

ROLL CALL & INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Members present: Cynthia Dunlop, Janet Gruwell, James W. Rieckhoff, Jeri Stahr, and Laura Steffen. Dan Holtz and Yuliana Rivera Arce were not present.

Others present: Kristen Edson, Executive Director and Mary Beth Schlabach, Director of Public Services.

Staff present: Deb Bloom, Circulation Department Head; Laura Holland, Administrative Clerk; Mary Ann Kempa, Cleveland Branch Manager; and Charles Pieri, Branch YPS Librarian.

Staff present via Zoom: Nathan Claeys, Director of Human Resources; Katie Cullison, Osolo Branch Manager; John Dawson, Senior Building Operations Manager; Sue Eller, Dunlap Branch Manager; Elizabeth Layman, Technical Services Librarian; and Trevor Wendzonka, Chief Marketing Officer.

Guests present: Hodge Patel, Abonmarche.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Elkhart Public Library was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by James W. Rieckhoff, President.

CONSENT AGENDA

The Consent Agenda was presented. Jeri Stahr noted that the new format was easier to read. She moved

THAT the Consent Agenda be adopted.

Laura Steffen seconded. Motion: carried (5-0)

PRESIDENT'S BUSINESS

James W. Rieckhoff, President, had no business to share. He did share his recent experience returning an empty case without the DVD.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Kristen Edson, Executive Director, informed the board that starting in February, board members will receive an update when board packet has been posted in SharePoint along with a link. Members were asked if they liked the previous "Elevator Speech" talking points. There was a positive response from the board, so this will begin again.

There were 3 questions submitted concerning the Facilities Master Plan. James W. Rieckhoff and Cynthia Dunlop will sit on the selection committee.

The lawyers have responded back concerning whether the board needs to approve every revision or new job description. The law seems ambiguous on job descriptions requiring board review. They suggested that a resolution giving specific levels of authority to the executive director should be adopted. This will be part of February's packet.

Additional updates were given. A consultant has been selected for the Leadership Retreat. Kristen has joined the Elkhart Rotary Club.

Chuck Pieri gave a presentation on what he does as Branch YPS Librarian. He regularly visits 47 classrooms each month. Besides reading with students, he uses this time to promote programs listed in our Explore magazine, and the benefits of the library. The slideshow had examples showing his engagement with students. Besides these monthly classroom visits, Chuck does a similar weekly program at the Tolson Center and he is starting a book club at Concord Intermediate in February. He also serves on various committees through the Indiana Library Federation. His "other duties as assigned" have included parking attendant for large programs, mentoring the branch YPS staff in selection, and organizing the Homework Help sessions with the National Honor Society. The presentation ended with the reading of a story to the board.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to discuss.

NEW BUSINESS

Cell Phone Stipend Policy

Kristen Edson, Executive Director, presented revisions to the Cell Phone Stipend Policy. Rather than list by job title, the tiers and stipend amounts vary based on role responsibilities. Cynthia Dunlop moved

THAT the Cell Phone Stipend Policy be adopted as submitted.

Janet Gruwell seconded. Motion: carried (5-0)

Update to 2026 Wage Schedule

Kristen Edson, Executive Director, presented an Update to 2026 Wage Schedule to include the addition of an Executive Assistant to the Executive Director. This new role is to help with the increased workload which will result from the Facilities Master Plan and the Capital Campaign that will follow. The final wording of the job description is nearly complete, needing one last review before posting, but the wage range has been determined based on comparable roles. Because of the timing for the events in the Facilities Master Plan, it is essential to approve the wage scale so that the position can be posted and filled in a timely manner. Jeri Stahr moved

THAT the Update to 2026 Wage Schedule be adopted.

Janet Gruwell seconded. Motion: carried (5-0)

PLAC Report for Board and Director signature (quarterly)

This is a signature only item.

Questions and Information from Board, Staff, and Guests

There were no additional comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Jeri Stahr moved

THAT the meeting be adjourned.

Laura Steffen seconded. James W. Rieckhoff, President, adjourned the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Elkhart Public Library at 6:27 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees will be February 17, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. at the Downtown Location, 300 S. Second Street, Elkhart, IN.

Laura Steffen, Secretary