

**La Porte County Public Library  
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, February 19, 2026**

**Call to Order**

Secretary Nicole Florek called the meeting to order at 5:31 PM.

**Roll Call**

**In Attendance:** Nicole Florek, Bonnie Snider, Tucker King, Jamie Novak

**Absent:** Dara Jeffries, Gina Alber, Elizabeth Weisemann

**Public Forum**

No comments were made by the public.

**Consent Agenda**

- a. Minutes of January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026 Board of Trustees Meeting
- b. Minutes of January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026 Board of Finance Meeting
- c. Financial Report
- d. Statistics Report

Motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Bonnie Snider and seconded by Tucker King. Motion carried.

**Reports**

**Managers Reports**

Toni Kester Bulger working with Cardinal Point to update monthly staff statistics. We have upgraded to use Power BI and are in the implementation stage. Circulation and school data will be implemented next. We will continue to automate more of the data and eventually sharing with schools and community partners. There are lots of long-term capabilities.

Holly Trott shared updates on open-access. It is going really well. Rolling Prairie is up 7% since open access. It is also being utilized at Coolspring and Union Mills.

Dania Bocanegra mentioned more early and later requests for meeting room access. An example was this morning when NW Indiana Biz Hub came at 8:00 which included people from Porter and Lake County.

De Burke and Aimee Meier gave highlights from their monthly reports. De highlighted work on job descriptions and Aimee highlighted KnowBe4 updates and improvement in Phishing campaign and ongoing training implementation.

**Director Report**

Director Fonda Owens shared the following updates:

- With resignation of Ann Shaffer, Accounting Professional, there has been focus on taking over her responsibilities. Will need to find new point people for the Accounting Software implementation. The Library will be hiring a new person for this position to help maintain internal controls and risk management. With cross-training that has been done, the library is able to cover in the short term.
- Delivery of new furniture will be coming in a few weeks and some in the summer.
- Work is continuing on shade structure in Wi-Fi Garden to finish up stone work and gutters.
- Legislative update on SB 8, bill that impacts libraries, includes language that County Council can zero out budgets. ILF wants limitations put on how much they can reduce the budget. Contact local legislators to advocate for putting protectors in place.
- Dania Bocanegra attended Summer Learning Conference in place of the Director. There is a pilot with Boys and Girls Club providing learning during the summer and wanted to see how they are modeling this. Lilly Foundation gave money to support some of this in Indiana. The La Porte County Public Library is looking to partner with Boys and Girls Club and La Porte School Corporation because Boys and Girls Club are at schools during the summer but the libraries are closed at these locations. Fonda and Toni will be meeting with La Porte School Corporation to map out and discuss cost sharing for staff members, with the Public Library staff being more engaged in running the school libraries during the summer.

#### **Legal Counsel**

No report from Attorney Novak.

#### **Unfinished Business**

No unfinished business.

#### **New Business**

#### **Election of Treasurer**

Fonda Owen, Director, recommended Toni Kester Bulger, COO, be elected as temporary Treasurer by the Board of Trustees. Ann Shaffer previously held this position.

Motion to approve was made by Bonnie Snider and seconded by Jamie Novak. Motion carried.

#### **AI Policy**

With AI all around us, there is a need for a staff policy. Director Owens recommended the following policy be adopted by the Board of Trustees.

#### **LPCPL Use of Artificial Intelligence Technologies Policy**

All artificial intelligence technologies used by the La Porte County Public Library (LPCPL) are used transparently, ethically, effectively, and accountably; in alignment with our vision, values, purpose; and in compliance with legal requirements.

## **Purpose**

For the purposes of this policy, “Generative AI Programs and Systems” refer to any software or platform that employs computer-based intelligence to create new content – such as text, images, audio, video, or code – by utilizing advanced machine learning models trained on existing data.

These systems encompass both standalone interfaces, like ChatGPT, which directly interact with underlying Large Language Models (LLMs), and traditional software applications enhanced with generative AI capabilities through APIs or other integrations like Microsoft CoPilot.

## **Definitions**

**Artificial Intelligence (AI):** Any simulation of human intelligence that (1) is used to perform tasks; (2) can create novel intellectual property (IP); and (3) iteratively improves based on experience and learning.

**AI Technology:** Any software, algorithm, or application that incorporates AI strategies and techniques including, but not limited to, machine learning, natural language processing, language modeling, generative predictive text, and robotics.

**AI-produced Intellectual Property (AIIP):** Any substantially unedited text or images produced by an AI technology such as text from a generative predictive text system or an image produced by a generative graphics program. Substantially unedited means less than 25% of the text or area of an image are edited prior to publication or presentation to customers.

**Generative prompt:** The text submitted to an AI technology which becomes the goal, target, question, or requested output when creating AIIP.

**Transparent use:** Customers and staff are informed when they are presented with AIIP so that they can apply appropriate evaluation skills in its use.

**Ethical use:** AI technologies are used in a manner that respects equity, reliability of information, and transparency in LPCPL governance and operations.

**Effective use:** AI technologies are used to empower customers, improve workflow efficiencies, and increase the quality of IP produced for LPCPL use.

**Accountable use:** AI technologies are used in ways that respect customer privacy, are properly vetted for accuracy, and comply with applicable laws and regulations.

**Direct use:** Involves actively engaging with generative AI tools, such as using Microsoft CoPilot to generate responses or create content.

**Indirect use:** Refers to traditional software applications, like word processors or spreadsheets, that incorporate AI-powered features to augment their functionality.

This policy applies to both direct and indirect use of Generative AI Programs and Systems by La Porte County Public Library (LPCPL) Team Members. It establishes guidelines for responsible use, including approved tools, appropriate use cases, and restrictions on data sharing to ensure security, privacy, and alignment with LPCPL's mission and values.

Given the rapidly evolving nature of AI technology, this policy section is expected to undergo frequent updates.

All employees are responsible for staying informed about changes to this section to ensure continued compliance. Beyond annual updates made to this policy directly, interim updates may be formally provided via email or via training sessions.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all LPCPL Team Members, contractors, consultants, temporary workers, and personnel affiliated with third parties. It governs the use of Generative AI Programs and Systems on LPCPL-owned or leased devices, networks, and cloud platforms.

### **Policy and Procedures**

#### **Direct Use of Generative AI – Ethical Considerations**

AIIP is extremely useful as first drafts or starting points for informational text and illustrations.

Limitations in AI technologies require staff to carefully review AIIP and edit appropriately to ensure it meets ethical and equity expectations:

It is not permitted to use substantially unedited AIIP in any LPCPL policy, procedure, or report.

After more than 25% of an AIIP items is edited, it is credited in its entirety to the human author of the final, published or presented IP.

AI technologies are used in a way that supports equity and avoids biases. Staff using AI technologies are individually responsible for identifying and mitigating potential biases in AIIP.

### **Indirect Use of Generative AI**

The use of traditional software with generative AI integrations (e.g., word processors or project management tools) is currently allowed only in the use case of Microsoft CoPilot in accordance with this policy. No other indirect use of generative AI is permitted.

#### **Generative AI Use Cases**

The following use cases are classified as approved or prohibited for LPCPL staff:

##### **Approved Use Cases:**

Text Generation: Writing articles, reports, summaries, or creating supplemental content.

Image Generation: Creating realistic or artistic images.

Video and Audio Creation: Producing videos, animations, or synthesizing voiceovers.

Design and Prototyping: Assisting in graphic design or generating service prototypes.  
Research: Gathering, analyzing, and synthesizing information about a topic. This includes querying AI systems to generate summaries, identify key insights, or compile relevant data based on existing knowledge and datasets.

**Prohibited Use Cases:**

Prohibited use cases are restricted due to risks including data exposure, regulatory violations, or activities outside of LPCPL's operational scope.

Code Generation: Writing or assisting in software development.

Healthcare: Generating synthetic medical data or aiding in medical research.

Research Using Personally Identifiable Information (PII): Discovering or processing personal information.

**Acceptable Use Guidelines for Generative AI**

LPCPL Team Members must adhere to the following acceptable use guidelines when engaging with Generative AI systems directly or indirectly:

**Data Restrictions:**

All prompts must be generic and avoid including confidential or proprietary LPCPL data or client information.

Do not input any sensitive or personally identifiable information (PII), such as:

Names

Email addresses

Physical addresses

Social Security numbers

Bank account numbers

Credit Card details

**Content Appropriateness:**

Priming inputs must not contain any vulgar, discriminatory, offensive, or unethical content

Generated outputs must not include discriminatory, offensive, or unethical content

Generated outputs must not include discriminatory, offensive, or unethical content.

Content must align with LPCPL's mission and values.

**Tool Usage:**

Use only approved Generative AI tools and adhere to designated use cases.

Report any issues or errors with the tools to LPCPL's IT Team and Leadership Team.

**Privacy and Security:**

Do not store sensitive data in third-party AI platforms.

Ensure AI-generated outputs do not expose LPCPL's proprietary or confidential information.

#### Compliance with Legal and Ethical Standards:

All Generative AI output must be human-reviewed and subjected to other LPCPL policies and procedures for privacy and acceptable use of technology.

Avoid using Generative AI systems in ways that do or could violate intellectual property laws. Do not rely on Generative AI outputs for decision-making without human review.

#### Addressing Bias in AI Generated Content

AI-generated content must always undergo thorough human review to ensure accuracy, fairness, and alignment with LPCPL's mission and values. While AI tools offer significant utility, they may also introduce bias, inaccuracies, or inappropriate content, including errors or material derived from copyrighted works or the intellectual property of others. Additionally, due to the inherent nature of their design, AI systems may "hallucinate" by generating content or information that appears plausible but is fabricated, inaccurate, or not grounded in their training data. To address these risks, LPCPL employees are responsible for critically evaluating and verifying AI-generated content before incorporating it into their work. Employees must remain vigilant to avoid perpetuating bias, ethical violations, or inaccuracies, and ensure that any content incorporated into a piece of work is compliant with the LPCPL's policies and standards.

#### Accountability Considerations

It is not permitted to use personally identifiable information for AI technology datasets or generative prompts.

All AIIP is reviewed for appropriateness of tone and language and fact checked to ensure accuracy of information:

Staff are individually responsible for reviewing, fact-checking, and quality control of AIIP the use in their workflows.

It is not a defense in disciplinary actions to assert an AI technology has responsibility for errors in AIIP.

AI Technologies used by LPCPL comply with all applicable local, state, and national laws and regulations and are regularly reviewed to ensure ongoing compliance with legal and ethical standards.

Staff using AI technologies receive initial and ongoing training to understand the ethical and practical aspects of AI technologies, as well as best practices and emerging trends.

#### Consequences of Policy Violations

Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

Motion to approve the AI Policy was made by Bonnie Snider and seconded Jamie Novak. Motion carried.

#### **Bad Debt Policy**

As a governmental unit, LPCPL is required to report money owed to the Library as an asset. Director Owens recommended the following policy be adopted to establish guidelines for reporting and managing debt reporting.

**La Porte County Public Library Bad Debt Policy**

This policy outlines the La Porte County Public Library’s (“LPCPL”) procedure for writing off bad debt and uncollectible accounts owed to LPCPL.

The Library Director may consider certain uncollected fees from inactive accounts as Bad Debt, provided the LPCPL has made a reasonable collection effort to date. After considering something a Bad Debt, these inactive accounts will be permanently purged from LPCPL’s integrated library system (“ILS”).

Bad Debt shall mean a debt that is five (5) or more years old and, in the Library Director’s reasonable discretion, is uncollectible. Certain instances where a fee may become a Bad Debt include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- 1. The Passage of five years since the fee was charged
- 2. A Customer’s location is unknown
- 3. A Customer has passed away
- 4. A Customer files bankruptcy (provided the LPCPL receives paperwork verifying this)

If the Library Director has cause to believe that something is a Bad Debt, the Library Director may purge records related to the same prior to the end of that five (5) year period, due to operational needs.

DULY affirmed by the Board of Trustees of the La Porte County Public Library at its regular meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> day of February 2026 at which meeting a quorum was present.

Motion to approve the Bad Debt Policy was made by Jamie Novak and seconded Bonnie Snider. Motion carried.

**Horizon Bank Organizational Resolution**

Resolution that is required to change information on account, and this is needed to remove Ann Shaffer. For legal purposes it needs to be adopted by Board. This reflects what was in the Investment Policy.

Name of Organization: La Porte County Public Library State of Organization: Indiana

The Undersigned certifies that the Secretary of the Organization named above (the “Organization”), whose name appears beneath the Secretary’s Certification (below), has been duly elected to and now holds that office and that the signature appearing opposite his or her name is his or her true signature.

Fonda Owens

\_\_\_\_\_ 2/19/2026

Print Name of President/CEO Signature of President/CEO

Dated



1 bind the Organization/Entity to any contract, arrangement or transaction, which shall be entered into by any Authorized Person with or through HPWM,  
1, 2 make payments related to the Account by checks and/or drafts drawn upon the funds of the Organization/Entity,  
1, 2 deliver money or securities or accept delivery of money or securities,  
1 endorse any securities in order to pass ownership thereof or for any other purpose,  
1 direct the sale or exercise of any rights with respect to securities therein,  
1 sign releases and powers of attorney and enter into contracts and agreements, including, but not limited to an HPWM investment management account agreement or cash management account agreement and documentation relating to any online services, electronic funds transfers and other services that may be offered in connection with the Account, as such documents may be modified from time to time, and any documentation permitted or contemplated by such agreements, products and services, and to affix the corporate seal to same,  
1 direct HPWM to surrender securities to the proper agent or party for the purpose of effecting any exchange or conversion, or otherwise,  
1,2 take any and all action in connection with the Account deemed necessary or desirable by any Authorized Person.

THIRD, that any Authorized Person may appoint any person(s) ("Designated Person") to 1) conduct trading in the Account, 2) endorse any securities, or to make, execute and deliver, under the corporate seal of the Organization or otherwise, any instrument of assignment and/or transfer necessary or proper to pass title to such securities, or 3) provide instructions to effect electronic fund transfers.

FOURTH, that each Authorized Person is empowered and authorized to do all things each deems necessary or desirable to implement the foregoing resolutions.

FIFTH, that Horizon Private Wealth Management may deal with any and all of the persons directly or indirectly empowered by the foregoing resolutions as though they are dealing with the Organization directly. The organization does hereby waive and release Horizon Private Wealth Management from any and all liability where it has acted in good faith with respect to this resolution.

SIXTH, that the Secretary of the Organization is hereby authorized and empowered to certify to Horizon Private Wealth Management, under the seal of the Organization or otherwise:

- (a) a true, correct and complete copy of these resolutions;
- (b) specimen signatures of each Authorized Person and each Designated Person empowered by the resolutions, if so requested by Horizon Private Wealth Management;
- (c) a certificate (which, if required by Horizon Private Wealth Management, shall be supported by an opinion of the general counsel of the Organization, or other counsel satisfactory to Horizon Private Wealth Management) that the Organization is duly organized and in good

standing, that the corporate charter authorizes the action or business described in these resolutions, and that no provision in the charter, by-laws, or other governing document of the Organization limits the power of the Board of Directors to pass these resolutions.

SEVENTH, that the fact that any person hereby empowered ceases to be an officer of the Organization or becomes an officer under another title, shall not affect the powers hereby conferred. In the event of any change in the office or powers of persons hereby empowered, the Secretary shall certify such changes to Horizon Private Wealth Management in writing, addressed to the branch or other representative office through which the Account is opened. Such notification, when received, shall terminate the powers theretofore authorized, and empower the persons thereby substituted.

EIGHTH, that Horizon Private Wealth Management may rely upon any certification furnished to Horizon Private Wealth Management in accordance with these resolutions and that the foregoing resolutions and the certificates furnished to Horizon Private Wealth Management are in full force and effect and irrevocable until receipt by Horizon Private Wealth Management of written notice of revocation or modification by the Organization, addressed to the branch or other representative office through which the Account is opened. This dispatch or receipt of any other form of notice shall not constitute a waiver of this provision.

Motion to adopt Horizon Bank Resolution was made by Jamie Novak and seconded Bonnie Snider. Motion carried.

**Approval and Payment of Claims – APV Batch Thursday, February 19th, 2026**

Motion to approve the payment of claims was made by Tucker King and seconded Bonnie Snider. Motion carried.

**Questions or Comments from the Public**

No questions or comments were made.

**Questions or Comments from the Board**

No questions or comments were made.

**Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn was made by Tucker King and seconded by Jamie Novak. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:34 PM.