

**Highwood Library & Community Center
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting – February 23, 2026**

Present—Trustees: Bertha Chavez, Janell Cleland, Lucy Hospodarsky, Nora Loreda, Paul Martinez, Jason Muelver, Nancy Pastroff, Catherine Regalado; Laura Ramirez, Director
Absent—None

Ms. Hospodarsky called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

Public Comments: None

President’s Report - None

Secretary’s Report

Ms. Hospodarsky moved to approve the November 24, 2025 and January 26, 2026 regular meeting minutes. Mr. Muelver seconded and the motion carried unanimously. After biannual review, Ms. Regalado moved to retain the current status of Executive Session minutes. Ms. Hospodarsky seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Communication: A comment in suggestion box was appreciative of the displays in the Library.

Treasurer’s Report

Ms. Pastroff presented the January financials and February invoices. Ms. Hospodarsky moved to approve the February 2026 invoices as listed in the Check Detail, Ms. Loreda seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Director’s Report

Ms. Ramirez highlighted some items:

- There was a recent naturalization ceremony for a class graduate.
- Technology Committee will finalize Technology Plan next week for March board meeting.
- Several grants have been received. Illinois State Library fully funded Project Next Generation, as well as a grant to improve security at the Library. Looking for B&G/Board input on possible key card entry, and additional cameras will be installed on west side of building. The food and toiletry support to the community is fully funded through 2026.
- Early voting starts next Monday. Mr. Brotsos created an instructional presentation for volunteers with a repeat on Wednesday, which may be recorded. Additional volunteers are needed to open building on Monday mornings.

Committee Reports

Finance: Committee met right before meeting. They discussed moving from debit to credit card due to daily spend limit and cost savings buying bulk quantities. This will allow managers to track spend by receipts. Treasurer will move forward on credit cards for managers and Director. Have received 2 quotes on HVAC issue and working on a third. Internal Controls Questionnaire for audit is on track to be completed tomorrow and given to auditors.

Policy: The Committee met and present two policies for approval with little to no change, as highlighted. It was noted that Standards chapter indicates Board reviews policies every 3 years but we follow schedule a previous Director obtained from Directors University with more frequent review. Standards also recommend a written ADA policy.

Building and Grounds: Mr. Martinez shared update on HVAC problem. Committee admits members as appropriate, no need to go through Board. Committee will look at vestibule water damage on west side of ceiling, which was part of recent construction.

Personnel: committee met and put together Succession Plan.

Old Business

Discussion of and approval of Technology Plan was tabled to next month.

New Business

Ms. Hospodarsky moved to approve the Soliciting and Selling and Meeting Room policies as presented. Ms. Cleland seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Discussion of HVAC repair

Ms. Hospodarsky moved to approve an expense of up to \$6850 for this, Mr. Muelver seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Discussion of equipment disposal list

Items 1-7 furniture items are currently in City Storage. #8 will be researched first but currently has only been used by Art Center.

Ms. Hospodarsky moved to approve disposal of items 1-7 on list. Ms. Pastroff seconded and the motion carried unanimously. President will sign form. A folder in shared drive will be created to retain scanned approved equipment disposal forms.

Ms. Regalado left the meeting at 7:30 pm.

Review of Online Standards for IL Public Libraries: Section 6 - Governance and Administration
Director provided brief history of Standards and overview of the structure, specifically the Action Plan that asks the Library to rate services on provided scale. She walked Board through each category on the check list and asked for input on services that we want to move to the next level of performance. President took notes on specific goals to move to next level.

Discussion of Succession Plan

President and Vice President met to review sample plans and created a draft to share with Board. Board decided it was a procedure rather than policy. The Policy Committee will read the plan through the lens of the Board By-Laws to make certain they are aligned. Board discussed next steps if the Director doesn't return in defined time frame. Board must be able to move forward with the search/replacement process and this should be named.

Discussion of credit cards for staff

The Finance Committee will reconvene to finalize details. Ms. Hospodarsky moved to approve credit cards for staff, allowing the Finance Committee to select the credit card that will meet the needs of the Library. Mr. Muelver seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion of closing the Library one hour early on Friday April 24, 2026.

There will be a staff quarterly gathering funded with grant money. Ms. Hospodarsky moved to approve closing the Library one hour early on 4/24/26, Ms. Cleland seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Hospodarsky moved and Ms. Loreda seconded to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:09 pm.