

CITY OF OREM
LIBRARY ADVISORY COMMISSION
February 25, 2026

Place: Orem Public Library - Sorenson Room in Library Hall

At 6:00 p.m.: Matthew Brown conducted the meeting

Library Advisory Commission: Katrina Brittner, Matt Brown, Christine Corley, Lorraine Jeffery, Nancy Schultze, Angela Watters and Quinn Mecham (City Council Representative)

Excused: Karina Lewis

Staff: Jaime Bartlett, Sheron Buttars, Bryce Merrill, and Mike Smith

1. Review and approve January 20, 2026 minutes -

Katrina Brittner made a motion to approve the minutes. Nancy Schultze seconded the motion.

Vote: Katrina Brittner - Yes, Matt Brown - Yes, Christine Corley - Yes, Lorraine Jeffery, Nancy Schultze and Angela Watters - Yes

2. City organizational changes - Library Director position posting update - Bryce Merrill

Bryce Merrill shared that the City Manager, Brenn Bybee rolled out structural changes about a month ago in the city including changes in the library. The City has had a focus on sustainability. The focus has been to keep city dollars as close to residents as possible. In the library prior to 2021, there were 20 hours per week benefited part time positions. The decision was made to eliminate these part time positions and have only Flexible/Variable and full time positions. Assistant Librarians were lower paid entry level positions and were the lowest paid positions in the county. The Assistant positions were reassigned to Associate and a third Library Manager position was added. Existing positions were not eliminated. Collection Maintenance shifts were changed from nine hour shifts to three to four hour shifts.

Bryce Merrill shared that a part time leadership promotion pipeline was built with an addition of positions with increases from \$11.00 to \$15.00 per hour (Flexible/Variable were retitled to Part Time). There were promotions from part time positions to full time positions. Two examples of these promotions were Angie Herrera to Assistant Librarian in General Reference and Sabrina Petty in Collection Services. Librarians have been increased from five to eight with subject matter specialists including Matt Kammerer in Makerspace and James Scarbrough in Media. These changes were each done without budget increases. These were consistent investments supported by the City Council. The goal is to support and grow other programs, increase collections and to run a lean library.

Bryce Merrill shared that part of the changes Brenn Bybee, City Manager, has rolled out the last few weeks include hiring a dedicated Library Director. Bryce Merrill's title will transition to Executive Director of Community Services. The changes in Parks and Rec are a bit more complicated. Trails and sports field work will be involved in that change. The Library Director and the Parks and Recreation Director, Tyler Peay, and Events team will be supervised by Bryce Merrill.

Bryce Merrill said the Library Director position will be posted this Thursday. The Library Director will oversee the Patron Experience and Collection Services Division which are managed by Jaime Bartlett and Shannon Montes de Oca which include the core library functions. Bryce Merrill said the laser focus will continue to be on core functions. Mike Smith and his team in Library Hall will continue to be supervised by Bryce Merrill due to the unique functions of Library Hall with the art and ticketing. Sheron Buttars, Executive Assistant, will report to Bryce Merrill and will continue to support the library. Kenice Whittaker, Events Manager, will report to Bryce Merrill. Tyler Peay will be the Parks and Recreation Director. Mariah Shirley, Debbie Boone, Jim Orr and Gena Bertlesen will all report to Tyler Peay.

Bryce Merrill said that the Library Director will work with the Library Advisory Commission and Bryce Merrill will continue to work with the Library Advisory Commission as well. Bryce Merrill shared that the goal will be to let the Library Director have autonomy while working together with the new Library Director to figure out how Bryce Merrill's role will work with the library and Library Director. The official staff liaison to the Library Advisory Commission will be the Library Director. Bryce Merrill's office will continue to be in the library. The new Library Director will be located in the office upstairs in the South Wing in Administration.

Bryce Merrill shared that the hiring process for the Library Director will be open for about one month. The plan is to have the first review after three weeks. The posting will not close at this time, applications will still be accepted. Bryce Merrill shared he has had conversations with other local library directors and internal staff members who voiced an interest in the position. Bryce Merrill shared that the hope is that the ideal candidate will have public library experience and fit well with the Library Division Managers. Bryce Merrill doesn't want to change the vision. Bryce Merrill shared that he feels it is paramount to stay with the current vision and traditional library services. Bryce Merrill said he wants to hire a Library Director that understands Orem. Bryce Merrill shared that the hiring is a national recruitment. Bryce Merrill shared that he has lived here for sixteen years and wants to find someone that understands Orem and how we interact with the city and residents. Bryce Merrill shared that the new Library Director will need to be someone that can run faster than staff.

Bryce Merrill asked for thoughts, feedback and concerns from the Commission members. Christine Corley asked if the position was posted on the city website. Bryce Merrill responded that the position is posted on the city website as well as other library related websites. Katrina Brittner said she likes the idea of hiring someone local. Bryce Merrill said the city staff is working on building the interview process. Lorraine Jeffery suggested that an applicant from somewhere else would bring in new ideas and could be interesting. Lorraine Jeffery said it is important to find the right person and right fit for the library.

Bryce Merrill said he has talked to HR staff about including the Library Advisory Commission in the interview process. Bryce Merrill will report back, it may be that Matt Brown as Chair would be asked to be involved where appropriate per HR. Bryce Merrill shared that he plans on the hiring process to take six to eight weeks. There will most likely be two or three rounds of interviewing. The internal applicant process would differ from external applicants. Bryce Merrill shared that the hope is to have the new Library Director in place prior to the Summer Reading kickoff, which would be in mid-May.

3. Budget update for fiscal year 2027 - Bryce Merrill

Bryce Merrill shared that staff is thick into the budget season for the July 1, 2027, fiscal year. The subcommittees started meeting in January. The initial submittals have been finished and the tentative budget will be available by April. In April, the Mayor and City Council members will be reviewing and offering their recommendations during Work Sessions. Updates will be made and the budget will be adopted during a June City Council meeting.

Bryce Merrill reported that the state of the city is strong and sales tax revenue is strong as well. Budget Amendments were presented to the City Council during their meeting last night. The big picture that has been presented by the City Manager, Brenn Bybee, is to start the budget process with existing staff and services at the beginning of the year.

Bryce Merrill reported that the library priorities are to continue forward with what has been planned. The projections with the Hub and book sorter have come true. Mike Smith and his team in Library Hall and Makerspace are continuing to expand and increase the revenue. Programs like the Nutcracker can make a big difference. Collection Development operating costs have decreased and per the MGT study more funds have been put towards the collection. Christine Corley asked how much has been added to the digital collection. Bryce Merrill responded that the Beehive Consortium issues have not been resolved but options are being discussed. Bryce Merrill shared that the CLEF Grant this year in the amount of \$18,000 will be used to purchase digital collection items this fiscal year.

Bryce Merrill reported that it is more expensive to buy books, DVDs, and digital items. There has been a price increase of 150% in the last five years. Duplicate titles get copies to people faster but staff is working to keep the breadth of the collection. New programs include the YOTO collection which kicked off one month ago and has been very popular. City Horticulturist, Laura Bascom, will be working with the greenhouse and the seed library.

Bryce Merrill reported that Holly Grierson and Nathan Robison oversee the art program in the Library Hall. Funds were allocated to purchase an improved gallery art hanging system. Marketing budget was allocated to buy banners and new printing materials and to target social media. In regards to staffing, the merit and hybrid step program for the part time step program

were all funded to help build a sustainable staffing model. The level of service continues to expand and find efficiencies.

Phase II of renovations for the Library will be the Hive remodel and it has gone into the early stages to identify potential costs to be discussed during the budget process for fiscal year 2027. These renovations would include making collaborative work areas for the Patron Experience Division in the previous collection maintenance area, and the prior acquisitions area would include a cafe model. Upcoming renovations will also include IT infrastructure changes that will improve cell phone usage in the south wing basement with sixty datapoints, mesh networks and a move of the computer labs. Other updates include a library garden and back yard with access from the 100 North entrance that will fence in the grass and will include planting beds and programs will be held in this area that will be done by the library team and horticulturists.

Bryce Merrill reported that eighty one parking stalls have been added between the library and the new City Hall. A committee has been created that reviews every city event to avoid overlap with city events for parking on the city campus, but overlap will still happen to some degree. A hawk signal has been installed on 100 North and Center Street to help with pedestrian access. There has been discussion regarding the addition of a shuttle for Taste of Orem and Oremfest. Bryce Merrill also mentioned that there has been discussion regarding not holding four events at the same time to help with parking.

4. Review of 2026 Goals - Strategic Plan presentations by staff - Jaime Bartlett, Shannon Montes de Oca and Mike Smith

Bryce Merrill asked the Library Managers to give highlights of their staff's Strategic Plans and Review of 2026 Goals presentations that were held on February 11th. Jaime Barlett is the Patron Experience Library Manager. Last year her staff focused on patron experience library service. Jaime Bartlett shared that with the library being under renovation patrons came in confused as to where items were located. The Concierge Desk helped lessen the confusion since patrons were greeted and taken to where they needed to go so it made it a great experience for patrons. The Concierge Desk will carry on this year. During the renovation the Summer Reading program was taken out to the community. Jaime Bartlett said well trained teams is one of their goals for 2026. Forty percent of their staff joined in 2025 or took on new roles. Staff meetings will be more efficient and effective and staff will cover for each other. Staff want to give the best service to patrons. Jaime Bartlett said team building and looking for fun ways to do this will be another goal. There are plans to go on adventures including visiting new libraries or sister libraries and bring back the best ideas. Jaime Bartlett said their team's staff will assist in activating the greenhouse and courtyards. The South Entrance will be reactivated, storywalks and a Kids Zone revamp are being discussed. Plants and pages in the greenhouse and pop up programs are also planned. Jaime Bartlett said she and her team are excited to see what 2026 will bring. Lorraine Jeffery said that the patron focus stands out and there are very innovative ideas. Jaime Bartlett said the great ideas are coming from staff.

Christine Corley shared that the community is so excited about the adult reading program. Jaime Bartlett said the program has been revamped this year and staff are excited to hear that people are excited about the new program. Jaime Bartlett shared that a recent program, Murder in the Shire, was very popular.

Mike Smith shared regarding Library Hall and Outreach. Mike Smith shared that the goal is to thoughtfully curate, engage dialogue with the community, engage local artists and provide a place to carry out art, be active leaders in roles, and invest for the long term in arts. Mike Smith shared that it takes a lot of time to build a community. The Library Hall team has been drawing from assessment, taking feedback, being inspired by works of artists and working to get connected to the CARE program. Mike Smith shared that they are taking a quantitative to qualitative look at stats to make sure the quality is high and that there is a good return on investment in Orem.

Mike Smith shared that there is a review process after each program that is called the GBU, the good, bad and ugly. This process enables the team to have hard conversations. Mike Smith said the team pays attention at events and watches audience response and makes notes and so follow up can be done regarding things like obstructed views in certain areas, sound issues, etc.

Mike Smith reported that Matt Kammerer has worked with Makerspace and Makercamps and wants to expand and have monthly workshops and expand to monthly workshops at Hillcrest. Matt Kammerer will be working on updates to call numbers and the hold processes in Makerspace. Mike Smith said that Matt Kammerer will also be working through the process to get the reservation calendar that is currently used for the study room calendar to be used with Makerspace for scheduling the recording studio. Mike Smith said that Nathan Robison has revamped Volunteers and Outreach so that the processes are more streamlined and efficient. Outreach works with local groups and city departments, has partnerships with UVU including one that recruits volunteers for docents in the arts space. Nathan Robison has also been working on an informal internship with Orem High School that recruits for the tech and audio team in Library Hall that starts as volunteers and potentially looks at professional careers in tech and audio. Two staff have been hired in the past and another volunteer will start through this program in the near future.

Lorraine Jeffery asked if the library charges for Library Hall programs. Mike Smith shared there are a couple of different options. Library programs and events are the first priority. Mike Smith curates the paid ticketed performance season and he coordinates city events and other department events, the CARE groups fold into city and library events. Library Hall provides a place to perform or have a program. Some of those programs establish partnerships such as the Nutcracker. Some groups started out like that and then they drew a crowd and then became a ticket worthy group. Mike Smith shared that there are also outside rentals that the Library Hall team supports as well.

Bryce Merrill reported that Shannon Montes de Oca's team is working on making movie call numbers more browseable. This will be a very large project. Also Collection Services staff will be working on some major shifts with the collection. The Book Sale process is being reviewed. Updates on these processes will be shared with the Commission in the future.

Bryce Merrill asked the Commission members what they are not seeing and what they love and would like to see more of in the library. Matt Brown shared that he likes the curatorial approach and feels it is the right direction for Library Hall. Matt Brown said he loves this library and feels it is alive and he is excited to be a part of it. Bryce Merrill thanked Matt Brown for that comment. Bryce Merrill said if the Commission members have thoughts the staff hopes they would please share them with Bryce Merrill. Lorraine Jeffery said she thinks there are good things happening and she loves changing the movie call numbers. Christine Corley asked if volunteers can help with the project. Mike Smith said that one collection area will be moved at a time but that ideas will be passed along to Nathan Robison who coordinates the volunteers.

Quinn Mecham said he would like to get to know each Commission member. Quinn Mecham requested each Commission member think about what they love and what they can do throughout the year and what contribution they would like to make that would be useful to staff. Quinn Mecham said he is grateful for the things that are happening. Quinn Mecham continued that the citizen commissions build something in collaboration that wouldn't happen without each member. Quinn Mecham requested that during the next meeting, and asked that this item be added to the next meeting agenda, that Commission members think about what their goals are for the year and where do you feel this group of people has creativity or insight that you can contribute in a meaningful way in making the ecosystem more creative and provide insight from other libraries. Quinn Mecham suggested going to libraries when traveling and taking notes on the coolest things and he requested that the Commission members bring back those ideas.

Bryce Merrill gave an invitation for feedback constantly and to think more strategically. Bryce Merrill continued that he would like to have a nature of contribution rather than one off ideas. Bryce Merrill requested each Commission member share three things throughout 2026 that would be beneficial for the library. Matt Brown pitched the idea of the library being something that celebrates beautiful words. Matt Brown's suggestions were kindness, exploration and inspiration. Matt Brown said he would like to have these words when someone walks in the library so literacy is celebrated. Matt Brown said he is not sure what it would look like, but would like to make this one of his goals. Christine Corley said she would like to see how to help meet the community's goals and see how the library could help and get that feedback to the library staff.

5. Construction/renovation update - Bryce Merrill

Matt Brown requested that updates be sent out to the Commission members for the renovation updates. Bryce Merrill said there is a plan for an April Grand Opening of the Plaza. Bryce Merrill said he will have Sheron Buttars send out emails with the dates for the Grand Opening of the Plaza and when the fences are scheduled to be moved in front of the library.

6. Upcoming Events

A document listing the Upcoming Events was given to each Commission member. Upcoming Events will be added to the agenda as an ongoing agenda item in the future.

7. Other

No other items.

8. Adjournment -

Adjourn: Katrina Brittner motioned to adjourn. Lorraine Jeffery seconded the motion.

Vote: Katrina Brittner - Yes, Matt Brown - Yes, Christine Corley - Yes, Lorraine Jeffery, Nancy Schultze and Angela Watters - Yes

The next Library Advisory Commission Meeting will be held on May 19, 2026.

Adjourned: 7:18 p.m.

Sheron Buttars, Executive Assistant

Approved:

DRAFT