

## **La Porte County Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, November 20, 2025

904 Indiana Avenue, La Porte, IN 46350

**In Attendance:** Amy Jackson, Board Vice President, Jamie Novak, Nicole Florek, Bonnie Snider, Tucker King

**Absent:** Dara Jeffries, Board President, Gina Alber

### **Call to Order**

Vice President Amy Jackson called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

### **Public Forum**

No comments were made by the public.

### **Consent Agenda**

1. Minutes of October 23rd 2025 Budget Adoption Meeting
2. Minutes of October 23rd 2025 Board of Trustees Meeting
3. Minutes of November 3, 2025 Strategic Plan Workshop Meeting
4. Financial Report
5. Statistics Reports

Motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Nicole Florek and seconded by Tucker King. Motion carried.

### **Reports**

#### **Manager Reports**

Toni Kester Bulger and Holly Trott presented highlights from their monthly reports.

#### **Director Report**

Director Fonda Owens shared the following updates:

- She attended the Indiana Library Federation Annual Conference with Toni Kester Bulger and Dania Bocanegra – all presented as well. Cassie Yeater and Elizabeth Adams presented and demonstrated makerspace equipment available at the LPCPL Exchange. The LPCPL team presented on the LPCPL Exchange. Director Owens presented with the Indiana State Library on library mergers.
- Director Owens shared the slides from Baker Tilley's ILF presentation on Libraries and SEA 1. These slides explained the budget timeline according to current legislation as it

stands. The current automatic share of Local Income Tax (LIT) will be eliminated in 2027 and LPCPL will have to approach County Council to request portion of LIT. Any given unit type is limited to 0.05% - unit type not unit – could mean all 5 libraries in the county are limited to 0.05% of LIT. There is no chance LPCPL will come close to receiving the same LIT amount we are currently.

### **Financial Analysis from BakerTilly**

Director Owens gave some highlights of the report. LPCPL's debt rating was downgraded by Standard and Poor's because of uncertainty in economic outlook in our community as well as a lack of a financial plan that met their requirements. The current budget has remained high to fund projects using cash reserves and to spend down cash reserves. LPCPL will need to start aligning expenditures closer to the revenue. She has asked BakerTilly to be at the December Board meeting.

### **Capital Improvements Assessment**

Plan for capital projects will be mapped out and will focus on the projects we know really need to be completed, like updating the Building Management System software to a cloud-based version. Other priorities include replacing worn furniture at the Main Library and planning for lighting and HVAC updates at all locations.

### **Legal Counsel**

No report from Attorney Novak.

### **Unfinished Business**

#### **Notice of Sale—Used Vehicles---Opening of Bids**

- Bid 1 for the Chevy Sonic by Ringwood Motors, Ringwood IL – \$1,080.
- Bid 2 for the Dodge Caravan Minivan by Ringwood Motors, Ringwood IL - \$1,280
- Bid 3 for the Dodge Caravan Minivan by Mike Pavey – \$1,650
- Bid 4 for the Chevy Sonic by Mike Pavey – \$1,250
- Bid 5 for the Chevy Sonic by Patrick Andrews – \$2,600
- Bid 6 for the Dodge Caravan Minivan by Dan Hunter – \$2,502
- Bid 7 for the Chevy Sonic by Curtis Szczeniak – \$1,250
- Bid 8 for the Dodge Caravan Minivan by Curtis Szczeniak - \$4,550

The winning bid for the Chevy Sonic is \$2,600 made by Patrick Andrews. The winning bid for the Dodge Caravan Minivan is \$4,550 made by Curtis Szczeniak.

## **Strategic Plan 2025-2029**

A strategic plan workshop meeting was held at the LPCPL Exchange with consultant Trudy Menke on November 3, 2025. At this meeting, Ms. Menke shared an overview of the software that will be used to track plan objectives. Director Owens pointed out that only a few words had been changed in the final draft being presented for approval. The changes were made because the language was duplicative. There was no substantive changes made. A motion was made by Nicole Florek and seconded by Tucker King to approve the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan as presented. Motion carried.

## **New Business**

### **Request to Create Cash Drawers**

Assistant Director Kester Bulger requested a second drawer be added in the Computer Lounge at the Main Library and at the LPCPL Exchange. She also requested an old petty cash drawer kept in the Business Office be closed. She also requested an increase to the Computer Lounge drawer cash base from \$45.00 to \$100.00. Making these changes allows the library to remove the kiosk pay stations for prints/copies at the Main Library to reduce payment processing products and reduce payment processing fees/costs systemwide.

A motion was made by Nicole Florek and seconded by Tucker King to approve the request to create cash drawers. Motion carried.

### **Request for 2026 Holiday Schedule**

Director Owens shared this request does not include a close day for a 2026 Staff In-Service Day. That request will be made at a later date. This request rescinds the Floating Holiday Policy and includes two additional holidays, Good Friday and the Day after Thanksgiving. There will be no increase in holidays or Paid Time Off as a result of this request.

### **2026 Holiday Schedule**

New Year's Day	Thursday, January 1
President's Day	Monday, February 16
Good Friday	Friday, April 3
Memorial Day	Monday, May 25
Independence Day	Saturday, July 4
Labor Day	Monday, September 7
Thanksgiving Day	Thursday, November 26
Day after Thanksgiving	Friday, November 27
Christmas Eve	Thursday, December 24
Christmas Day	Friday, December 25
New Year's Day 2027	Friday, January 1

## **Early Closing 2026**

Thanksgiving Eve                      Wednesday, November 25  
New Year's Eve                         Thursday, December 31

Close Main, Exchange and Coolspring locations at 6:00 PM. Staff do not receive holiday pay for this day. Schedules are adjusted to allow staff to work their full hours for the week.

## **Closing for Staff In-Service Day**

To be determined for 2026. A separate request will be made to the LPCPL Board of Trustees at a future date.

## **Floating Holidays**

Per the Floating Holiday Policy holiday pay eligible employees receive two floating holidays per year in addition to LPCPL's regular paid holidays. These two floating holidays may be used only for religious or cultural holidays, employee birthdays, or other state or federal holidays during which the Library remains open.

If the LPCPL Board of Trustees approves the holiday closings as recommended, the Floating Holiday Policy will need to be rescinded.

A motion was made by Tucker King and seconded by Jamie Novak to approve the 2026 Holiday Schedule and to rescind the Floating Holiday Policy. Motion carried.

## **Request to add Unplanned Closing Policy**

Director Owens is requesting this policy be adopted to formalize the decision-making process already being used by the organization when the need to unexpectedly close a location arises.

A motion was made by Nicole Florek and seconded by Tucker King to approve the unplanned closing policy. Motion carried.

## **LPCPL Unplanned Closings Policy**

In order to fulfill LPCPL's mission of public service, the La Porte County Public Library will make every responsible effort to open to the public as scheduled, consistent with safe access for the public and staff.

The policy below outlines how decisions are made to close LPCPL locations due to inclement weather and other emergency situations. Be aware that closings may not apply to all locations of LPCPL due to the large geographic area of La Porte County and the proximity to Lake Michigan. These factors cause weather conditions vary greatly from north to south.

1. The decision to close, open late, or close early due to inclement weather will be made by the Director. If the Director is unreachable, the decision will be made by the Assistant Director or Managers.
2. The Indiana Department of Homeland Security's Travel Advisory Map will guide this decision. If La Porte County is marked "red," the highest level of travel advisory, the Library will be closed. The exception to this is when the updated status of the map lags behind roads being open and passable for travel.
3. If La Porte County is marked "orange," the second-highest level of travel advisory, the decision will be left to the discretion of the Director, or if the Director is unreachable, Assistant Director or Managers.
4. The Library may close due to other emergency conditions such as loss of power, problems with heating and/or air-conditioning, bomb threat, loss of water, wind advisories, catastrophic emergencies or natural disasters.
5. LPCPL does not follow school closings or other local governmental units closing decisions.
6. An internet outage does not constitute a reason to close on its own.
7. Decisions about closing will be communicated to the public as follows:
  - a. Posted on closing lists for local media stations
  - b. On the library's website
  - c. On the library's voicemail
  - d. Posts on LPCPL social media
8. Decisions about closing will be communicated to staff via methods outlined in the Internal Communications Channel guide.
9. It is important to be aware that staff do not rely on social media or the Indiana Department of Homeland Security's Travel Map Status for closing information. Staff will hear directly from Administration and/or supervisors about closings.
10. Other policies may apply. (i.e. PTO, attendance, scheduling) Please refer to those for more information.

#### **Approval and Payment of Claims---APV Batch November 20, 2025**

A motion to approve the payment of claims was made by Nicole Florek and seconded by Tucker King. 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 Nicole Florek. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:55 PM.