

The Board of Trustees of the Eckhart Public Library met on January 14, 2026 at 6:15pm at the William H. Willennar Genealogy Center, 700 South Jackson Street, Auburn, IN. The media and public received proper notice, pursuant to I.C. § 5-14-1.5-5.

President Barbara Morrow presided and called the meeting to order at 6:10pm.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Members of the Board of Trustees present by roll call were: Connie Fullerton, Pete Kempf, Barbara Morrow, Amy Norton, William Schaab, Nora Schwartz. Absent: David Brown

Also present: Executive Director Valerie Simmons, Business & Finance Manager Martha Rubrake, Technical Services & Finance Specialist Rebecca Mann and Administrative Specialist Sherri Sible.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Angela Mapes Turner, Steve Graber

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Board Member Kempf moved to approve the minutes from the December 9, 2025 meeting. Secretary Fullerton provided the second.

The motion to approve the minutes as presented carried 5 to 0 by roll call vote of the Board: Brown- X ; Fullerton-aye; Kempf-aye; Norton-aye; Schaab-aye; Schwartz-aye.

Vice President David Brown arrived at 6:12p.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Board Member Schwartz moved to approve the financial reports as presented. Board Member Norton provided the second.

The motion to approve the financial reports as presented carried 6 to 0 by roll call vote of the Board: Brown-aye; Fullerton-aye; Kempf-aye; Norton-aye; Schaab-aye; Schwartz-aye.

Final transfer of appropriations per Indiana Code (IC) 6-1.1-18-6.

Treasurer Schaab moved to adopt Resolution 2026-01 for the 2025 Transfer of Appropriations. Vice President Brown provided the second.

The motion to adopt Resolution 2026-01 Transfer of Appropriations as presented carried 6 to 0 by roll call vote of the Board: Brown-aye; Fullerton-aye; Kempf-aye; Norton-aye; Schaab-aye; Schwartz-aye.

VOUCHERS AUTHORIZATION

Presented vouchers from December 11, 2025 through January 14, 2026 in the amount of \$253,887.24.

Board Member Kempf moved to authorize the vouchers as presented. Board Member Schwartz provided the second.

The motion to approve the vouchers as presented carried 6 to 0 by roll call vote of the Board: Brown-aye; Fullerton-aye; Kempf-aye; Norton-aye; Schaab-aye; Schwartz-aye.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

All personnel have received internal controls training on standards and procedures adopted by EPL as required by Indiana Code (IC) 5-11-1-27(g)(2).

Simmons reported that the reappointment paperwork for Vice President Brown has been filed at the courthouse.

The Fee Schedule for 2026 will be presented at the February meeting.

Winter Read.Do.Explore is going strong already. The theme this year is "EPL Makes" which focuses on crafts and learning new skills.

Simmons reviewed the 2025 cumulative statistics. Notable changes include:

- Overall increase in circulation of 4.7% from 2024. This increase, combined with a decrease of what we are requesting from other libraries, indicates that the collection development efforts at EPL are better meeting the immediate needs of our patrons.

- While standard adult books decreased slightly (-4.2%), specialized physical items like Vox Books (+297.2%), Puppets (+95.9%), Library of Things (+20.9%), and Kits (+50.7%) gained popularity.
- 4.1% increase in active patrons from last year.
- 17.9% Increase of Main library display item circulation, illustrating the importance of accessibility to new materials and thoughtfully planned themed displays.
- Significant downloadable use increases.
- Wrapping up a major effort to include much of our Genealogy collection in the Internet Archive, allowing for world-wide online access of our holdings. As a result, we saw a huge increase in use from 1,505 views in 2024 to an impressive 42,342 views in 2025.

Efforts continue in partnership with the Eckhart Library Foundation to execute a sponsorship campaign for updated outdoor furnishings.

E-Rate project updates:

- The 2025 Category 1 project was for additional wireless hotspots to circulate to our patrons. The implementation of the project was dependent on the continuation of e-rate eligibility, and the eligibility was discontinued. We will carefully assess the option to add additional hot spots through our current carrier.
- The 2025 Category 2 project was for wireless access points, network switches, and labor costs. Vital Computing was selected for this project, and all work has been completed.
- The 2026 Category 2 project is for replacement battery cartridges for high-capacity Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) systems and one UPS heavy-duty backup power supply. Using a competitive matrix, Vital Computing was selected for this project. Alan Sweeny will be the primary contact.

Personnel:

No updates.

Gifts and Grants:

Donation from Sherri and Gary Sible in memory of long time patron and Friends member Tom Shawver who passed away January 5, 2026. Eckhart Public Library was the designated memorial for Tom.

Donations have been received in memory of Joyce Hoffmann who passed away December 6, 2025: Lisa & Jeramie Rigsby, Darcy Armstrong, Treva Finn, Matt Barse, Betty Wagner, Christopher & Christine Skidmore, and Sherri & Gary Sible. Eckhart Public Library was the designated memorial for Joyce who was a volunteer at the Teen Library in past years.

Donation from Terry and Ethel Bosserman to Eckhart Public Library.

Eckhart Library Foundation \$2,500.01 reimbursement for donation given in memory of Zach Hundagen. The additional shelving and supporting materials have been received and placed in the Teen Library.

COMMUNICATIONS and CORRESPONDENCE

Thank you card from Jason and Joann Sweitzer.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

EPL Director's performance review will be scheduled for January 27, 2026.

NEW BUSINESS

Election of officers for the Board of Trustees for 2026. Nominations are open.

Board Member Kempf nominated the following slate of officers for 2026:

- President - Barbara Morrow
- Vice President - David Brown
- Treasurer - William Schaab
- Secretary - Connie Fullerton

Board Member Kempf moved to approve the slate of officers as presented. Board Member Schwartz provided the second.

The motion to approve the slate of officers as presented carried 6 to 0 by roll call vote of the Board: Brown-aye; Fullerton-aye; Kempf-aye; Norton-aye; Schaab-aye; Schwartz-aye.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Update from the Friends of the Eckhart Public Library presented by Steve Graber:

- Strawberries Around the Fountain will be held Thursday, June 4 from 4-7 PM to coincide with summer Read.Do.Explore kick off.
- Membership drive on going; Book sales are doing well.
- Historic roof tiles will be crated in the spring and sent to the buyer in California.
- Luke Martin has joined the Friends of EPL Board.

Update from the Eckhart Library Foundation presented by Angela Mapes Turner:

- A new slate of officers will be presented and voted on January 26, 2026
- Shannon Carpenter has expanded consultant responsibilities
- Janelle Graber is Chief Operating Officer

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held on February 11, 2026 at 6:00pm for the regular meeting at the Willennar Genealogy Center, 700 S. Jackson Street, Auburn, IN.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board of Trustees, **Treasurer Schaab moved to adjourn the meeting.** Board Member Norton provided the second.

The motion to adjourn carried 6 to 0 by roll call vote of the Board: Brown-aye; Fullerton-aye; Kempf-aye; Norton-aye; Schaab-aye; Schwartz-aye.

Approved by the EPL Board of Trustees



Barbara O. Morrow, President

ATTEST: 

Connie Fullerton, Secretary

