's Revenge Expedition (Adult)

### **May 2025**

Visits: 1,666; New Patrons: 50; Physical Checkouts: 1,044; Digital Checkouts: 3,767; Public Computer Sessions: 0; Early Literacy Program/Attendance: 22/249; Children Program/Attendance: 3/44; Teen Program/Attendance: 1/5; Adult Program/Attendance: 8/111; Meeting Room Usage Total Reservation/Total Attendance: 0/0

### **June 2025**

Visits: 662; New Patrons: 70; Physical Checkouts: 2,685; Digital Checkouts: 3,722; Public Computer Sessions: 0; Early Literacy Program/Attendance: 9/260; Children Program/Attendance: 3/96; Teen Program/Attendance: 1/3; Adult Program/Attendance: 7/99; Meeting Room Usage Total Reservation/Total Attendance: 0/0

**May 2025/June 2025 Outreach Events**

- Slide into Summer (May)
- Downtown Clayton Outdoor Concert (June)

**May 2025/June 2025 Popular Checkouts on Libby**

- Iron Flame by Rebecca Yarros
- The Let Them Theory by Mel Robbins
- The Women by Kristin Hannah
- None Of This Is True by Lisa Jewell
- All The Colors Of The Dark by Chris Whitaker
- Deep End by Ali Hazelwood

**8 OTHER BUSINESS**

**9 ADJOURNMENT**

- a) Motion to Adjourn

With nothing further, the meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

**Motion To Adjourn**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>CARRIED 9-0</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Amanda Gawthorpe
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Sarah Chera
<b>YES:</b>	Julia Curran, Jill King, Eugene Wheeler, Makayla Noel Walden, Meredith Sewell, Amanda Gawthorpe, Victoria Privette, Sarah Chera, and Miriam Herrell
<b>NO:</b>	None
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Amber Revels-Stocks and Lucy Bianchi

Duly adopted this 18<sup>TH</sup> day of September 2024

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Eugene Wheeler  
Vice Board Chair

ATTEST:

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Sam Johnson-Phillips, CMC, NCCMC  
Deputy Town Clerk

July 17, 2025  
Minutes