

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES OF THE
COOK MEMORIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

January 20, 2026

Call to order: The regular meeting of the Cook Memorial Public Library District was held on Tuesday, January 20, 2026 at the Cook Park Library, 413 N. Milwaukee Avenue, Libertyville, Illinois. The meeting was called to order by President Deb Ader at 6:30 p.m. Trustees present at roll call in addition to Ms. Ader were: Phyllis Dobbs, Lisa Michaluk, Karen Singer, Kristen Palic, Sara Lawton, and Rachael Josephsen.

Staff members present were Library Director David Archer, Business Manager Ann Rappa, and Executive Assistant Gabriella Pantle.

Public Comment: None.

Aaron Raftery of Nania Energy Advisors joined the meeting virtually at 6:35 p.m.

Solar Feasibility Discussion: Mr. Archer explained that following direction provided by Trustees at the December 16, 2025 regular board meeting, Mr. Raftery is joining the meeting to provide a brief overview of the solar feasibility study (presented to the Building and Grounds Committee on November 17, 2025 and provided to the board in December) and to respond to Trustee questions.

Mr. Raftery went over the three options the Board may consider for adding solar. He noted that they are not biased on any particular option but that their recommendation is to only install solar panels on the newer roof sections and wait on the older sections until they have been replaced. The board then asked Mr. Raftery several questions before he left the meeting at 7:08 p.m. The board had a long discussion on federal grants and incentives, the short term and long-term increases in utility costs, and whether they should proceed with the projects in stages or wait and do everything all at once. The board then conducted an informal poll to determine where each Trustee stands on moving forward with installing solar panels on the newer roof sections at both locations in order to qualify for the federal incentives and waiting on the older roof sections until they have been replaced. The results of that poll are as follows: YES; Ms. Palic, Ms. Ader, Ms. Michaluk, Ms. Dobbs, Ms. Lawton, and Ms. Singer. NO; Ms. Josephsen. Based on these results, the Board directed Mr. Archer to draft a resolution authorizing him to solicit proposals for the purchase and installation of solar panels on the planned new roof at Cook Park Library and the roof of the 2019 expansion at Aspen Drive Library that they will review and discuss at the next meeting.

Approval of the Minutes: Ms. Ader made a motion, seconded by Ms. Palic to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of December 16, 2025. Roll call was as follows: Ayes; Ms. Ader, Ms. Michaluk, Ms. Dobbs, Ms. Singer, Ms. Palic, Ms. Lawton, and Ms. Josephsen. Nays; none. Motion carries.

Approval of the Bills: Ms. Dobbs made a motion, seconded by Ms. Michaluk to approve the Bills Paid Report for the period of December 6, 2025 through January 9, 2026 in the amount of \$1,094,894.97. Roll call was as follows: Ayes; Ms. Ader, Ms. Michaluk, Ms. Dobbs, Ms. Singer, Ms. Palic, Ms. Lawton, and Ms. Josephsen. Nays; none. Motion carries.

Report of the Director: Mr. Archer announced that the visitor counts for December 2025 are accurate on the statistical report but since the door counters had been malfunctioning for quite some time, the numbers from previous months will need to be recalculated. He confirmed that the visitor counts going forward will be accurate.

He then reported that in November, a U.S. District Court blocked a presidential executive order to significantly scale back the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), following a lawsuit by 21 state Attorney Generals, including Illinois. While the decision allows libraries and museums access to previously delayed funds, the administration may appeal and Congress must reauthorize the Museum and Library Services Act to ensure continued funding. He explained how this impacts CMPLD.

Mr. Archer announced that hot pick magazines have been added to a few of the Library's most popular titles allowing for current issues to be checked out rather than being for "In Library Use" only. The titles that have currently been added are *People*, *Consumer Reports*, *HGTV*, *Milk Street*, *O Quarterly*, and *Traditional Home*.

He also announced that the original microphones and USB audio interfaces in Digital Studio 1 were overdue for an upgrade and have recently been replaced with new equipment. He noted that with the popularity of podcasting and home recording, studio equipment is better and more affordable than ever.

Lastly, Mr. Archer reported that the annual bookmark contest was once again hugely successful and brought in creative entries submitted by more than 700 kindergarten through grade 8 students from 17 schools, and homeschooled students. From these entries, 35 students were selected as winners.

Approve Report of the Director: Ms. Dobbs made a motion, seconded by Ms. Palic, to approve the report of the Director. Roll call was as follows: Ayes; Ms. Ader, Ms. Michaluk, Ms. Dobbs, Ms. Singer, Ms. Palic, Ms. Lawton, and Ms. Josephsen. Nays; none. Motion carries.

Report of the President: No report.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND REPRESENTATIVES

Finance & Employee Practices: Ms. Dobbs reported that the committee discussed the FY25 General Fund operating surplus at their meeting on January 13 but took no action on recommending an interfund transfer to Special Reserve. She reported that they also reviewed the Personnel Policy but had several questions that will need to be reviewed by legal counsel before it goes back to committees for approval. Lastly, she reported that after a brief discussion, the committee confirmed that, as detailed in the FY2026 Operating Budget approved in June 2025,

merit recognition will be made this month as a one-time lump sum bonus pool rather than an increase to base salary.

Policy Review: No report.

Building and Grounds: No report.

Technology: No report. The committee has a meeting scheduled for March.

Resources, Services and Long Range Planning: No report. The committee has a meeting scheduled for February.

Friends' Representative: No report.

RAILS Representative: No report.

Historical Society Representative: No report.

Other Business: Mr. Archer stated that the list of Illinois Public Library Standards for the Per Capita Grant, which the board reviewed and discussed at the December meeting, was included in the packet for their information only.

Communications: None.

Public questions: None.

Adjournment: Ms. Dobbs made a motion, seconded by Ms. Ader to adjourn the meeting. Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:09 p.m. Roll call was as follows: Ayes; Ms. Ader, Ms. Michaluk, Ms. Dobbs, Ms. Singer, Ms. Palic, Ms. Lawton, and Ms. Josephsen. Nays; none. Motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,

Sara Lawton, Secretary

Deb Ader, President