



Dubuque County
Library District

The Dubuque County Library District Board of Trustees met at 5:30 on Tuesday, July 15 at the Asbury Branch, 5290 Grand Meadow Drive, Asbury, IA 52002.

The meeting was called to order by President Kristen Smith at 5:42 p.m.

President Kristen Smith called roll. Present: Jane Boge, Nellie Burk, Shawn Coenen, Susan Henricks, Teresa Reuter, Sue Ross, Julita Schneider, and Van Waggoner.

Also present: Laura Sauser, Library Director; Lauren Offerman, Library Clerk

Correspondence: None

Public Comment: None

Minutes: The minutes from the meeting on June 17, 2025, were presented for review and approval. Henricks suggested two edits to correct incomplete sentences. Schneider made a motion to approve the minutes with those corrections and Rueter seconded this motion; all ayes, motion carried.

Financial Reports

Accounts Payable - The NewsBank subscription has been upgraded to an enhanced collection that includes access to an interactive online version of local, state, and national news, including the *Telegraph Herald* Image Edition. The enhanced subscription was an additional \$440 and is anticipated to be popular with our patrons. Staff will be meeting with our NewsBank reps to talk about marketing strategies for announcing this enhanced collection.

There was an increase in copying costs. Sauser plans to examine both internal and external usage.

O'Connor & English Insurance received two insurance payments in 2025; the current July payment follows the first claim paid at the beginning of 2025. Sauser explained that the county is moving its insurance payments to follow the fiscal year, rather than the calendar year. O'Connor & English will also be providing us with a quote for cybersecurity insurance at a later date.

Boge questioned the DCLD shawl purchased from Lands' End; Sauser confirmed that, despite the description provided by the company, the item is a cardigan with the DCLD logo. Boge suggested we consider a DCLD throw blanket for future merchandise for sale to patrons.

Smith requested a motion to approve the Accounts Payable Report. A motion was made by Rueter and seconded by Schneider; all ayes, motion carried.

Account Balance - Smith requested a motion to approve the balance sheet. A motion was made by Schneider and seconded by Coenen; all ayes, motion carried.

The cash flow document for the last three years of activity was presented. The DCLD holds 492,828.37 in reserves; some of these funds will be used on the collection and furnishings for the Farley Library and there are other large projects included in the strategic plan these funds may be earmarked to cover. Offerman explained that the reserves may only be spent through a budget amendment or if they are included in the FY 2027 budget. The finance committee will review and allocate funds from the reserves.

Director's Report

The Directors' Report was inadvertently left out of the board meeting packets. Sauser summarized her report and made a note to send the full report to the board after the meeting. Sauser expressed her enjoyment of meeting the community through many different outlets: local events/parades, tour of the Loras College library, and attending the July Farley City Council meeting. She was recently featured in an article in the *Telegraph Herald*.

AED have been installed at all the branches. Sauser is working to schedule training for new staff and staff who may want a refresher. Henricks and Boge suggested individuals who would be able to train staff and help maintain the AED.

New firewalls were installed in early July and several technical issues took place around the same time, mostly by coincidence. Koha, our main software for patron checkouts and other interactions, was down from July 3 -7. Sauser reported that staff handled these difficulties with grace and professionalism.

BrainFuse (the skill-building software) is being discontinued and will be replaced by Mometrix in the new fiscal year.

FY25 Statistics – Both a 4th quarter and fiscal year-end report, produced by Circulation Manager Ryan Bankston, were shared with board members. The annual report for the State Library is in progress. Both visitors and check-out statistics are up; however, the Asbury Wi-Fi statistics may be inaccurate due to issues with WhoFi. Henricks asked about the list of community engagement events on the report and inquired what counts as an event. Sauser explained that Lydia Sigwarth, Community Engagement Librarian, includes all outreach activities, such as special events like area parades, and Asbury in the Park, as well as each recurring event at local daycares, schools, and senior homes as one event each. Though Puzzlepalooza is a Friends of the Library Event, it also counts as an event for the DCLD. Sauser asked the board how they prefer to see programming statistics presented at each meeting. Schneider said that the statistics are helpful. Now that we have a staff member who is offering programs specifically for teen audiences, Sauser said she will start separating the statistics of the adult and teen programs.

Board webpage - Sauser spoke about plans to update the website and social media with the information she has gathered from board members talking about their favorite books and

their motivation to serve as a trustee. There will also be a physical display of “Trustee Picks” in the Asbury branch after the conclusion of the Summer Reading Program.

Expansion of library hours initiative - The expansion of library hours is still under consideration. A survey to gather feedback from patrons will be distributed in August. There was discussion about the idea of adding 3 to 4 hours initially and building up to 5 additional hours. Henricks questioned if all three branches (Farley, Epworth, and Holy Cross) need extra hours. Schneider stated that that consistency of hours makes it easier for patrons to remember; for example, closing at the same time every night. Rueter commented that she finds it odd that programmers are having events at branches when the library itself is closed. Burk asked how easy it is to change hours. Sauser responded that it is physically easy to change the website, but spreading the word among patrons can be harder.

Report of Committees

Farley Library & Community Center - Boge reported that the fundraising committee has been active in the community, including a Float in the July Fest parade. The fundraising committee submitted one grant application to the DRA and will submit another to Woodward Communications by the end of the month.

Unfinished Business - None

New Business

Committee Assignments FY26 - Smith sent a survey to the trustees prior to the meeting asking about their committee preferences. Committee assignments for FY2026 will remain the same, other than the addition of Ross and Schneider to the Nominating Committee and Henricks to the Finance Committee.

Discussion

Strategic Plan Review – Sauser shared a copy of the 2022 – 2027 DCLD strategic plan with a list of updates outlining progress toward our goals. There was discussion about areas to focus on for FY26, including expanding outreach to include additional communities such as group homes and programs for adults with disabilities. Staff have suggested that one area of focus be on areas south of Highway 20/Key West, which is an underserved area. Marketing is another area the board would like to emphasize. Schneider also suggested the board take another look at the recorded presentation Sauser provided during the interview process for ideas.

There was discussion about the purchase of the bookmobile included in the strategic plan. Sauser will do some additional research into this idea to share with the board. Questions that still need to be explored include where to park a bookmobile, how items will be returned, and the overall cost of the vehicle and maintenance.

Better leveraging the library's investment in makerspace items was another topic of discussion. Smith asked about the possibility of using those items on a bookmobile. Sauser is going to do an inventory of our makerspace items and their usage to share with the board at a later date.

Schneider asked about staff training and development related to Goal 4 of the strategic plan. She wants to ensure how staff speak to patrons in person and on the phone is consistent and universal. Schneider says she also thinks staff should be encouraged to attend conferences. She explained that in her experience, understanding and respect from the librarians removes barriers and encourages patron participation.

The State Library is hosting a webinar on strategic planning for trustees on August 6, 2025. Sauser offered to host a watch party at the Asbury branch. The one-hour webinar will also be recorded for those unable to watch that evening.

Other discussion - The first set of annual invoices have been sent to the contracting cities. There was discussion about how rates are set per capita.

Sauser shared that she had looking in to trustee memberships in the Iowa Library Association (ILA). Trustee memberships are \$30.00 per person annually and are not pro-rated. Smith is already an ILA member. Sauser said the DCLD could look into purchasing memberships for others if there is interest. The next ILA conference is in October in Sioux City. The Wisconsin Library Association annual conference is at the end of October in Madison, which would be closer for us to attend.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:11 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Lauren Offerman.