MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES
PEORIA PUBLIC LIBRARY
September 16, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

Board President Ruth Bittner called the meeting of the Board of Library Trustees of Peoria Public Library to order at 5:30 pm. This Regular meeting was held in the Lower Level 2 Conference Room at the Main Library, 107 NE Monroe St., Peoria, Illinois.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Board Members Present: Ruth Bittner, Cecilia Buckner, Margaret Cousin, Kevin Kinne, Roberta Parks, Jacob Roberts, and Barbara Van Auken

Board Members Absent: Scot Driscoll, Steven Marx

Library Staff Present: Emily Byron, Circulation Manager; Carolyn Conklin, Reference Assistant; Jennifer Davis, Marketing Manager; Veronica De Fazio, Deputy Director; Pat England, Library Assistant; Elise Hearn, Programming Manager; Jennifer Jacobsen-Wood, Technical Services Manager; Jay Johnston, Reference Assistant; Karla Wilkinson, Programming Librarian; and Randall Yelverton, Executive Director

CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence was received in the past month.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

CONSENT AGENDA

A. #2025-96: Request to Approve Minutes as listed below:
   1. Minutes of the Regular Board meeting of August 19, 2025
   2. Minutes of the Executive Session meeting of August 19, 2025

B. #2025-97: Request to Approve Expenditures as listed below:

1.	Payroll for Period Ending August 16, 2025	$149,233.72
2.	Payroll for Period Ending August 30, 2025	$149,778.64
3.	Regular Expenditures for September 2025	$205,845.39
4.	Capital Development Fund for September 2025	$ 19,374.26

C. #2025-98: Request of the Executive Director to Approve Personnel Actions for the period ending September 12, 2025

D. #2025-99: Request of the Executive Director to Receive and File Finance Reports for the month of August 2025

E. #2025-100: Request of the Executive Director to Receive and File Library Use Statistics for the month of August 2025

A motion was made by Barbara Van Auken, seconded by Margaret Cousin to approve Consent Agenda items #2025-96 through #2025-100. Motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS

A. #2025-101 Purchase tablets for Board

A motion was made by Barbara Van Auken, seconded by Margaret Cousin to approve the purchase of up to five Amazon Fires to be used by the Board during meetings in order to access meeting documents.

Several Trustees stated that they would use their own devices. Hard copies of the packet will continue to be printed for any Trustee who wishes to use them during the meeting.

The motion passed unanimously.

B. #2025-102 Board name badges

A motion was made by Barbara Van Auken, seconded by Kevin Kinne to provide each Trustee with a name badge with access to staff areas.

Aye – Bittner, Buckner, Cousin, Kinne, Roberts, Van Auken
Nay – Parks

C. #2025-103 Board of Trustee meeting locations, times, livestreaming/recording

A motion was made by Roberta Parks, seconded by Jacob Roberts to livestream Regular meetings of the Board of Trustees beginning in October 2025.

The discussion of meeting locations and times was moved under the Executive Director's report.

Motion passed unanimously.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A. Lakeview Update

The Lakeview Branch was closed because of a water main break in the area, which affected the Park District as well. Yelverton reviewed the contract language and how it was applied in order to determine closing Lakeview and staff working in other locations.

B. Contract Negotiations
Contract negotiations begin on September 19. Yelverton will schedule a Personnel and Negotiations Committee meeting to discuss the process and potential approaches to negotiating the contract.

C. Library Use of a Collection Agency
This item was discussed under Other Business.

D. Website Corrections and Additions
Yelverton worked with Jennifer Davis to ensure that those pages on the website with Board meeting dates and minutes are up-to-date.

E. Partnership with the American Heart Association
The Library will offer easy-to-use blood pressure monitors at all locations as part of a new partnership with the American Heart Association. These units offer spoken instruction and walk users through the process of using the monitor. This is a program the AHA has offered through other libraries, and the Library is happy to be a part of this ongoing effort.

F. Strategic Planning Update
The Strategic Planning process continues. Members of the staff and Board committee will be speaking at the upcoming Staff Day. The final document will be presented at the October Board meeting. In November, the Management Team will discuss implementation of the items in the final Plan.

G. Presentation to the Peoria City Council
Yelverton and Elise Hearn addressed the City Council at the September 9 meeting, thanking the Mayor and Council for their ongoing support, as well as sharing information about "Peoria Reads!" and other upcoming programs. The City had a proclamation recognizing the "Peoria Reads!" program.

H. Fine Free Fare Free program
As part of the above presentation, Yelverton discussed the Library's "Fine Free Fare Free" program. The Library is working again with CityLink to offer free rides throughout the month of September for those who have PPL cards. September is National Library Card Sign Up Month, and this Fare Free program offers a great incentive to get residents to sign up for library cards. This program, which the Library has been conducting for several years now, has been replicated by the Bloomington and Normal libraries.

I. Youth Collection Development Librarian
Yelverton and Sarah Couri, the Collection Manager, have been interviewing candidates for a Youth Collection Development Librarian. This person would be responsible for purchasing children's and young adult materials. Given the materials budget and circulation, adding an additional selector to the department who will be able to focus on these particular materials will be very beneficial.

J. **Increase in Library revenue for 2026**
The City reported that there has been growth in Equalized Assess Value (EAV) for Peoria. This increase of approximately 6.65% will mean increased revenue for Peoria Public Library in 2026.

K. **Meeting dates and locations**
Yelverton and Bittner reported that the remaining meetings for 2025 will remain at Main Library, with the intention of holding two meetings at other branches in 2026.

The discussion regarding what time the Regular Board of Trustee meetings are held was tabled until the November meeting. At that time, Yelverton will present a proposal to the Board as part of the annual meeting dates approval process.

L. **Door Count and Circulation Statistics**
The visitor total for August 2025 was down 1.45% from August 2024. The circulation total for the same period was down 2.66%.

STAFF REPORTS

A. **PROGRAMMING REPORT**
Elise Hearn spoke about the "Peoria Reads!" events.

B. **COMMUNITY RELATIONS REPORT**
Veronica De Fazio highlighted some of the events in the report.

REPORT OF THE LIBRARY BOARD LIAISON TO THE FRIENDS OF THE PEORIA PUBLIC LIBRARY
Friends of the Library President, Margaret Cousin, reported on donations for the Peoria Journal Star digitization project. Yelverton will attend the October Friends meeting to provide additional information on the project.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Building Committee – No Report
B. Executive Committee – No Report
C. Finance Committee – No Report
D. Nominating/Appeals Committee – No Report
E. Personnel/Negotiations Committee – A meeting will be set following the first negotiations meeting
F. **Strategic Planning Committee**
Parks, Marx, and Yelverton met with the consultant from Fast Forward Libraries to discuss staff buy-in. As a result, a presentation on the strategic plan will be made during the Staff Day on October 13.

OTHER BUSINESS
Yelverton reviewed the Library's use of a collection agency. This procedure is less necessary now that the Library is fine free, and costs the Library more money than it brings in. Trustees expressed interest in a policy that would address not charging for items lost in extenuating circumstances such as fires or

floods. The topic of eliminating the use of a collection agency will be brought to the October Board meeting as an Action Item.

EXECUTIVE SESSION
None

AGENDA BUILDING

ADJOURNMENT
The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 pm

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Roberta Parks, Secretary
Board of Library Trustees
Peoria Public Library