

2024 EPL Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes
Monday, February 10, 2025
6:00pm, Central Branch

Attendees:

Trustees Present

Debbie Kroupa	Maggie Leglise	Koneake Lawrence	Scott Serazin
Patricia Schrull	Rhonda Smith	Ray Armstrong	Sam Battle

Trustees Absent

Jessica Schneider

Staff:

Macy Southard	Frank Szuch	Tanya White	Kathy Runser
Jennifer Harmon	Debby Perkins		

Visitors:

Wendi Zwaduk Kathleen Pero

The Board met at the Central Branch Library. Debbie Kroupa called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm. Debbie welcomed all Attendees.

Public Comments:

Kathleen Pero, intervention specialist at Eastern Heights, shared that she will be hosting an Art Gallery on March 11 from 6-7pm at the Central Rotary Room. This Art Gallery will feature her students' work as well as help the curriculum as she teaches them through community outreach. This event is open to the public and will have light refreshments. Kathleen thanks EPL for allowing her students to use this space.

Consent Agenda Items:

- a. Approval of January 2025 monthly meeting minutes
- b. Personnel Actions:
Resignations:
Robin Cooper - Librarian, Bookmobile
- c. Memorials & Contributions:

Friends of EPL Keystone	\$50.00	In memory of Raymond Dill
Gary & Mary Siwierka	\$35.00	In memory of Alton McNeal
Elyria 95 Book Club	\$350.00	
Sam Ristas	\$100.00	
Unknown	\$29.37	
- d. **Board Acknowledgement:**
Public Notice of West River HVAC Replacement Project Bid – Posted to The Chronicle Telegram on 2/7.

Patricia Schrull moved to approve the Consent Agenda Items. Rhonda Smith seconded the motion. The Board approved the Consent Agenda Items. (**Resolution 17.25**)

Fiscal Officer's Report:
Financial Update:

- Operating expenses exceeded revenue in the month of January by \$264,000. This is mainly due to 3 pays in the month. A comparison to January 2024 is provided.
- In the month of January, the Fiscal Office issued 180 purchase orders: encumbering \$1.8m.
- W-2s were distributed to employees in January
- 1099s were filed electronically with the financial software system.
- The 2024 Hinkle report was filed with the State Auditor.

State Budget News: Governor DeWine released his state budget proposal during a press conference on February 3rd. His administration remains committed to supporting the libraries in the state. DeWine's proposal includes increasing the Public Library Funding from 1.7% of the General Fund Revenue to 1.75%. Additionally, DeWine is anticipating growth in State tax revenues averaging 3%-4% each year.

Interest Rates:

The current interest rate on EPL's investments at Star Ohio is 4.5%. This is down a whole percent point from last year. In 2025, there is \$525,000 in interest earnings budgeted in the General Fund; \$770,000 across all investments. In January, the Federal Reserve paused interest rate cuts that began in September 2024. Any significant rate cuts would have a negative impact on the 2025 budget.

Real estate tax: Auditors office said that our increased estimate is \$13,000 and the first payment is in March. Update to come.

E-Rate: Funding requests for discounted internet services at 4 branches have been submitted. EPL will receive discounted invoices starting in July 2025. The discount rate is 80% and will save the library approximately \$20,000 over a 12-month period. A new E-Rate program is starting in 2025 for hotspot devices. EPL is working with OPLIN to apply for this funding as well.

Ray Armstrong motioned to approve the Fiscal Officer's Report. Scott Serazin seconded the motion. The Board approved the Fiscal Officer's Report. (**Resolution 18.25**)

Director's Report:

Facilities updates

Electric Vehicle charging station – First Energy installed new power pole with higher capacity at WR to meet the demands of the fast-charging EV charging station

Central Library – Testing out a new Welcome station desk as a greeter station to create a welcoming environment and making staff more available

HVAC Issues – Central and South experienced low temperatures on the coldest days, both issues required servicing.

Operations updates

Board of Elections – Lorain County BOE has requested for Central Library to be used as a future polling location, for two precincts to start in the May Election. This is in addition to the WR polling location

Scholastic Games –Lorain County high school team quiz competitions - EPL has long been a partner of the Scholastic Games (over 10 years).

Tax preparation – United Way Tax free tax preparation assistance has started at West River. Last year the appointments at West River brought significant tax refunds back to the community.

Facilities and Safety Training - Staff trainings on building-specific safety procedures and handling emergencies to begin Feb 2025. Each location will have a 1 hour delayed opening (10am instead of 9am) so that as many staff as possible may attend this important safety training. These delayed openings will be announced to the public and posted on the doors with advance notice. This was prompted by a power outage at West River and the recognition that there are new staff that need to learn how to handle emergency situations, fire drills etc.

Lorain County libraries collaborations - Legislator meetings, management training, Lorain County “one book” collaboration.

- The managers’ retreat with Lorain Public Library managers was great. A lot of takeaways and collaboration during and after speaker, Betsy Lentz’s presentation. We are looking forward to collaborating with Lorain again.
- A Lorain/Huron county Legislators meeting took place at the Herrick Library with a group of Lorain County library directors gathered to hear from state representatives: Joe miller, Gayle Manning, and Kelly Deeter. More in the President’s report.
- Community foundation to bring in an author for an annual event, details to come!

Events

Trustee Workshop - OLC Library Trustee Workshop will be presented in two parts. Part One will be held on Sat., March 8, from 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. in person at the OLC office in Dublin or online.

Legislative Day - April 8 Library leaders meeting in Columbus organized by OLC

National Library Week Apr 6-12

National Library Workers’ Day April 8

Guest speakers

EPL Branding and Identity project, co-presentation by Jen Harmon and Jen Starkey. The new brand guidelines and logo were presented, and it was determined by the Board that it was necessary to create a resolution for the March meeting.

Koneake Lawrence motioned to approve the Director’s Report. Patricia Schroll seconded the motion. The Board approved the Director’s Report. (**Resolution 19.25**)

Presidents report:

Ray Dill passed away in mid-January. He was a longtime member of the community and a loved member of the friends group. See his obituary here:

<https://www.tributearchive.com/obituaries/34561852/raymond-lee-dill>

Legislator Meeting: It was nice to see and understand this group of Lorain County library directors. They are very well connected and work together collaboratively. Joe miller, Gayle Manning, Kelly Deeter, and Michelle & Jay from OLC were all there to express the needs for libraries. They are all very knowledgeable about all things dealing with libraries and know the importance of the state and county wide issues. There was a strong representation for libraries, with similar views and understanding of the impact of the lack of libraries in schools, need for libraries in the community, and homeschooling issues.

OLC Update: The House Bill 257 was passed allowing boards to hold virtual meetings. OLC will provide more information, and we will look for recommendation from them to help construct language for the new bylaws. Revision of the by-laws will take place soon with a committee. The virtual meetings law will go into effect in April.

ADHOC committee for board recruitment: Volunteers are needed to create a plan and execute the process to have the two (almost vacant) positions full. Jessica Schneider, Scott Serazin, and Patricia Schrull volunteered to be on the board recruitment ADHOC committee.

Maggie Leglise motioned to approve the President's Report. Ray Armstrong seconded the motion. The Board approved the President's Report. (**Resolution 20.25**)

Committee Reports:

Elyria Friends: All the 2024 books are cleared out, and the Friends have donated the leftovers to Kids Book Bank in Cleveland and Better World books. The Friends have cleaned out the sorting room and emptied the shelves, they are still going through the Jane Lovell donation. They have started the annual membership drive. Lastly, they donated to EPL: \$8,000 towards summer reading and \$900 towards WR gardening supplies.

Keystone Friends: The Keystone Friends received over \$600 of donations in memory of Ray Dill. They are currently looking into a different sorting procedure. The Friends are also hoping for a float in the parade for the LaGrange bicentennial (150 village, 200 township) to bring awareness.

Finance and Audit: The committee met last week; Maggie Leglise is going to be the Chair. The committee set the 2025 meeting dates and reviewed credit card statements for the fourth quarter. Annual salary data was shared with the Committee.

Ray Armstrong motioned to approve the Committee Reports. Koneake Lawrence seconded the motion. The Board approved the Committee Reports. (**Resolution 21.25**)

Old business:

West River HVAC Project: The Public Notice was posted last week in the Chronicle. The Request for Qualifications are due March 7th at the Central branch.

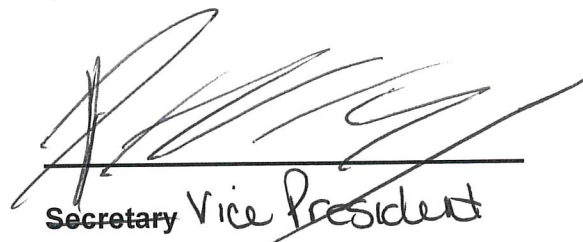
New Business:

2024 annual report: The main difference from this year and last year is the length of the report. We wanted to test a simpler format with highlights. It is structured for patrons to view quickly and will be distributed as a half page size for patrons to use as book slip.

Adjournment: Ray Armstrong motioned to adjourn the meeting. Sam Battle seconded the motion. The Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:18 pm. (**Resolution 22.25**)



President



Secretary Vice President