



**MINUTES
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
ST. CHARLES PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT
MAY 28, 2026**

The Committee of the Whole Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the St. Charles Public Library District was held Thursday, May 28, 2026, at the Library. Present: President Mary Kruse, Vice President/Secretary Bonnie J. Dauer (arrived 6:15 pm), Treasurer Michael J. Hill, Trustees Allison Lanthrum (arrived 6:13 pm), Barbara Diepenbrock, and Jane Shelton, Director Kate Buckson, and Executive Administrative Assistant Virginia Tsipas. Absent: Trustee Claudia Frost.

Library staff present: Mary Merritt, Junior Renteria.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Kruse called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

II. ROLL CALL, RECORDING TRUSTEES PRESENT AND ABSENT

Trustee Kruse confirmed there was a quorum present through roll call.

III. TRUSTEE TRAINING

Director Kate Buckson reviewed the Trustee Budget Training that was sent with the packet.

IV. DISCUSSION

• **FINANCE**

○ **Annual Budget Presentation**

Finance Manager Mary Merritt presented the 2026/2027 budget proposal. Tax dollars are always levied two years in advance and for fiscal year 2026/2027, tax dollars were levied in November 2025. The Library levied over \$10 million and received just under that amount.

Anticipated income includes tax dollars, interest income, lost materials, non-resident fees, copies, room rentals, and revenue recapture. In addition, income is received from Friends of the Library and the St. Charles Public Library Foundation. This is the final year for the St. Mark's construction repayment. No TIF revenue is expected this fiscal year.

Ms. Merritt discussed expenses for all seven funds. She budgets conservatively and is working to reduce surpluses in all funds.

For Library Materials, popularity drives the budget and collection development librarians review those statistics. New collections are considered, and in fiscal year 2025/2026, a vinyl collection was added. Staff are working to increase access to Hoopla throughout the day.

The Personnel budget has increased the most. There was a 5% salary increase for Union members and there are currently some positions to be filled. Health insurance increases range from 16% to 27%. GLP1s are driving up health care costs. We are working with the insurance company to hopefully reduce those costs.

Professional Development reimbursements have increased with rising mileage costs and investing in more staff to attend seminars and training.

Programs and Supplies have a new line item for STC Creative. We are asking for more programming funds from the Foundation and Friends.

We are budgeting out of special reserve for ADA improvements, roof repairs, Carnegie foyer refresh, and the sensory garden. The DCEO grant for the sensory garden will be reimbursed to us, but we are required to spend the dollars first. We are budgeting \$25,000 from the Library budget to go with the DCEO grant, and there may be additional funds from the Foundation and possibly more grants. We hope to find out about additional grants in June.

A balanced budget is anticipated, and we are proposing to hold \$100,000 from the Operating Fund at the end of the current fiscal year, so there will not be a need to cut funds next year.

We have always had a surplus each year to transfer to the Special Reserve Fund, and these dollars are restricted to spending on capital improvements. After the transfer of surplus funds for this fiscal year, the Special Reserve Fund will be approximately \$2.5 million.

For the Building and Maintenance Fund, we will have an uptick in maintenance and repairs as we are five years post construction. This fund includes utilities and there have been increases in water costs. Ms. Merritt has doubled the water budget for anticipated increases. We propose to transfer \$19,070.97 from the Operating Fund for Liability to the Building and Maintenance Fund. This is due to a mistake by the DuPage County Clerk's office transposing monies for these two funds.

For the IMRF/FICA Fund, salaries increased substantially. However, our IMRF employer rate is expected to go down from 11.35% to 10.28%.

This is the second year where interest earned in the Gift and Special Trustee Fund stays in the fund. These are non-taxpayer dollars used for board development and staff recognition.

Trustees were encouraged to email Ms. Merritt before the June Board meeting with any questions regarding the budget.

- **Review of Tentative Budget & Appropriation Ordinance**

The Tentative Budget & Appropriation Ordinance will be approved in June. It corresponds to the supporting documents provided in the Board packet. We plan an \$11.7 million budget across all funds. Appropriated funds are more than budgeted funds, and this is necessary in case there is a need to reallocate dollars from one fund to another. We will never go over budgeted dollars. We appropriate for the authority to spend.

- **Review of Building and Maintenance Tax of .02% Ordinance**

The Building and Maintenance Tax of .02% Ordinance is presented in July for Board approval. This ordinance allows for the Library to levy this tax in November. If registered voters want to petition the adoption of this ordinance, it must be submitted to the electors of the District. The required number of voters needed is determined by the counties and available in November. The process for this petition is stated in the ordinance. We would lose \$350,000 to fund our building maintenance if we did not file for this tax. We are very fiscally responsible with the budget and work so that we do not need to go back to the public for referendum.

- **FACILITIES**

- **Walk through: Outdoor Improvements**

Ms. Buckson and Facilities and Security Manager Junior Renteria provided an update of the parking lot project. During their walk through with the architects and general contractor on May 27, 2026, they discovered that much of the sealing was not completed properly. The paving and restriping

subcontractor made significant errors. The veining on the pavement is not acceptable, and sewage drains and manholes were sealed over. The responsibility of this work is entirely on the general contractor, Schroeder Asphalt Services, Inc.

The architects are working on a list of what needs to be fixed. The work will be prioritized to be completed as soon as possible. The Library will not close for this work. A Summer Reading kick off party will be held on June 6, 2026, and some of the activities will be held in the parking lot.

The engineers measured the slopes and inspected the concrete to be sure all were ADA compliant. There are small corrections to be made and those will be addressed.

Mr. Renteria will reach out to the City so they can inspect the drains, as there is dried asphalt inside the drains. Mr. Renteria will retain the video footage for the dates of May 22 through May 25, 2026, the duration of when this work was performed. The architects advised that payment to the general contractor be withheld until the work is redone.

No patron complaints were received due to the closing of the Library on May 24, 2026. Early notifications were provided with signs on the entrance doors, information on the website, and social media posts.

There will be a bid opening on Tuesday, June 2, 2026, for the roofing project.

- **POLICIES**

- **Outstanding Check**

This is a new policy to create a process dealing with checks that have been outstanding for more than six months. About 90% of outstanding checks are for patron reimbursements, for lost items or cancellations of meeting room rentals. The remainder of outstanding checks are for staff reimbursement, mostly for mileage. The Library's accountants have reviewed this policy. There will be a statement on all future checks stating to cash the check within 180 days.

After six months, the payee will be notified by U.S. Mail that they have 30 days to cash the check or request a reissuance if the check is lost. If outstanding checks are not cashed after this notification time period, the Library will work with the State for unclaimed property. This process will remove outstanding checks from the Library's system.

- **Purchasing and Disposal**

No recommendations at this time for revisions to this policy. This is aligned with Illinois law regarding how the Library spends money and compliance in disposing of unwanted items.

- **Fixed Asset Capitalization**

No recommendations at this time for revisions to this policy. This was reviewed by Lauterbach & Amen. This relates to property owned by the Library that decreases in value over time.

- **Patron Conduct**

Ms. Buckson discussed this policy with the management team, and it was discussed during listening sessions with staff. The most important matter of patron conduct is the emotional toll patron abuse takes on staff. This type of behavior will not be tolerated towards staff. A suggestion is to have signage posted, making patrons aware of this matter. Ms. Buckson will ask Communications & Marketing staff to create appropriate signage for service desks, asking patrons to be kind to staff.

Inappropriate attire by patrons is addressed if it causes disruption with other patrons. No footwear is the biggest problem. Managers in Charge or Security will approach the patron to ask that they adhere to the policy for appropriate attire.

If patrons are sleeping and are not causing a disruption, staff do not wake them.

There is signage on the door to The Loft, stating that the space is for teens only. IDs are checked for teens to enter that space.

The last paragraph heading should be titled "Compliance". Any ideas for the title change for this policy should be shared with Ms. Buckson.

o **Notary**

During the listening sessions, Circulation staff discussed the challenges to find an available notary for patrons who walk in without an appointment. There are eight Library notaries; however, they may be busy with meetings, programs and projects and not available even if they are scheduled to work. Circulation Specialist Taylor O'Neill suggested a notary extension that rings to all notaries' phones at once. This suggestion was implemented and has helped. Notary transactions have been tracked for the last year and a half and one out of four transactions is provided for people outside the Library district. Revisions to the policy were sent to the Library attorney for review. Patrons are encouraged to make an appointment online, but there are still those who walk in. A suggestion was made that Communico offers a module for scheduling appointments. The Executive Administrative Assistant and Human Resources Administrative Assistant positions are required to be notaries. All other Library notaries are volunteers. Notaries are not paid for this service. If Trustees have further suggestions for this policy, they should contact Ms. Buckson prior to the June Board meeting.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Trustee Hill, second by Trustee Dauer, to adjourn at 8:10 pm. Carried unanimously.



Bonnie J. Dauer
Secretary, Board of Trustees