Dubuque County Library District

The Dubuque County Library District Board of Trustees met at 5:30 p.m. on October 27, 2026 at the Peosta branch NICC Library, Room 200G, 8342 NICC Dr., Peosta, IA 52068

The meeting was called to order by President Shawn Coenen at 5:31 p.m.

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

Excused: Susan Henricks and Van Waggoner

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

Approval of Agenda:
Burk made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Schnieder. All ayes, motion carried.

Correspondence: None
Public Comment: None

Minutes
The minutes from the September 15 board meeting were provided for approval. Coenen requested a motion to approve the minutes of the September 15 meeting. Moved to accept by Schneider, second by Boge. All ayes, motion carried.

Financial Reports:
Accounts Payable

Purchases to expand the large print collection are reflected in the library materials budget line. ILA travel expenses for the Technical Services Librarian and Children's Librarian are found under Mileage and Travel expenses. The annual renewal from Tech logic for RFID licensing and technology is reflected under software and hardware budget lines.

Coenen requested a motion to approve the Accounts Payable Report. The motion was made by Boge and seconded by Ross. All ayes, motion carried.

Account Balance
At the conclusion of the first quarter of FY27, personnel expenses are at 25%. The mileage reimbursement budget line will likely be overspent, and Sauser plans to increase that budget line for FY28.
The liability insurance line is over budget due to being underbilled in the past.

Restricted funds- Trustees were provided promotional bookmarks for the Craft and Hobby database through TN Marketing. This new offering will be paid for with the Jean Warner Trust funds. The Young Adult & Adult Services Librarian met with TN Marketing at the ALA conference in June. Patrons and programmers will both be able to use this resource. Sauser estimates the Craft and Hobby database will be live on the DCLD website within the next month.

Coenen requested a motion to approve the Accounts Balance Report. The motion was made by Boge and seconded by Ross. All ayes, motion carried.

Director's Report
Sauser thanked the trustees for their support and flexibility this month.
The State Library of Iowa FY26 annual survey has been submitted. Sauser will send a copy of the survey to the trustees.
DCLD received the check for the Direct State Aid portion of Enrich Iowa funding. One more check from Enrich Iowa will be issued for the reimbursement of Open Access and Interlibrary Loan.
The next quarterly training session for trustees will take place in at 5:15 pm December 2, 2026, at the Asbury Branch.

Report of Committees
The parking lot for the Farley Library & Community Center will be completed within the next two weeks. Once finished, workers cannot drive on it for two weeks. Sauser predicted that we will move in January. Boge announced a $2,500 grant from Thiesen's Home Farm and Auto for the project. The McDonough foundation grant will be used to purchase a display case for the library.

Smith pointed out the highlights of the FY2028 budget. The finance committee will meet one more time before the November trustee meeting.

Unfinished Business
Trustees agreed to send out an RFP for a strategic plan consulting firm to bid on facilitating our new planning process. There was a discussion about using Enrich Iowa funds to pay for a consultant. Once proposals are recieved the trustees will decide whether to use the State Library resources or an outside consultant.

Coenen requested a motion to publish an RFP for strategic planning. The motion was made by Smith and seconded by Rueter. All ayes, motion carried.

Sauser proposed a new phone system for the Dubuque County Library District using Enrich Iowa funds. Each branch will keep the original phone numbers to ensure the transition is seamless for patrons. The new phone system allows for transfers between branches and greater capacity for voicemail. The transition will also lower the monthly telephone expenses. The current Farley location is included in the City of Farley's phone system, and Sauser will add Farley to the DCLD plan once the new building is complete. The Peosta branch will remain on NICC's phone system.

Coenen requested a motion to approve the purchase of the updated phone system. The motion was made by Smith and seconded by Schneider. All ayes, motion carried.

New Business
The Finance Committee provided a draft of the proposed FY28 budget for the trustees to preview. The committee is recommending the per capita rate for FY28 to remain the same as FY27 to continue to spend the fund balance.

Highlights of the proposed budget include the addition of $50,000 to the vehicle maintenance and repair budget line for the purchase of a second vehicle; expanding the hours of a library clerk from part time to full time and adding 4 hours to the part-time children's programming specialist position; adding additional funds to the Office Equipment and Furniture budget line for the Epworth branch refresh, including funds to cover the monthly fees to store items offsite while work is done on the Epworth branch; and moving some funds from the Marketing budget to the Programming budget to accommodate more programming at the new Farley branch. The Education and Training budget line reflects funds for an annual staff in-service day and the cost of background checks for new staff and volunteers. Sauser shared that she is also working on costs for a possible summer reading program intern position.

There was a discussion about the recommended approach to projecting health insurance costs for FY28. The Health Insurance budget line has been historically overbudgeted. Sauser explained that the Dubuque County Budget Office is estimating a 10% increase in health insurance costs for FY28; however, after discussion, the Finance Committee has included an 8% increase in the proposed FY28 budget.

The Finance Committee will present a final budget to the trustees for approval at the November board meeting.

Discussion

Adjournment 6:20
Next Meeting – November 17, 2026 – Peosta branch