



Meeting Minutes

Library Board

Tuesday, February 10, 2026

5:00 PM

La Crosse Public Library
Auditorium (Lower Level)

Call to Order

The Vice Chair, Kathy Ivey, called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Kathy Ivey, Jess Thill, Araysa Simpson, Aaron Engel, Mac Kiel, Erin Raymus

ABSENT: Rosanne Northwood, Sue Anglehart

STAFF: Dawn Wacek, Daniel Whitmore, Cynthia Arauz, Brooke Newberry, Amber Leibundgut-Peterson, Miranda Greeno

Agenda Items:

1 Approval of Minutes from Regular Board Meeting – January 13, 2026

Motion to approve the minutes from the regular Board meeting of January 13, 2026.

(Aaron Engel/Araysa Simpson) Carried

2 Approval of Minutes from Committee of the Whole – February 3, 2026

Motion to approve the minutes from the Committee of the Whole meeting of February 3, 2026.

(Aaron Engel/Jess Thill) Carried

3 Approval of Bills & Financial Reports – January 2026 & 13th Month

Motion to approve the bills and financial reports from January 2026 & 13th month.

(Aaron Engel/Erin Raymus) Carried

4 Reports

4.1 Director's Report

4.11 Vacancy Report

Open positions include one full-time Business Services Associate, two part-time Children & Families Assistants, one part-time Resource Management Assistant, and one part-time Frontline Assistant. Interviews are underway.

IT Supervisor Braedon Monroe will attend the BrainStorm conference in March. Director Wacek, Operations Manager Cynthia Arauz, Infrastructure Manager Daniel Whitmore, and Lifelong Learning Librarian Livi Hackbarth will attend the Public Library Association (PLA) conference in April.

4.12 Operations and Services Updates

An increase in behavioral incidents and unresponsive patrons has been observed. A second Talon officer will be on-site for one to two months. Existing policies are being reinforced.

Ms. Wacek attended a meeting with public library staff from other systems and noted that safety and security concerns are common across libraries. Some libraries use contracted security services, while others manage services internally. Conversations will continue among libraries across the state to share strategies, challenges, and effective practices.

A Board member asked clarifying questions about procedures for patron incidents. Discussion followed. Board members expressed interest in reviewing incident trends quarterly or monthly while remaining mindful of the purview of the Board. This data may help inform future decisions regarding best practices, expenditures, and security services such as Talon.

Director Wacek participates in a monthly Unsheltered Leadership meeting addressing issues affecting the City as a whole. These challenges extend beyond the Library's scope; the Library will continue to follow its mission and maintain clear expectations for patron behavior.

Ms. Wacek has consulted with the Mayor and City Legal regarding procedures if ICE officials appear at the building. Safety and de-escalation are priorities in an unpredictable situation. Staff are being provided with resources, scripts, expectations, and legal guidance.

A Capital Improvement Project (CIP) meeting was held. A generator and checkout kiosk are included in the City's plan and will go before City Council. Projects may be modified or denied during the approval process.

LPL, in collaboration with the La Crosse School District, will host children's author Angela Dominguez on Thursday, February 26, to discuss her work with the public.

To celebrate completion of the project funded through a grant from the Wisconsin Department of Administration's Flexible Facilities Program, the Library will host an all-day, open-house style grand opening celebration on Wednesday, March 11.

4.13 Construction Update

Most furniture has been assembled. A furniture punch list review is scheduled for tomorrow. Some furniture deliveries have been delayed. A soft opening is planned for Monday, February 16.

5 Old Business

5.1 Vacation Schedule

Motion to approve the adoption of the City of La Crosse vacation schedule

effective January 1, 2026.
(Aaron Engel/Erin Raymus) Carried

6 New Business

6.1 WRLS Contract

The System Resource Library Contract is required by the Department of Public Instruction (DPI).

Motion to approve the 2026 WRLS contract.
(Aaron Engel/Araysa Simpson) Carried

6.2 Feasibility Study Contract Approval

Director Wacek expressed comfort with the contract and the working relationship to date.

Motion to approve Crescendo Fundraising Professionals feasibility study contract.
(Aaron Engel/Erin Raymus) Carried

6.3 Fund Balance Expenditures Approval

6.31 Electrical Panel: Up to \$60,000

The remaining grant contingency may cover the full expense, pending final bills. However, funding must be requested and approval is not guaranteed.

Authorization is requested for up to \$60,000 from Fund balance to cover the cost if remaining grant contingency is not sufficient or is not approved. Approval would allow the project to move forward and proceed to City Council.

Motion to approve up to \$60,000 from Fund balance for electrical panel replacement if not covered by grant contingency.
(Jess Thill/Erin Raymus) Carried

6.32 Feasibility Study: Up to \$15,000

The feasibility study totals \$45,000, with \$30,000 funded through internal fundraising line. Up to \$15,000 was initially proposed from Fund balance to cover the remaining amount.

Motion to approve up to \$15,000 from Fund balance for the feasibility study.
(Aaron Engel/Araysa Simpson) Carried

Discussion followed regarding the use of Special Trustees funds instead of Fund balance.

Motion to rescind the motion approving up to \$15,000 from Fund balance for the feasibility study.

(Aaron Engel/Araysa Simpson) Carried

Motion to approve up to \$15,000 from Special Trustees for the feasibility study.

(Araysa Simpson/Jess Thill) Carried

7 Topics for Future Meetings

7.1 2025 Annual Report

7.2 Policy Review: Volunteer and Film / Photo

7.3 Fund Balance Update

7.4 By-laws Review

8 Public Comment / Other

9 Board Tour of New Spaces

Director Wacek gave the Board members an informal tour of the newly renovated spaces.

Adjournment at 5:54 p.m.

Motion to adjourn.

(Aaron Engel/Araysa Simpson) Carried