

**MINUTES OF THE 8 December 2025 MEETING
OF THE COLCHESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

I. ACTION ITEMS

A. Call to order

President W. Utter called the regular meeting to order at 4:38 p.m.

B. Roll call/Determination of Quorum

Trustees present: , April Bennett, Evan Bennett, Craig Rigg, Nicole Weaver. N. Altenbern and S. Altenbern arrived at 5:20 p.m. Also present was Library Director Debbie Sullivan.

C. Approval of Agenda — No revision

D. Review/Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting

E. Bennett/A. Bennett moved to approve the minutes of the 3 November 2025 meeting. Motion carried.

E. Treasurer's Report

Upon arrival, S. Altenbern presented a report showing income of \$13.10 against expenses of \$4,246.53. E.

Bennett/A. Bennett moved acceptance of report. Motion carried.

F. Christmas Around the Prairie December 14 plans

— Set up starts at 5:00 p.m.

— Theme is "Storybook Christmas" featuring different kinds of popcorn befitting children's stories

— Peppermint, caramel, cocoa, and plain popcorn; puppy chow; seasoned oyster crackers; red punch

— Paper baskets for popcorn; red napkins; cups

— Registry for door prize — a "lottery ticket" wreath

— Tom Smith table promo for STEM

— N. Weaver station for face painting

— Set up for cook book sales

G. 2026-27 Levy — The paperwork was prepared, but copier malfunction and incorrect dating prevented the board from voting for approval. The board will hold a brief meeting before Christmas on the Prairie to approve the levy.

II. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Advocacy Minute

1. A STEM grant has been approved from the Tracy Foundation for \$5,000. It's focus will be on children ages 6-10 and conducted by Tom Jalinski with Director Sullivan as administrator. Plans are to hold the activities on Wednesdays after school.

2. Per Capita Equalization — In an effort to compensate for small library districts' restricted tax base versus library districts with large tax bases, the state of Illinois has increased the Colchester District Library's per capita allowance from \$1,600 to \$7,200 for the next fiscal year. Sullivan would like to place more emphasis on encouraging and facilitate greater reading opportunities by acquiring more books with a broader scope.

B. Palace Project — This service is a replacement for the now discontinued Baker & Taylor method of acquiring electronic materials. Palace Project is a nation-wide organization that allows patrons to download their app and use their library card number and PIN. For Colchester, patron PIN is simply BOOK.

III. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. Recognition of Visitors — None

B. Committee Reports

1. Finance (S. Altenbern) — No report

2. Building and Grounds (Rigg) — Roof conditions seem to be functioning considering the recent heavy snow.

3. Policy (A.Bennett) — No report

4. Stephen L. Roth Trust Fund (E. Bennett) — In the absence of the treasurer and pending discovery of where best to allocate funds from the closed Wells Fargo account, the board discussed whether to keep the Roth Fund as a separate memorial account rather than combine it with the other memorials. President Utter would like to see two signatures for check signing in the funds that are now presently in the Per Capita account. **Upon arrival of treasurer Altenbern, E. Bennett moved to place the Roth funds from the closed Wells Fargo account as well as all but \$500 from the other memorial accounts in a money market account with Edward Jones. The \$500 remaining in the library's memorial account represents a donation from Susan McSperritt. *more specifics about the type of account and the exact name of the company will come soon.***

5. Special Events (N. Altenbern) — In the absence of the chair, the board reviewed the upcoming Christmas Around the Prairie event.
6. Juvenile Programs (Weaver) — The "dinosaur" presentation at the school was well received.
7. Fundraising (A. Bennett) — The board is still reviewing a "chocolate" event to be associated with Valentines Day. Final plans will be discussed at the January meeting.
8. Bylaws (Rigg) — No report

C. President's Report

D. Library Director's Report

1. Statistics — Director Sullivan presented monthly statistics
2. Grants
 - a. Tracy Foundation will be providing a \$5,000 grant as reviewed in II.A.1 above.
 - b. The Tracy Foundation grant for STEM has been approved for \$5,000. This one will serve older students—ages 6-10..
 - c. Project Next Generation (PNG) is a STEM grant for \$36,000. The library was contacted about the application, which looks promising. It will involve working with Andrew Beasley, IT contact at West Prairie Jr-Sr. High School for students 12-18 years old.
3. Information
 - a. A "memorial tree" has been set up in the southeast corner of the Colchester Veterans Memorial grounds with blue and white lights. Connor Sullivan is labeling ribbons attached to snowflakes that are hung in memory of individuals who community members wish to honor. The library is also helping community members place commemorative wreaths on the fence at the Veterans Memorial.
 - b. The book club is making bags for story hour children for Christmas. The bags will include an ornament, book, toy, snacks, , etc.
 - c. The Di-November event at the West Prairie South Elementary School served 85 children, and the Curious George event in the library served 47 preschoolers from the school as well as story hour children.
 - d. Director Sullivan and the staff have met all the requirements for Narcan training. It involves recognizing signs of opioid overdose and administering of nasal spray.

E. Closed/Executive Session

1. E. Bennett/N. Altenbern moved to enter executive session at 5:33 p.m. E. Bennett/S. Altenbern moved to exit executive session at 5:40 p.m.
2. E. Bennett/N. Altenbern moved to issue safety awards to all district employees for their service in assuring that the library is a safe and secure environment for patrons: Director Sullivan \$175; Wyanette Smith, Elaine Hanks, John Dodd — \$50 each.

F. Items for Next Agenda

G. Announcements and Communications

H. Adjournment

- E. Bennett/A. Bennett moved adjournment at 5:54 p.m. Motion carried.

Submitted
Craig Rigg
Nicole Weaver

**MINUTES OF THE 14 December 2025 SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE COLCHESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

President Utter called the special meeting to order at 4:50 p.m. Trustees present: Nancy Altenbern, Steve Altenbern, April Bennett, Even Bennett, Craig Rigg, Nicole Weaver.

C. Rigg/E. Bennett moved to approve Ordinance No. 2526-3 — Ordinance Levying and Assessing Property Tax for Colchester Public Library District. Motion carried.

E. Bennett/S. Altenbern moved adjournment. Motion carried

Submitted
Craig Rigg