

February 2, 2026

Friends of the Arlington Public Library (FOAL) Board Meeting Minutes

Board Members:

Present: Claire Christian, Jamie Krovontka, Michelle Kilkenny, Laura Porter, Rob Hizon, Brittany Robertson, Judy Kindell, Jane Posner, Maureen Quinn, Todd Ludeke, Kelly Fado, Andrew Goodwin, Kate Summers

Absent: Barbara Adde, Natalia Lanteigne

Others Present:

Library: Rebecca Case, Diane Kresh

Other: Marty Pippins, Merri Horn, Amy Miller

Meeting called to order at 7:06 p.m. by President, Claire Christian

I. December 15, 2025 board meeting minutes

MOTION: Judith Kindell moved to approve the December minutes as amended by Kelly; Brittany Robertson seconded; motion was approved unanimously.

II. Library report

Rebecca provided updates on the Arlington@250 programming and will continue to share updates on initiatives as they develop. There will be promotions around Arlington@250 in all of the FOAL bookstores. Rebecca will also share revenue reports via email with the group, but excellent merchandise sales pushed us to higher revenue in December 2025.

The budget session will be in March and Rebecca shared that now is a great time to talk with neighborhood associations, writing articles for your neighborhood newsletters and talking directly with County Board members. The budget is not finished yet, but Diane will fill us in as soon as she knows more details.

Elevators are under construction at Central and DES has all spring book sale dates and times. We should have 1 if not 2 elevators. The auditorium is also available on Monday in case we want to do something around a Monday bag sale.

Diane shared that tonight's event (2/2/26) with author and radio commentator, Clay Cane featuring Dr. Ibrahim X. Kendi as moderator was a full house. She shared that it is a good reminder of the role that libraries play always, but especially now as a safe space to have difficult conversations about social justice, equity, etc.

There was also discussion about engaging with teens and young adults to get them more involved in library events. The FOAL board requested stats for advocacy and Rebecca will package up some information for a frame of reference.

III. Financial report and update

Claire reported that we are making good progress with new accountant.

IV. Upcoming library and FOAL events

There are a lot of events planned for 2026. The sign up genius has been sent out and the request is for every board member to sign up for at least 1 tabling event per year. Tabling events are where we get exposure with the community.

We plan on tabling at Arlington Palooza (attendance ~3,500) on Saturday, May 16. We also have an opportunity to do a fundraising event with Antoni Porowski and we'll be working with the library and GMU to determine what space we have for this event.

The Glencarlyn plant sale is the Saturday of the book sale. Discussion of participation concluded with that this is a good community event and that we should staff a table with a FOAL board member and perhaps a volunteer or two from our volunteer list.

The group also discussed tabling at the Arlington County Fair and partnering with the library to share a table. Rebecca will follow-up with us.

Claire reported that she had a catch up call with Juvenile Detention Center (JDC). The library that FOAL funded is very popular. They are looking for more support from FOAL to include a few more carts. They are also offering book clubs and are interested in new books and more copies of the books. Rebecca will get a quote for the books for us. The JDC is also interested in having some author events. Rebecca will speak with the collection and development teams and get back to us on the feasibility.

Claire also expressed interest in establishing a small fund to give each of the residents at the JDC an opportunity to get a new book on their birthday. She recommends that we provide the JDC (Anita) a \$500 gift card to purchase the books on the child's birthday.

Kate Summers moved to fund the Juvenile Detention Center library with \$5,000 which includes a \$500 gift card for birthday books, two carts and additional books for the library; Maureen Quinn seconded; motion was approved unanimously.

Kate proposed a new event to the group. She would like to do something similar to the "Book It Around DC" event but would like to focus on a local coffee shop or bakery as a way to get readers together. It would be a free, ticketed event for all ages. Attendees could donate or join FOAL. Ideas include covering the cost of one coffee and having a pastry tray, giving out FOAL bookmarks, and having door prizes.

V. Donations and membership update

December 1 to 31, 2025

- 138 donations totaling \$29,818.38
- 33 new/renewals totaling \$1,590.00

January 1 to 31, 2026

- 38 donations totaling \$13,422.74
- 39 new/renewals totaling \$1,600.00

We have a total of 1,481 FOAL members (309 lifetime members)

The executive committee team discussed the potential for an endowment for Arlington Reads. Key takeaways include: the group is interested in pursuing the idea but need to put more thought and research into how much we should seed the endowment with, as well as having a giving circle and additional corporate donors. The immediate goal is to establish the fund and generate dedicated funding for Arlington Reads every year.

The hope is that we could announce this endeavor at the April 21 Arlington Reads event.

Andrew agreed to assist with this initiative and requested some additional details to help him move forward with planning and naming the fund. Discussion was held amongst board members on how much to seed the endowment, along with ideas for growing the fund in years to come.

Judith Kindell moved to set up a Diane Kresh Arlington Reads Endowment Fund; Claire Christian seconded; motion was approved unanimously.

VI. Book sale updates

We are just under three months out from the book sale. Marty has not contacted vendors yet but will do so soon. We've previously discussed having a bag day the Monday after the sale and this is something we can think about for the spring. Marty will round back with the board on details.

We need paper bags; Kelly will send the form letters to Marty to request a new supply.

Marty suggested that we expand the book sale to operate on G1 and G2 for a future sale (fall 2026 or beyond), whereby all books would be out on shelves with no need to restock. Marty believes we could increase our profits using this method. He suggests that we discuss and consider this idea at a future board meeting.

Kate shared that we'll hold the Books & Bubbly event again the Wednesday of book sale week. She will reach out to the vendor to get our order in. Discussion of musical talent via Jane for that evening, Jane will follow-up with Marty and Kate separately.

VII. Strategic planning

Right now, we are in the initial phases with document review of policies, procedures, etc. Please fill out the survey from Zakiya and put February 23 and March 2 on the calendar for strategic planning session.

VIII. Updates from branch representatives

Cherrydale update (Kate): wanted to flag that there were some community complaints of hours at Cherrydale impacting book clubs. The community values the in-person sessions at the library and with the new hours, it's not possible. Rebecca shared that it was a data-driven decision.

Courthouse (Jamie): the library has been closed because of a water pipe leak and heating issues causing delays in requested holds. At this time, it is not clear how damaged the collection is. Rebecca shared that hygiene kits have been circulated and are out in the branches. Jamie shared that Courthouse may need additional kits because of the larger population at this specific library. Further research to be done to see what, if any, additional products may be needed in the kits for Courthouse.

IX. DPT update

DPT is doing well. February promotions are out in the Central bookstore – Black History Month (end cap + books in the middle of the shelves) and “Blind Date with a Book”, a cart full of wrapped books. They will also continue with the “Chill with a Book” display through the winter months.

As of yesterday, Joe has packed 795 boxes for the spring sale which equates to about 14,000-15,000 books. Merri will keep an eye on this.

X. Next board meeting

The next board meeting will be held Monday, March 2, 2026 at 7:15 p.m.

Board Decisions

- Approval of the December meeting minutes.
- Approval of \$5,000 to fund the Juvenile Detention Center with two new carts, a \$500 gift card for birthday book purchases, as well as additional books for the library.
- Approval to set up a Diane Kresh Arlington Reads Endowment Fund.
- Approval of approximately \$4,000 for liability insurance on February 27, 2026.

Action Items

- Rebecca will share advocacy statistics with the board.
- Andrew to meet with Claire and others to discuss next steps for endowment work.
- Kelly will send form letters to Marty to request a new supply of paper bags.
- Kate will connect with vendor for Books & Bubbly.
- Jane will connect with Marty and Kate re: musical talent at Books & Bubbly.
- Amy will create a survey to send to FOAL members that will ask them about budget cuts and what services they use at the library to help with our advocacy efforts.

FOAL Board Meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Amy Miller