

Lake Forest Library Board of Trustees

360 E. Deerpath Road, Lake Forest, IL, 60045

Tuesday, June 17, 2025

Regular Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

President Clifton welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order on June 17, 2025 at 6:31 pm in the Kasian Room, at Lake Forest Library.

ROLL CALL

Trustees present: President Jim Clifton, Vice President JoAnn Desmond, Trustee Josh Jackson, Trustee Garth Pearson, Trustee Robert Shaw, Trustee Vince Sparrow, Trustee Heather Strong (via video), Trustee Emily Van Bel. A quorum was present.

Library Staff present: Ishwar Laxminarayan, Executive Director, Heidi Krueger, Assistant Director, Jim Lee, Facilities Manager, Kate Buckardt, Adult Services Manager, Joy Schmoll Communications Manager, Lorie Rohrer, Youth Services Manager and Leo Hamza ,Business Manager.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

President Clifton welcomed everyone and thanked all trustees, staff and committees for their support over the past two years during his presidential term. He wished incoming President Jackson success. Trustees Johnson, Desmond and Jackson all expressed gratitude for President Clifton's leadership.

CALL FOR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Local resident Mary Sanders, a neighbor of the library introduced herself.

Trustee Shaw reported success of "Meet the Fleet" event highlighting the library presence.

Trustee Johnson shared updates from Senator Morrison's meeting with library directors. Trustee Johnson praised Ishwar for his leadership. The main topics discussed at that meeting were concerns over library security, the high cost of eBooks and an increased interest from state representatives wanting to provide support and collaboration with their libraries.

CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

Director Laxminarayan highlighted ongoing positive community feedback including one patron's comment that the library "is like Cheers without the beer." Director Laxminarayan noted the heightened discussion of censorship challenges both locally and nationally and the stress such censorship pressures have placed on his staff.

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Trustee Sparrow and seconded by Trustee Shaw. The vote was approved unanimously by all trustees in attendance.

BUILDING COMMITTEE

Exterior Courtyard Rehabilitation- Phase I

Trustee Van Bel reported on approval from the Historic Preservation Committee to move forward with plans for the courtyards rehabilitation project. Trustee Van Bel thanked all fellow trustees who attended the Historic Preservation meeting. Trustee Van Bel also reported that construction documents have been issued for bidding. A contractor walkthrough was held June 3rd, with bids due June 23rd. There is a target construction start date in July or early August. Trustee Van Bel reminded the trustees that this phase covers the architectural hardscape only. Gardens in Progress will present the landscape design plan to the Board later this summer with Landscape bidding to occur over winter followed by planting and furniture installation planned for Spring 2026.

1931 Historic Room Revitalization

The contract with Vinci Hamp is still being reviewed. Programming discussions between Vinci Hamp and Staff will be scheduled for mid-July as well as a planned meet and greet with Vinci Hamp with trustees of the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation and Library Board on Monday August 18th.

Landscape Master Plan

Trustee Van Bel noted that the Building Committee will be meeting with the Garden Club to discuss landscape design for the front lawn and surrounding areas.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Monthly Financial Reports

Trustee Sparrow presented a new way to report the monthly financial reports. The new formatting allows for a more dynamic and better comparison reporting layout. Trustee Shaw inquired about salaries and wages, wanting to confirm that only one pay period was thus far included. There was discussion around this with trustee Sparrow mentioning that the way city reports in conjunction with Library Board meetings may not always line up, but over time will straighten out.

Director Laxminarayan did discuss an appropriations attachment noting the 10% contingency added, which was allotted to the operations budget. Trustee Desmond inquired if this was an additional levy or part of the library's existing tax levy. After further discussion, several trustees requested clarity on funding source and process around this.

Illinois Public Library Annual Report (IPLAR)

Director Laxminarayan highlighted the report and that total annual attendance visits are up this year from last. He also noted that children's circulation is up. Media lab tutorials and school outreach have increased. Overall, all metrics yielded a positive result.

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OPERATIONS REPORT

Director Laxminarayan noted strong collaborations with fellow community partners. He also noted that "Exam Escape" was again successful drawing over 800 students over the week. A new program, "100 Books Before Graduation" was launched with its first graduate recognized. As Director Laxminarayan had highlighted in the IPLAR report, he also noted in his operations report that metrics are up across the board with staff working on usage trend reports.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

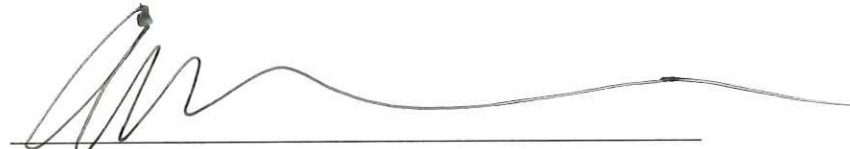
None.

NEW BUSINESS

President Clifton noted that he and Trustee Jackson will swap roles. President Clifton will now be a part of Long-Range Planning committee. Trustee Van Bel mentioned that a special Building Committee meeting will be planned for some time in August to provide an update on the Courtyards project.

Meeting adjourned at 7:46 pm.

Next Scheduled Meeting: Special Board Meeting, Tuesday, July 1, 2025 at 5.00 pm.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emily Van Bel', is written over a horizontal line.

Emily Van Bel, Secretary

Submitted for approval by the Board on August 19, 2025