

HIGHLAND PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY
Board of Trustees Meeting
January 20, 2026

CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Olian, presiding on behalf of President Hoffman and Vice President Zotos, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Members Present: Rich Basofin, Rob Biederman, Ashley Lapin Olian, Rebecca Nathanson, Rob Olian, Carol Wolfe

Members Absent: Irene Hoffman, Peter Zotos

Others Present: Claudia Fincher, Graham Harwood, Catherine Lambrecht, Darren Schretter, Cary Rositas-Sheftel, Pamela Siegel, Heidi Smith

Trustee Olian and Director Smith welcomed Claudia Fincher, the new student liaison.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Trustee Biederman moved and Trustee Wolfe seconded a motion to approve the December 16, 2025 regular meeting minutes, December 2025 Bill List, the December 2025 Financial Reports, and the transfer to Special Reserve Fund. The motion passed unanimously.

Ayes: Basofin, Biederman, Lapin Olian, Nathanson, Olian, Wolfe

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

EXPANSION LIAISONS

Trustee Olian moved the expansion update to the top of the agenda and turned the meeting over to Graham Harwood, CCS representative, to provide a construction update.

Mr. Harwood stated that work continues on site grading, and foundation pours are underway with some work awaiting concrete and improved weather conditions. Regarding water issues in the lower level, the previously identified water damage was addressed with the installation of drain tile. A new water issue has since been identified through a different wall, and the team is actively investigating the source. Interior framing and new flooring up to the baseboard are complete. In the auditorium, the raised floor and dry wall installation have been completed. Work in the hallway has been placed on hold due to the newly identified water issue. Ductwork and electrical work continue in the lower level.

Looking ahead, once the concrete walls are poured, the space between the walls and the surrounding area will be backfilled. Drainage and under-slab work will be installed beneath the slab, with steelwork anticipated to begin by the end of January. Construction is expected to move quickly at that point, followed by pouring the concrete slab to make the structure watertight.

Several delays were noted, including undercuts, the addition of drain tile in the auditorium, a surveying error, and the electrical solution for conduit entering the building. The elevator location will be adjusted to avoid conflicts with electrical conduits.

Owner-Architect-Contractor (OAC) meetings continue on a biweekly basis. Pay Application No. 5 for October, totaling approximately \$300,000, was approved and paid. November and December pay applications remain open. Total project expenditures to date, including the October payment, are approximately \$2 million. The project schedule is continually updated and reviewed every two weeks, with particular attention to critical items and their impact on library operations. Current planning includes determining the timing for stair removal, and moving and storing Youth Services materials in the lower level.

Change orders currently total approximately \$400,000. The allowance in LoDestro's contract is approximately \$250,000, resulting in an overage of about \$150,000. Final pricing has not yet been determined, as several major items are still being finalized.

Director Smith reviewed the expansion expense detail that was distributed prior to the meeting. Due to the success of fundraising to date, the Library is in a position to increase the total amount budgeted in the 2026 budget for the expansion project in order to add to the contingency amount and to cover additional items that have arisen. The first page of the handout itemizes expenses already incurred, those pending, and those requested. Overall, she recommended increasing the 2026 budget by a total of \$750,000. A budget amendment will be presented to the Board next month for approval.

Director Smith noted that the 2026 capital budget includes a \$20,000 line item for signage, with an additional \$20,000 budgeted in 2027. The architect has recommended a total signage budget of \$50,000 this year. Accordingly, Director Smith recommended adding \$50,000 to the 2026 budget amendment for signage.

Trustee Olian remarked that the increased contingency amount reflects the amount originally included in the project budget that was reduced earlier due to the unexpected high bids, which necessitated cuts to items such as furniture. Fundraising dollars were not taken into consideration at that time.

Darren Schretter of Studio GC was present to answer questions regarding the furniture presentation shared last month and the memo included in the packet outlining next steps for the purchase of shelving and furniture. At the previous meeting, he presented the cost estimates at that time for shelving and workstations. Since then, LFI's shelving quote has been finalized based on last month's discussion.

Trustee Biederman questioned the total furniture budget. Director Smith noted that the project originally budgeted \$500,000 for furniture but was reduced to \$400,000 by cutting items and materials. At that level, she can't recommend furniture of acceptable quality. To avoid further price increases, she requested a motion authorizing expenditures not to exceed \$475,000.

Trustee Olian moved and Trustee Biederman seconded a motion to approve the authorization of the purchase of the shelving packages presented not to exceed \$235,000. The motion passed unanimously.

Ayes: Basofin, Biederman, Lapin Olian, Nathanson, Olian, Wolfe

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED

Trustee Olian moved and Trustee Biederman seconded a motion to approve the authorization of the purchase of the furniture packages presented not to exceed \$240,000. The motion passed unanimously.

Ayes: Basofin, Biederman, Lapin Olian, Nathanson, Olian, Wolfe

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Trustee Olian reported on behalf of President Hoffman:

- Trustee Olian reported that Alicia De La Cruz resigned from the Board due to personal matters. The Mayor is reviewing previously submitted applications to appoint a replacement.
- The Board revisited its prior discussion regarding magazine circulation. Director Smith reported that, after further review with staff and managers, they believe access to both current and back issues could be improved by eliminating magazine renewals and limiting checkout to 14 days rather than 42 days with all renewals. Patrons would still be able to place holds on both current and back issues. Director Smith asked the Board to consider the proposal and noted that it will be presented for approval at the February meeting.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Director Smith's report included the following:

- Director Smith inquired whether there were any questions regarding her report in the board packet. Trustee Biederman asked if ICE presence has affected library attendance. Director Smith shared that it is unclear whether internal or external factors may be affecting library use.

DEVELOPMENT LIAISONS

Trustee Lapin Olian reported that as of year-end, fundraising totals reached \$803,913, representing 238 gifts and 14 pledges. She noted that three naming agreements included in the packet require Board approval.

Trustee Basofin moved and Trustee Lapin Olian seconded a motion to approve the three MOUs presented in the packet: the Donna Fletcher Schur Trust, the Dolores Kohl Education Foundation, and Ryan & Tiffani Siegel. The motion passed unanimously.

Ayes: Basofin, Biederman, Lapin Olian, Nathanson, Olian, Wolfe

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED

OPERATIONS & POLICIES COMMITTEE

Trustee Olian expressed hope that everyone had reviewed the revised Personnel Policy. He noted that David Buzard, who worked extensively on the Personnel Manual revisions, was unable to attend the meeting and remarked that it would have been nice to thank him in person. He explained that, aside from stylistic edits and reorganization, the changes reflect updates in the law related to blood and organ donation, military leave, and accommodation for nursing mothers. The policy was amended to ensure compliance with current legal requirements.

Trustee Olian moved and Trustee Biederman seconded a motion to approve the Personnel Policy as revised. The motion passed unanimously.

Ayes: Basofin, Biederman, Lapin Olian, Nathanson, Olian, Wolfe

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED

OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Lapin Olian moved and Trustee Wolfe seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Olian, presiding, adjourned the meeting at 8:03 pm. The motion passed unanimously.

Ayes: Basofin, Biederman, Lapin Olian, Nathanson, Olian, Wolfe

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED

Submitted by: Pamela Siegel

Reviewed by: Heidi Smith, Ashley Lapin Olian

Approved: February 17, 2026