

RIVER FOREST PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Meeting Minutes: Regular Board Meeting: January 20, 6PM

Call to Order: At 6:02 pm, President Delano called the Regular Meeting of the River Forest Public Library Board of Trustees to order. The roll was taken:

- Trustees Present: Scott Delano, Ann Berens, Elan Long, Simon Saddleton, Katie O'Neill, Nathan Root. Lindsay McIntyre was absent.
- Also Present: Emily Compton (RFPL Director), Shannon Duffy (RFPL Assistant Director)

Visitors and Guests: none

Visitor Comments: n/a

Consent Agenda:

- a. Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting: November 18, 2025
- b. November 2025 Revenue and Expense Reports
- c. November 2025 Bill Payment List and Credit Card Charges
- d. November 30, 2025 Fund Balances Report and Capital Reserve Fund
- e. December 2025 Revenue and Expense Reports
- f. December 2025 Bill Payment List and Credit Card Charges
- g. December 31, 2025 Fund Balances Report and Capital Reserve Fund

Trustee Berens moved to approve Consent Agenda items a-g, and Trustee O'Neill seconded the motion. Discussion included a credit card finance charge and the RFPL staff holiday party. Director Compton stated that the staff party was a success, but planning for it will start earlier next year. The motion passed on a roll call vote.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Berens, Delano, Long, O'Neill, Root, Saddleton

Patron Suggestions:

Director Compton reported several suggestions from patrons including covering the fireplace when not in use to keep out the cold, placing chairs outside of the Barbara Hall Meeting Room for patrons waiting to enter, and putting holiday closure notifications in a more visible place. There were also requests to add more wonder books, graphic novels, and board games for teens to the collection to make the entire library pink.

Director's Report:

In addition to her written report, Director Compton discussed:

- The Library had its first workshop with Engberg-Anderson (EA) for the space needs assessment. There was a morning session with the facilities committee and management and an afternoon session with management only. Hot topics

included the need for private space and lighting issues. The next workshop will be on January 28th.

- There will be two events to celebrate the opening of the new community room: a sneak peek for donors on January 30th and a ribbon cutting for the public on January 31st.
- The Library has not received any funds from property taxes since October. Director Compton explained that Cook County began sending money to corporate authorities only, which meant that village libraries were not receiving money yet. She added that funds should begin coming in during January.

President's Report:

President Delano noted that he and Director Compton were keeping a close eye on the Library's liquidity given the long delay in receiving property tax revenue. He thanked the Facilities committee members for their attendance in the space needs assessment workshops. He noted that the space needs assessment will go hand in hand with the facilities assessment to inform the Library on where to spend funds in the future.

New Business

Committee Reports

Facilities Committee

The Facilities Committee started the space needs assessment process with EA. They attended the first of three scheduled workshops with the fourth to be scheduled later. The punch list for the room renovation project was completed on January 16th. The project is nearly done. Furniture will arrive on January 29th.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee will meet on February 5th to go over first draft of the budget for fiscal year 2026-27.

Policy Committee

The Policy Committee met on January 13th and proposed Board approval of two policies.

Oversight II. Fiscal Accountability policy update – vote

The financial limits outlined in the Fiscal Accountability policy have not been updated in many years. Since the cost of goods and services has increased, Director Compton requested that financial limits be raised in order for the library to address issues more efficiently. She polled over 50 Illinois libraries and the majority of them allowed their directors to use funds that were accounted for in the approved budget.

Staff XII. Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use policy adoption – vote

Director Compton was advised by the Library's IT company, HR consultant, and various library associations to create a policy regarding AI use. The staff discussed the topic at the last in-service day. The consensus was that staff should be aware of AI but cautious in how they use it due to AI's environmental impact, copyright violations, and privacy issues. The policy acknowledges the risks and provides guidelines for staff on how to use library-approved AI tools. The Board concluded that the proposed policy is a good start and the policy will need to be reviewed and updated as the AI environment and library staff and patron AI usage change.

Trustee Delano moved to approve both the Fiscal Accountability and Generative AI policies. Trustee Saddleton seconded the motion, which passed on a roll call vote.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: O'Neill, Root, Saddleton, Berens, Delano, Long

RFPL Foundation Liaison

Trustee Berens reported that the Foundation has its annual meeting on January 27th. They will elect new officers and adopt goals for the upcoming year. On January 30th, the Foundation will host an event for donors to see the newly renovated space before it's open to the public. 200 constituents donated a combined \$230,000 to the project. All 200 donors are invited to the event.

Village of River Forest Collaboration Committee Liaison

The Committee met on December 11th. The Park District has adopted use of a consent agenda at Board meetings. The Township has appointed Mark Hosty as the new clerk and is looking to fill a trustee vacancy. They had a levy hearing and approved a 2.9% increase. The Civic Center Authority remains committed to working with the Community Center on a lease. At OPRFHS, Project Two is on schedule and budget. Project Three may require a referendum in order to build the performing arts space. District 90 had a proposed agreement with the teachers' union that was not ratified by the teachers. The district is searching for a new superintendent since Ed Condon is retiring. The Committee will meet again on February 25th.

Reschedule March 17, 2026 Regular Board meeting due to Public Act 104-0438

A 2026 update to the Open Meetings Act states that a public meeting cannot be held on an election day, so the March Regular Board meeting will be rescheduled for Monday, March 16th at 6:00 PM.

Plan to transfer funds from Capital to Operating if Operating Fund falls below \$150,000 - vote

Director Compton stated that there is currently \$1,124,652 in the Library's capital fund and \$198,455 in the operating fund. Money should start coming in, but if the operating funds drops below one month's operating expenses, Director Compton

would transfer \$150,000 from capital to operating. The money would be transferred back to the capital fund once revenue comes in.

Trustee Saddleton moved to permit Director Compton to transfer one month's worth of operating funds from capital to operating in the event that the existing operating balance falls below one month's expenses with an equivalent transfer back to capital once the operating fund exceeds \$300,000. Trustee Berens seconded the motion, which passed on a roll call vote.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Root, Saddleton, Berens, Delano, Long, O'Neill

Old Business

Air handler unit condensation issue - update

Work on the drain has begun. Director Compton is corresponding with Williams Architects and IMEG regarding sharing the cost. IMEG is consulting with their insurance company.

Garden sign replacement - update

Director Compton approved the proposal from Vital Signs, which came in at just under \$18,000. Ms. Duffy will coordinate with Vital Signs and Hulen Landscaping for installation, which will most likely need to wait until spring when the ground has thawed.

Phase two (Community Room, Children's office space, bathroom) renovation project – update

Midwest Services & Development pay application (\$137,277) – vote

LFI Children's Room shelving quote (\$4,624) – vote

The construction wall is still up in the Children's Room. Shelving needs to be moved back before the wall can come down and that should happen in the next week. The Library will receive change orders for moving the shelving and replacing the threshold of the emergency exit in the Children's Room staff workspace.

Trustee Delano moved to approve Midwest Services and Development's pay application in the amount of \$137,277 and LFI's shelving quote in the amount of \$4,624. The motion was seconded by Trustee O'Neill and passed on a roll call vote.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Delano, Long, O'Neill, Root, Saddleton, Berens

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:16pm following a motion by Trustee Saddleton which was seconded by Trustee Root. All approved, and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Elan Long, Secretary