



Meeting Minutes

Library Board

Tuesday, November 4, 2025

5:00 PM

La Crosse Public Library
Auditorium (Lower Level)

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Call to Order

The Vice Chair, Kathy Ivey, called the meeting to order at 5:11 p.m.

PRESENT: Sue Anglehart, Kathy Ivey, Jess Thill, Aaron Engel, Araysa Simpson, Mac Kiel, Katie Bittner

ABSENT: Erin Raymus, Rosanne Northwood

STAFF: Dawn Wacek, Daniel Whitmore, Amber Leibundgut-Peterson, Cynthia Arauz, Brooke Newberry, Heather Miller, Lindsay Schmitt, Scott Brouwer, Miranda Greeno

Agenda Items:

1 2026 Library Operating Budget Discussion

1.1 Service Reduction Scenarios

Ms. Anglehart expressed her appreciation for community members partaking in the listening session as well as reaching out to share their thoughts via email.

Director Wacek shared with the Board a PowerPoint presentation that revisited the two reduction options:

Option A: Reduce all hours of service, programs, outreach, and Archives services. Eliminate Deputy Director and Assistant 2 positions. Add one part-time assistant position. This option maintains two locations for 2026. Total savings of \$180,063. Lost staffing of 60 hours per week, 3120 annually.

Option B: Close North Community Library. Eliminate Deputy Director and Assistant 2 positions. Add three part-time assistant positions. This option redirects resources from under-utilized facility to meeting people where they are on the northside. Total savings of \$173,333 as well as additional savings over time due to the reduction of non-personnel costs of North, such as maintenance and infrastructure. Lost staffing of 20 hours per week, 1040 annually.

Ms. Wacek shared that fundraising is not a viable option for LPL's operating expenses. This is because fundraising for operations is inherently unstable and inequitable. It also creates an accountability problem and signals to the City that tax funding is optional.

While LPL has wonderful volunteers that complete around 80 hours of work per month, it cannot be staffed with volunteers as there are legal and privacy requirements as well as expertise and consistency required to run the Library. The Librarians, Supervisors, and Managers bring 190 years of professional library experience to their work at LPL.

Board members continued the budget discussion by exploring what outreach may look like if both locations are maintained versus if North is closed, how they value the input of both staff members and community members, and the potential negative impacts of each of the scenario options.

Board members shared how many community members in the small group discussions expressed opposition to the loss of services across the City and viewed Library services as necessary. Given the expected budget cut of \$174,705 and uncertainty about future budget cuts, the Board must make a difficult decision and consider the closing of a second branch. A vote will take place at the regular Board meeting on Tuesday, November 11, 2025.

Adjournment

Ms. Ivey adjourned the Committee of the Whole at 6:19 p.m.