

La Porte County Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Thursday, October 23, 2025

904 Indiana Avenue, La Porte, IN 46350

In attendance: Dara Jeffries, Board President, Bonnie Snider, Tucker King, Jamie Novak, Nicole Florek, Secretary, and Gina Alber

Absent: Amy Jackson

Others in attendance:

Anthony Novak, Legal Counsel,

Fonda Owens, Director

Ann Shaffer, Treasurer

Call to Order

President Dara Jeffries called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

Public Forum

No comments were made by the public.

Consent Agenda

1. Minutes of September 18, 2025 Public Hearing on the 2026 Proposed Budget
2. Minutes of September 18, 2025 Board of Trustees Meeting
3. Financial Reports
4. Statistics Reports

Motion to approve consent agenda was made by Gina Alber and seconded by Nicole Florek. Motion carried.

Reports

Manager Reports

Toni Kester Bulger, Dania Bocanegra and Aimee Meyer presented highlights from their monthly reports.

Director Report

Director Fonda Owens shared the following updates:

- Great News! The Library will receive a \$10,000 grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The grant can be used to celebrate America 250 activities or to benefit the library and the community it serves.
- National Friends of the Libraries week is October 19 to 25, 2025, and both local and national businesses are showing their support. The Friends have been awarded a grant from Comcast to support the TechPack program. The Free and Accepted Freemasons Excelsior Lodge #41 from La Porte selected the Friends as the beneficiary of their second annual 1920's Gala fundraising event. Proceeds from this event will support the Library's afterschool snack program.
- The NILBA event was well received, and this year's guest speaker delivered an impactful presentation with valuable insight to share.
- Spoke with several legislators from the regional regarding the impact of SB1 tax reforms.
- The steel for the shade structure roof has arrived and is currently being installed. The contractor anticipates completing the project soon.

- Draft of the Strategic Plan has been completed and will be presented later in the meeting.
- The final draft of the comprehensive financial plan from Baker Tilly has been received. The results will be presented at the November Board meeting.
- Attended the combined meeting of the Springfield, Center and New Durham Township Boards. It was a lively meeting, with many attendees expressing frustration over the lack of notification regarding the proposed township mergers. No vote on the mergers was taken at this meeting.
- Attended the SBOA exit conference for the 2023-2024 audit period. No unfavorable findings or remarks were noted in the audit report.

Legal Counsel

Attorney Novak noted that it is time for the Director's review and suggested implementing a new process. Director Owens would provide a list 2025 projects and proposed impactful goals for 2026 for the Board review. These items will be discussed during an Executive Session meeting to be held prior to either the November or December 2025 Board meetings.

Unfinish Business

Review of Board of Trustees Bylaws

A motion was made by Tucker King and seconded by Bonnie Snider to reaffirm the Bylaws of the Board of Trustees of the La Porte County Public Library. Motion carried.

Strategic Plan 2025-2029

Director Owens presented the Strategic Plan for 2025-2029 to the board. The Mission and Vision Statements have been revised to emphasize the library impact on individuals and its role in fostering community connections through curiosity, tools and shared history. The plan provides staff with clear guidance to align their work with specific goals, measurable impact and prioritized projects. Director Owens requested that the Board review the plan and submit any comments prior to the next meeting.

A motion was made by Nicole Florek and seconded by Tucker King to table a vote on the Strategic Plan 2025-2029. Motion carried.

New Business

Request to Create Non-resident Fee for the LPCPL Exchange

Director Owens requested fees be established for the Exchange to help offset the operating cost based on Library's service district. Membership fees will not be required for residents and property owners in the Library's service district. Membership fees would go into effect on January 1, 2026.

	Annual Fee - Individual	Annual Fee – Family (same household)
La Porte County Residents/Property Owners --- Outside the LPCPL District	\$35.00/year	\$75.00/year
Indiana Residents/Property Owners— Outside of La Porte County	\$50.00/year	\$125.00/year
Nonresidents or Property Owners--- Outside of Indiana	\$75.00/year	\$200.00/year

A motion was made by Tucker King and seconded by Nicole Florek to approve the LPCPL Exchange fee structure as presented. Motion carried.

Request to Create New Account Types

Recommendation to create the following account types for borrowers outside the Library's services district.

- Local Reciprocal-All Access,
- Local Reciprocal-Limited Access
- State Reciprocal-All Access
- State Reciprocal-Limited Access.

Creating these account types will provide more accurate data on library usage by residents both within and outside the Library's district.

A motion was made by Tucker King and seconded by Jamie Novak to create reciprocal account types as presented. Motion carried.

Request for Revisions to Policy on Electronic Transfer Payments

The updated resolution now includes language regarding the receipt and distribution of electronic payments. A motion was made by Nicole Florek and seconded by Gina Alber to approve the updated Resolution Authorizing Electronic Funds Transfers. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFER

(Including Payroll and PERF)

WHEREAS, the Board of the La Porte County Public Library ("Library") has determined that it is beneficial to its financial operations to transact the financial affairs of the Library through electronic funds transfers including direct deposit.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that pursuant to the provisions of I.C. 5-13-5-5, the Library will institute electronic fund transfers for the transaction of business with a financial institution or a retirement fund administered by the public employees' retirement fund, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that pursuant to the provisions of IC 36-12-3-16.5, the Library will institute electronic fund transfers for the payment of claims, including the payment of wages and other compensation and benefits owed to the Library employees, via direct deposit through the services provided by the applicable financial institutions, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that pursuant to the provisions of IC 36-1-8-11, the library may accept various payments electronically as well, including but not limited to payments for fines and fees and tax disbursements, to the extent that such payments can be documented properly for audit purposes, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Library Treasurer is hereby authorized to take any and all actions necessary to implement and accept electronic fund transfers, including direct deposit, for the Library, and that the Library Director and Treasurer are hereby instructed and are required to comply with all other requirements for the payment of claims by the library and must maintain

adequate documentation of transactions conducted electronically so that said transactions may be audited as provided by law.

DULY ADOPTED by the Board of Trustees of the La Porte County Public Library at its regular meeting held on the 23rd day of October, 2025, at which meeting a quorum was present.

Request to Create a Clearing Account for Electronic

That Indiana State Board of Accounts has provided more detailed guidance on how governmental units make electronically transact payments to vendors. It is recommended to establish an EFT clearing account mitigate risk of exposing the Library's banking information. This account would maintain a limited balance sufficient only to cover EFT transactions.

A motion was made by Nicole Florek and seconded by Jamie Novak to approve an EFT clearing account to be established at Centier Bank as presented. Motion carried.

Notice of Sale

With the purchase of the two new Subaru's for Library use, the 2015 Chevy Sonic and Dodge Caravan will be sold. Sealed bids will be accepted prior to the November 20, 2025 board meeting and opened during the meeting.

A motion was made by Bonnie Snider and seconded by Tucker King approving the sale of the 2015 Chevy Sonic and Dodge Caravan. Motion carried.

Proposed Wages and Salaries 2026

This year's recommendation is to take a more conservative approach for wages and salaries and keeping the current wage levels in place for 2026. The recommendation for 2026 is two parts. First part is to increase across the board wages and salaries by 2% for employees hired prior to 7/1/2025 who have successfully completed their probationary period of employment. The second part is that bonuses may be paid to staff hired prior to 7/1/2025 who have successfully completed their probationary period for employment. Bonus amounts will not exceed 2% of an eligible staff member's 2025 wage or salary. An evaluation of available funds for the bonus recommendation will be conducted no later than October 31, 2026. The final determination for the payment of any bonus will be based, in part, on availability of funds and shall be approved by the La Porte County Public Library Board of Trustees.

A motion was made by Bonnie Snider and seconded by Tucker King to approve the recommendation for wage and salary ranges and increases for 2026. Motion carried.

Approval and Payment of Claims – APV Batch October 23, 2025

A motion to approve the payment of claims made by Nicole Florek and seconded by 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 made by Gina Alber and seconded by Nicole Florek. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:58 PM.