



Meeting Minutes
Tri-Township Public Library District
Tuesday, April 1, 2025
7:00 p.m. Regular Meeting
Meeting Room, Lower Level

Documents distributed to attendees:

1. Agenda
2. Financial statements (Balance Sheet, Profit and Loss Report, Budget vs Actual)
3. Director's report
4. Program activity report (Tori)
5. Social media strategy/content, digital presence, and community engagement (Anyia)
6. Program notes (Alyssa)
7. Social media usage summaries
8. Program evaluation results

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by President Michele Erschen at 7 p.m.

B. Roll Call

1. Board present: President Michele Erschen; Vice-President Mary Ellen Akridge, Treasurer Liz Compton, Trustee Katie Devany, Trustee Linda Taake. **Absent:** Secretary Dawn Henry
2. Public present: Elizabeth Fischer, Library Director; Karla Brown, Transcriber; Katie Serrano
3. Input of Agenda Items
 - Board: Akridge - community survey (Old Business); Erschen – reading of letter (New Business)
 - Public: None

(moved from New Business) Serrano was sworn in as the new board trustee with term ending in 2027. Fischer will provide state training and requirement information to Serrano and the board will provide election information and guidance in 2026 for the 2027 election.

C. Approval of Minutes

Regular Meeting Minutes of March 4, 2025

Motion was made by Compton, seconded by Taake, to accept the regular meeting minutes as presented. Ayes: Carried by acclamation; Absent: Henry; Abstain: Serrano

Special Meeting Minutes of March 25, 2025

Motion was made by Compton, seconded by Akridge, to accept the special meeting minutes as presented. Ayes: Carried by acclamation; Absent: Henry; Abstain: Serrano

D. Treasurer's Report

- Compton reported that all budget data has been entered into QuickBooks and now the Budget vs Actual Report is accurate showing the Over Budget column. Pointed out that this is a year-to-date report, and the budget column is showing only partial year. In some cases, the actual may be more/less than budget (as shown in the Over Budget column), but as the year progresses, the budget numbers will change, recalculating the difference.
- Several specific line items were discussed:

- IMRF shows difference between actual and budget because some long-term employees are no longer employed by the library and the newer staff members are not eligible.
- Building Maintenance shows significant actual/budget difference, but money had been set aside prior to renovation.
- Workmen's Compensation reflects a credit because of receiving a refund.
- Children's program actual is higher than budget primarily because the staff is increasing the number and kinds of programs, per the board's direction. The budget will be increased in July for the next fiscal year.
- The accounting expense line item was for the bookkeeping service that is no longer used. The bookkeeper expense is now part of Salaries and Wages.
- All Illinois funds are being managed carefully. With the new system and procedures, a simpler process is being developed for these specific items.
- Compton is very comfortable with the financial standing of the library as is shown on the Equity line of the Balance sheet. The type of analysis that she explained can be done due to bringing the bookkeeping function in-house, allowing the balances to be verified each month. Members thanked Compton for her efforts.
- Serrano asked if these three reports (in packet) were available for previous months. Compton replied that not exactly because of all the changes that have been made, but from now on, the same set of reports and information should be available each month. Compton added that information at transaction level is frequently monitored by the Finance Committee.

E. Director's Report

In addition to the distributed report, Fischer mentioned:

- Participating with Madison County Transit for collecting used bicycles to be donated to St. Louis Bicycle Works (BWORKS).
- Onboarding meetings with several staff members were completed.
- Fischer is completing continuing education courses for director and personal growth. Erschen thanked her for taking this initiative.
- Tori's programming stats showed a comparison from last year, and the board mentioned that is very helpful. A program list included March – June events with several being discussed such as the Family Story time with Central Institute for the Deaf, the teen only crochet group, etc. – there is something for everyone.
- Anya's report shows enhancements that she is making in social media and digital presence. Based on the report:
 - Erschen mentioned that when enhancing/changing the "How Do I" section on the website, to use AI to make sure that it is written at about a sixth grade level.
 - Serrano asked if the website could be translated into different languages and Fischer will look into that.
 - Akridge noted the library's newspaper presence could be improved and suggested a reporter be invited to tour the library.
 - It was suggested having staff spotlights on different social media platforms as well as in the newspaper.
 - Erschen suggested the survey feedback (example in packet) be added to the website's homepage as scrolling testimonials.
 - It was suggested to reach out to the Chamber of Commerce to see if there is something the library can be doing to showcase the library's offerings, staff, etc.
- Library staff appreciation day is April 8.
Motion was made by Compton, seconded by Akridge, to use board funds not to exceed \$250 to cover appreciation efforts. It was suggested that flowers be ordered for the front

desk in addition to food being brought in. Ayes by roll call: Akridge, Erschen, Compton, Devany, Serrano, Taake; Absent: Henry
It was suggested board members sign cards to be given to staff members.

F. Maintenance

Nothing to report

G. Committee Reports

• Personnel Committee

1. Nothing to report
2. Akridge used the opportunity to refresh everyone's understanding of their committee involvement. There are (usually) three people on each committee and each member has equal say. Actions will be based on the consensus of all committee members and the chair will bring those recommendations to the entire board, which will then be voted on by all board members. Compton added that each committee is thought of as an advisory board that brings recommendations to the entire board for voting. (See Five-Year Plan Committee for more discussion.)

• Finance Committee

Compton reported the committee is on "hyperdrive" and will begin working on a three-step activity later this week.

1. The levies have been approved for the upcoming fiscal year and the members will be assigning those monies to the July 1 – June 30 budget.
2. Once step 1 is completed, ordinances will be written for the following fiscal year. The library attorney (F Keck) will be involved in assisting with this task and guiding the board through the Truth in Taxation requirements and meeting, recommending the best approach for the library's future.
3. After step 2 is finalized, the levies will be written/submitted asking the county for the requested monies for the next fiscal year.

Compton expressed the committee wants to be transparent with the decisions and activities being completed.

• Public Relations (PR) Committee.

1. Nothing to report; on hiatus. Will be removed from the agenda.

• Policy Committee.

1. Nothing to report.

• Building and Grounds Committee

1. Fischer, along with the committee, will coordinate accepting bids for cleaning and maintenance. With the procedural changes that have been implemented over the last few months, it was decided that all third-party contractors working with the library should be working under an agreement/contract.
2. CertaPro refund. The issue has not been resolved and is being turned over to the library's attorney.
3. Taake updated that the door solution is moving forward.

• Five-Year Plan Committee

1. Erschen explained the assignments to this newly created committee. The entity is being created to develop actions that align with the library's core principles of people, place, and funds and based on this, she has assigned herself as Chair with members

- being Akridge (Personnel Chair), Taake (Bldg & Grounds Chair), and Compton (Finance Chair).
2. To further support the core principles, the Finance Committee will consist of the Treasurer (chair - Compton), a Personnel committee member (Akridge), and a Building and Grounds committee member (Serrano).
 3. In addition, Erschen distributed a report listing the five committees showing members assigned to each (noting chairs). Assignments are to begin as soon as possible.
 4. Erschen noted the goals and recommendations of the Five-Year Plan Committee will be discussed with the other board members with everyone participating in some fashion.
 5. Compton thanked Erschen for efforts developing and explaining the reasons behind the committee assignments.

H. Communications

Nothing to report.

I. Old Business

1. Akridge reminded everyone that community survey ideas/changes should be forwarded to her by Tuesday, April 8. She provided the last community survey (sent out 10 years ago) to serve as a starting point regarding what might be included in the upcoming survey. All suggestions/feedback are welcome. Akridge will aggregate the feedback and present the findings at the May meeting.
2. Devany suggested that once the results come back from the survey, a focus group be identified so that follow-up could be completed. Perhaps a question can be added similar to "Can we contact you for more information?" on the survey.

J. New Business

1. Erschen read a resignation letter from Dawn Henry, Board Secretary and Trustee, effective April 1, 2025. Fischer confirmed Henry had turned in her keys.
2. Motion was made by Compton, seconded by Akridge, to nominate Devany for the Board of Trustee Secretary position. Devany accepted the nomination. Ayes: Carried by acclamation.
3. Every Door Direct Mail (EDDM), Fischer presented information for a direct mailing to help advertise the library's summer offerings. The library staff will design the card and it will be sent to 6,315 residences in the 62294 zip code. (Doing one to include St. Jacob and Marine will be decided later as some are in the library district while other residences are not.) Cost for the initial mailing is \$2,865.33. During the discussion, several ideas were suggested:
 - Was asked why including just summer activity and Fischer explained the idea was to provide a reference tool for upcoming events with other mailings being sent throughout the year.
 - Consider sending information home with school and daycare kids.
 - Consider offering prizes for those that come into the library and drop off a portion of the card (or similar incentive).

Erschen asked how the return on investment could be measured and asked the members to think of ideas and let her know their thoughts.

Motion was made by Erschen, seconded by Devany, to spend \$2,865.33 for the mailing to 6,315 residences to advertise the summer activities for children, teens, and adults.

Ayes by roll call: Akridge, Erschen, Compton, Devany, Serrano, Taake

4. Fischer presented the Patron Point program that links with the library's Polaris system to access patron information and automate marketing and other communications such as birthday greetings, program announcements, library card expiration notices, etc. Fischer

thought that Anya would be the primary coordinator with other staff members being trained to assist. Erschen thought it would be a good marketing tool and stated she appreciated the staff looking into this alternative. Compton thought it would be a good idea to do it for a year and then evaluate. Cost is \$5,000 for a one-year subscription. The Patron Point company waived the initial \$5,000 setup charge, so the library would pay only the first year's subscription. The return on investment was mentioned (along with EDDM) and the members will work on determining how this can be done. It was mentioned that a baseline and goals need to be determined.

Motion was made by Devany, seconded by Taake, to spend \$5,000 that covers the first year's subscription and (waived) setup service.

Ayes by roll call: Akridge, Erschen, Compton, Devany, Serrano, Taake

5. Hoopla invoice for March \$3,345.78. Motion was made by Compton, seconded by Devany, to pay the Hoopla invoice for \$3,345.78.

Ayes by roll call: Akridge, Erschen, Compton, Devany, Serrano, Taake

6. Mango annual review for \$2,016. Fischer presented statistics that just over one hour of usage had been logged in the last year.

Motion was made by Compton, seconded by Akridge, to not renew the subscription.

Ayes: Carried by acclamation

K. Public Participation

L. Adjournment

Motion by Devany, seconded by Akridge, to adjourn the meeting at 9:37 p.m.

Ayes: Carried by acclamation

M. Announcements

Attendees congratulated Akridge, Devany, and Taake for maintaining their seats on the board during the April 1 election.

Follow-up items for next meeting:

Community survey suggestions to Akridge

Ideas for measuring EDD and Patron Point success (baseline and goals) to Erschen

Inside and outside front door solutions