

**DOWNERS GROVE PUBLIC LIBRARY  
1050 CURTISS STREET  
DOWNERS GROVE, ILLINOIS**

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES MEETING  
HELD AT BETTY CHEEVER COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
DOWNERS GROVE CIVIC CENTER  
MARCH 25, 2026, 7:00 P.M.**

**TRUSTEES:**

Matt Topic	President
Barnali Khuntia	Secretary
Swapna Gigani	Trustee
Dave Humphreys	Trustee
Nathan Williams	Trustee

**GUESTS:**

Jen Ryjewski	Assistant Library Director
Katelyn Vabalaitis	Human Resources & Finance Manager

Minutes prepared by Human Resources & Finance Manager Katelyn Vabalaitis.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

There being a quorum present, and adequate and proper notice of the meeting having been given, the meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

President Matt Topic led the room in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. ROLL CALL**

All members of the Board were present.

**4. CONSENT AGENDA**

**On a motion made by Barnali Khuntia, seconded by Swapna Gigani, it was resolved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Roll call: Ayes: Gigani, Humphreys, Khuntia, Williams, Topic. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.**

Included the Consent Agenda:

- February 25, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes
- February 2026 Financial Report
- March 2026 Invoices

**5. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Jamie Dougherty spoke on behalf of the Downers Grove Public Library Foundation, extending an invite to the Board and the audience to the upcoming Spring Soiree on April 19. The Foundation partnered with EQDG in celebration of National Library Week. The event will benefit EQDG and the library's mission in the community. Tickets can be purchased online.

## 6. TRUSTEE COMMENTS

**Nathan Williams** noted that March is Women's History Month and he encouraged everyone to read a book about and a book by a woman. He selected **Penelope's Bones** by Emily Hauser. He was reminded of the adage attributed to Winston Churchill – "History is written by the victors." Dominant narratives are told by those who have power. Nathan believes we must intentionally focus on marginalized voices, as we often do not hear their stories. He noted a university course that his wife teaches called "The Empire Writes Back," which focuses on non-western rewritings of western texts from a colonial period. He encouraged all to look beyond the male gaze to understand the world from another point of view. He noted that Trustee Dave Humphreys was featured in Downers Grove Living magazine and he urged everyone to read more about Dave, his time growing up in Downers Grove, and his service to our community. Nathan expressed gratitude to the library's senior management team during the transition between directors. Transitions are stressful and uncertain and he appreciated that senior staff were there to supply a steady hand. Nathan highlighted a couple events, including the Spring Soiree, which he will be attending, and the Americans and the Holocaust exhibit, which will be on display at the library from April 14-May 19. Downers Grove Public Library is one of 50 libraries selected to host the exhibit in its current run. Nathan stated that history only lives if you actually witness it.

**Dave Humphreys** spoke about his experience as the featured interview in Downers Grove Living magazine, noting it was a lengthy interview so much of it didn't end up in the article. Dave recognized Women's History Month and commented that the Downers Grove Museum has a scavenger hunt going on in Downtown Downers Grove through the end of the month to celebrate. He also commented that he is looking forward to the Spring Soiree, which will be hosted by the Downers Grove Public Library Foundation and EQDG.

**Swapna Gigani** asked Trustee Nathan Williams if he came up with the university course title for his wife. He responded that he did not.

**Matt Topic** thanked staff as the library transitions to a new director. Those kinds of transitions can be a challenge so he thanked staff for continuing to do the great job that they've been doing. He thanked Assistant Director Jen Ryjewski for putting the meeting together.

## 7. LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Jen Ryjewski encouraged everyone to attend the Americans and the Holocaust exhibit at the library. The opening reception for the exhibit is on April 14 at 6:30 p.m. in the library's café, and then guests will be invited to view the exhibit afterwards. Staff have scheduled class tours in excess of 1,200 students in District 58. The exhibit will be closed to the public during those school tours. She directed all to visit [dglibrary.org/aath-exhibit](http://dglibrary.org/aath-exhibit) to learn about complimentary programs, guided tours, and drop-in programs. Jen gave a huge shout out to the Adults & Teen Services and Kids Room staff who have prepared for the tours and will be leading classes through the exhibit. Jen apologized for an error in the Illinois Public Library Annual Report. In Section 5, Board Members, she did not include Trustee Dave Humphreys on the report, as he is serving until replaced. She contacted the Illinois State Library and notified them of the correction needed. Jen announced that the Kids Room reached a new storytime attendance high of 146 attendees. She gave kudos to the Children's Services Department. Jen reminded everyone of the upcoming Spring Soiree.

## 8. NEW BUSINESS

## 8.1 General Policy Updates

Since February 2025, the library has had internal guidelines and a checklist to help staff in the event there was Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) presence on library property. This past February, the Village of Downers Grove passed their own ordinance in regards to the monitoring of ICE activities on Village property. As a result, library staff asked the library's attorney to review the existing guidelines and checklist to make sure they are still applicable and keeping up with best practices. The attorney responded with an exhaustive seven page policy that is excessively procedural, which does not match the approach the library takes to its policies. Instead, staff are proposing taking the rules from the attorney's policy and incorporating them into the General Policy and then taking the procedural elements and incorporating those into the Managers on Duty/Building Operations Monitors Manual. It was noted that when the Village ordinance becomes operationalized, the library will have to look again at whether there's anything that needs updating.

Trustee Humphreys commented that he does not want the Board to get bogged down in procedures and because they are a governing board, not a procedural board, they should leave the procedures to the staff. He noted that the inclusion of the definition of a public versus private space in the library is important, and it is reflected in the draft policy.

Trustee Williams commented that he thinks it is premature to be adopting a more robust policy than what was proposed but he thinks it is important that staff have a resource that is clearly defined. He also noted that according to RAILS, Sugar Grove Public Library is the only other library that has adopted a policy related to ICE activities.

President Topic noted that these policy updates will be put up for a vote at next month's meeting.

## 8.2 Good Neighbor Village Initiative

**On a motion made by Dave Humphreys, seconded by Barnali Khuntia, it was resolved to support the Good Neighbor Village Initiative. Roll call: Ayes: Gigani, Humphreys, Khuntia, Williams, Topic. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.**

Jen Ryjewski stated that she recently met with the library's longstanding partner, EQDG, and they are working on an initiative to designate Downers Grove as a Good Neighbor Village. The inspiration for this was National Good Neighbor Day, established by Jimmy Carter in 1978. For the past few years, Mayor Barnett has issued a Village Proclamation recognizing Good Neighbor Day on September 28, which celebrates kindness, connection, and neighborly support. EQDG is asking all of their partners to review their proposal and draft resolution and agree to sign a letter of support that will be forthcoming.

Sue Ellen Cook, of EQDG, was present at the meeting to answer any questions. She said their organization has been meeting with a number of local organizations and non-profits to explain the proposal and hopefully get a lot of support so that Downers Grove can be one of the first towns to have this designation.

## 9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

## 10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session.

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

President Topic adjourned the meeting at 7:31 p.m.

**DISCLAIMER**

The above minutes should be used as a summary of the motions passed and issues discussed at the meeting. This document shall not be considered a verbatim copy of every word spoken at the meeting.