

Lake Forest Library Board of Trustees
360 E. Deerpath Road, Lake Forest, IL, 60045

Tuesday, December 16, 2025
Regular Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

President Jackson welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order on December 16, 2025 at 6:31 pm in the Kasian Room, at Lake Forest Library.

ROLL CALL

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

Library Staff present: Ishwar Laxminarayan - Executive Director, Heidi Krueger – Assistant Director, Kate Buckardt - Adult Services Manager, Joy Schmoll - Communications Manager, Jim Lee - Building Superintendent, Leo Hamza - Business Manager and John Lacson - Media Lab Specialist.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

President Jackson welcomed everyone and noted that there is much to look forward to in the coming months, as well as a great deal already accomplished.

TRUSTEE COMMENTS

Trustee Johnson reported attending the Legislative Breakfast with Director Laxminarayan and observed strong participation from libraries statewide. He noted the positive recognition of library staff across institutions.

- The breakfast was sponsored by the Illinois Library Association (ILA) and focused on equitable access to information, particularly e-books and digital media.
- Concerns were raised regarding increasing costs and publisher restrictions.
- Illinois recently passed the License to Read Act, allowing librarians to negotiate pricing directly with publishers.
- Inflation and rising operational costs were also discussed.
- Continuing education opportunities for library trustees were highlighted.

CALL FOR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

None.

CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

Director Laxminarayan reviewed several patron comments including feedback regarding the use of wireless hotspots. Trustee Strong raised concerns about non-resident patrons from other communities using library facilities. Ms. Kruger clarified that access to the Media Lab and take-

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out technology requires a valid library card. Mr. Laxminarayan emphasized that libraries are founded on collaboration and that use by out-of-town residents can be viewed as a measure of success and strong programming. A brief discussion followed. The library's attorney has confirmed that the status of the Library in terms of deductibility of charitable contributions is similar to the status of a 501(c)(3) organization.

CONSENT AGENDA

The Omnibus Consent Agenda was presented. Trustee Clifton raised questions regarding discrepancies in operating expense figures within the finance report. Trustee Sparrow made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Trustee Desmond seconded the motion.

The following voted "Aye": Trustees Clifton, Desmond, Jackson, Johnson, Pearson, Shaw, Sparrow, Strong and Van Bel. The following voted "Nay": none. 9-Ayes, 0-Nays, motion carried.

BUILDING COMMITTEE

Exterior Courtyard Rehabilitation- Phase I

Trustee Strong provided a construction update citing that construction remains delayed due to weather however, there is still a target reopening date of May 1, weather permitting. Courtyard furniture is scheduled to be ordered next month to ensure timely delivery for opening.

1931 Historic Rooms Revitalization

The Building Committee has since met again with Vinci Hamp (VH) and reviewed further development of custom furniture and color selections. A more detailed cost estimate is expected by next month with intent of holding a follow-up public meeting, anticipated in early February.

WJE Initial Structural Review for Centennial Projects Phase 3

Trustee Jackson emphasized the importance of the site and civil study for Phase 3 projects. Trustee Strong noted the need to plan for Phase 3 so the feasibility study allows for future expansion. It was discussed that the lack of a complete, consolidated set of building drawings—particularly structural drawings—makes planning difficult. Trustee Shaw asked whether the City might have archived drawings. While none have been located to date, WJE will continue to search. Trustee Desmond moved to approve the initial structural review proposal in the amount of \$49,000.00 and to authorize the Executive Director to sign. The motion was seconded by Trustee Johnson.

The following voted "Aye": Trustees Clifton, Desmond, Jackson, Johnson, Pearson, Shaw, Sparrow, Strong and Van Bel. The following voted "Nay": none. 9-Ayes, 0-Nays, motion carried.

New Boiler

Mr. Lee reported that replacement equipment has been secured and installation is pending a break in weather.

Library Calendar for 2026

Director Laxminarayan reviewed changes to the 2026 library calendar. Trustee Shaw made a motion to approve the 2026 calendar as presented. Trustee Desmond seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

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Trustees Meeting Calendar for 2026

Director Laxminarayan reviewed the 2026 Board of Trustees meeting calendar. Meetings will continue to be held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month. Trustee Shaw made a motion to approve the 2026 trustee meeting calendar as presented. Trustee Desmond seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

OPERATIONS REPORT

Director Laxminarayan noted positive feedback for the Media Lab Team. 386 children have joined the *1,000 Books Before Kindergarten* program. Upcoming events include Exam Escape Week.

Trustee Clifton asked about identifying the “sweet spot” between offering more programs versus fewer, more impactful programs. A brief discussion followed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

Meeting adjourned at 7:21 pm.

Next Scheduled Meeting: Regular Board Meeting, Tuesday, January 20th, 2026 at 6:30 pm.



Emily Van Bel, Secretary
Submitted for approval by the Board on January 20, 2026