

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

February 17, 2026

Call to order: The regular meeting of the Cook Memorial Public Library District was held on Tuesday, February 17, 2026 at the Aspen Drive Library, 701 Aspen Drive, Vernon Hills, 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, Karen Singer, Kristen Palic, Lisa Michaluk, 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.

Approval of the Minutes: Ms. Dobbs a motion, seconded by Ms. Singer to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of January 20, 2026. Roll call was as follows: Ayes; Ms. Ader, Ms. Dobbs, Ms. Singer, Ms. Palic, Ms. Michaluk, 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 January 10, 2026 through February 6, 2026 in the amount of \$1,733,587.14 Roll call was as follows: Ayes; Ms. Ader, Ms. Dobbs, Ms. Singer, Ms. Palic, Ms. Michaluk, Ms. Lawton, and Ms. Josephsen. Nays; none. Motion carries.

Report of the Director: Mr. Archer reported that visitor counts were down 6% overall but that program attendance was up 21% compared to this time last year. He also reported that last year the Library launched a *Threadless* site where staff could purchase Cook Memorial Public Library District apparel and that it has been very popular. Because patrons have asked about branded apparel for years, the shop was opened this month to the public and offers a variety of apparel for all ages with the CMPLD logo and the Check Out Your Happy logo. Mr. Archer noted that items are sold at cost and the Library does not make a profit. It's simply a goodwill offering and a fun way to share the Library brand with the community.

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. Dobbs, Ms. Singer, Ms. Palic, Ms. Michaluk, Ms. Lawton, and Ms. Josephsen. Nays; none. Motion carries.

Report of the President: Ms. Ader announced that she would like to reschedule the August meeting to either August 11 or August 25. After discussing, the trustees agreed on August 25.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND REPRESENTATIVES

Finance & Employee Practices: Ms. Dobbs reported that James Rachlin from Meristem Advisors attended their committee meeting on February 3 to present his long-term financial projections for the Library noting that a copy of the presentation was included in the Board Packet for discussion only as no action is required. She continued by saying that Meristem's findings show that the Library is on solid financial footing with a stable trajectory but that looking ahead, the Board will need to find ways to increase fund balances and capital reserves. She noted that the committee will begin that process at their first budget meeting in March, after which the financial projections can be reviewed again and updated.

Policy Review:

Approval of Resolution 2025-2026/5 Adopting the Revised Drug-Free Workplace Policy: Ms. Michaluk explained that when this policy was last presented to the Board in December, a concern was raised regarding language in Article VII, Section 3 which resulted in the board not approving the policy until the issue was clarified by legal counsel. The version being presented tonight includes revised language, drafted by legal counsel, that addresses the concern previously raised by the Board and which the committee is recommending for approval via Resolution 2025-2026/5. Ms. Michaluk then made a motion, seconded by Ms. Palic to approve Resolution 2025-2026/5 adopting the revised Drug-Free Workplace Policy. Roll call was as follows: Ayes; Ms. Ader, Ms. Dobbs, Ms. Singer, Ms. Palic, Ms. Michaluk, Ms. Lawton, and Ms. Josephsen. Nays; none. Motion carries.

Building and Grounds: No report.

Technology: No report. The committee will be meeting in March.

Resources, Services and Long Range Planning: Ms. Ader announced that at the committee's upcoming meeting on February 24, the Executive Director of Cooperative Computer Services (CCS) will provide an overview of the consortium and how the Library might benefit from joining. She encouraged trustees to attend at least this portion of the meeting if possible.

Friends' Representative: Ms. Dobbs reported that the Friends' spring book sale will be on 4/11 and 4/12 and that one of their goals is to move out a lot of the overflow inventory. She also reported that they might be looking for a new secretary as the current one is moving away.

RAILS Representative: No report.

Historical Society Representative: No report.

Other Business: Mr. Archer reported that two resolutions are being presented tonight for approval that place the Board in a better position to evaluate the feasibility of adding solar panels to selected roof areas at both library locations in time to take advantage of federal incentives, noting that both resolutions have been reviewed by legal counsel.

Resolution 2025-2026/6 Authorizing Participation in the Interlocal Purchasing System: Mr. Archer explained that this resolution seeks approval to formally ratify the Library's participation in the Interlocal Purchasing System (TIPS), a national cooperative purchasing program. He explained further that TIPS provides access to competitively procured contracts that can streamline purchasing processes and reduce administrative and bidding costs. He announced that he has already submitted the application and executed the membership agreement in order to evaluate the program's potential benefits to the Library noting that approval of the resolution simply formalizes that action. The trustees briefly discussed it and made one change, after which Ms. Ader made a motion, seconded by Ms. Michaluk to approve Resolution 2025-2026/6 authorizing participation in the Interlocal Purchasing System (TIPS) as amended. Roll call was as follows: Ayes; Ms. Ader, Ms. Dobbs, Ms. Singer, Ms. Palic, Ms. Michaluk, Ms. Lawton, and Ms. Josephsen. Nays; none. Motion carries.

Resolution 2025-2026/7 Authorizing Library Director to Solicit Proposals for the Purchase and Installation of Solar Panels: Mr. Archer explained that this resolution authorizes the solicitation of proposals for the purchase and installation of solar panels at each location, as informally directed by Trustees at the January 20, 2026 Board meeting. He explained further that given the limited window to take advantage of available federal incentives, this resolution requires at least three proposals from vendors affiliated with TIPS. He noted that this approach was approved by the Library's legal counsel. Ms. Ader then made a motion, seconded by Ms. Singer to approve Resolution 2025-2026/7 authorizing the Library Director to solicit proposals for the purchase and installation of solar panels. Roll call was as follows: Ayes; Ms. Ader, Ms. Dobbs, Ms. Singer, Ms. Palic, Ms. Michaluk, and Ms. Lawton. Nays; Ms. Josephsen. Motion carries.

Communications: Ms. Dobbs reported that she spoke to several people at her Talk With the Trust shift at Cook Park who had questions about reel-to-reel conversion, the Library's AI policy, the seed catalog and the use of Narcan in the Library. She also reported that one patron mentioned that she had checked out a Maker Kit for her nephews but returned it right away because they weren't interested in it. The patron noted that if she had known what was in the Maker Kit, she would have been able to determine if it was something her nephews would have liked before checking it out. Ms. Dobbs suggested that samples of Maker Kits be made available so patrons can see what is in them and asked Mr. Archer to explore that.

Ms. Singer reported that she only spoke with a few people during her Talk With the Trustee Shift at Aspen Drive but that all of the comments were positive.

Public questions: None.

Adjourn to Closed Session: At 7:23 p.m., Ms. Ader made a motion, seconded by Ms. Dobbs to go into closed session as permitted by 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) to discuss the performance of a specific employee. Roll call was as follows: Ayes; Ms. Ader, Ms. Dobbs, Ms. Singer, Ms. Palic, Ms. Michaluk, Ms. Lawton, and Ms. Josephsen. Nays; none. Motion carries.

Resume Open Session: The open session resumed at 7:27 p.m.

Adjournment: Ms. Ader made a motion, seconded by Ms. Dobbs to adjourn the meeting. Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:28 p.m. Roll call was as follows: Ayes; Ms. Ader, Ms. Dobbs, Ms. Singer, Ms. Palic, Ms. Michaluk, Ms. Lawton, and Ms. Josephsen. Nays; none. Motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,

Sara Lawton, Secretary

Deb Ader, President