

HIGHLAND PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY
Board of Trustees Meeting
December 16, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

President Olian, presiding, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Members Present: Rich Basofin, Rob Biederman, Irene Hoffman, Ashley Lapin Olian, Rebecca Nathanson, Rob Olian, Carol Wolfe, Peter Zotos

Members Absent: Alicia De La Cruz

Others Present: David Buzard, Catherine Lambrecht, Anthony Moaton, Darren Schretter, Cary Rositas-Sheftel, Pamela Siegel, Heidi Smith

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Trustee Biederman moved and Trustee Zotos seconded a motion to approve the November 18, 2025 regular meeting minutes, the November 18, 2025 Bill List, and the November 2025 Financial Reports. The motion passed unanimously.

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

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

EXPANSION LIAISONS

President Olian moved the expansion update to the top of the agenda and introduced Darren Schretter of Studio GC to provide a report on construction progress.

Mr. Schretter reported that site preparation for pouring the slab is nearing completion. Excavation is proceeding on the south side, and all the fill required to replace poor soil conditions have been installed around the perimeter. Perimeter footings are complete and foundation work is underway. Interior footings that support two remaining interior columns are the final items to be completed before underground utilities begin in the footprint of the building. Interior work includes framing of all lower-level walls, completion of under slab water drainage tiles, raising the platform for the makerspace, and mechanical and electrical rough-ins.

Additional water seepage was observed this week along an interior wall in the lower level. The waterproofing contractor was on site, and further wall openings will be made to investigate the extent of cracking.

An exterior building mock-up was reviewed showing details for stone, flashing, and installation. Additional containment was added at the lower level to provide more separation and improve temperature control. Upcoming work includes continuing the underground slab and building up grade for the upper foundation, along with installation of slab utilities. One exterior utility remains outstanding - the water main which is awaiting a City permit. Approval is anticipated by the end of the week, after which the work will be scheduled.

Mr. Schretter reviewed the project schedule and identified project challenges, which include the removal of poor soils, installation of drain tile for water mitigation, a surveying error, and adjustments to electrical service routing. The electrical changes may require rerouting feeds or relocating the elevator approximately two and a half feet. Relocating the elevator is expected to provide significant cost savings compared to moving the electrical feeds, with an estimated cost of \$50,000-\$60,000 versus \$200,000. OAC meetings continue to be held every two weeks, with the next meeting scheduled for December 30.

Pay Application #5 for October was recently submitted to Director Smith for payment. Mr. Schretter has just received the November payable, approximately \$300,000, which he will review with Graham Harwood. Year-to-date construction costs total \$1.67 million excluding Pay Application #5. LoDestro is still working on an updated construction schedule. Phase 3 archive work is anticipated to be completed in September.

President Olian asked whether there is an estimate for undercutting. Mr. Shretter indicated that the contractor expects to have a number next week and noted that CCS has been informed the estimate may be approximately \$150,000. President Olian also asked about the cost of moving the water line. The cost was \$44,000; however, the City has requested additional work, including replacing T- connections with straight runs and adding thrust blocks.

A question was raised regarding the feasibility of using a thinner fire-rated door with the 6” CMU wall to meet fire rating requirements. Testing documentation and technical papers will be submitted to the City along with an amended permit. If the proposal is not approved, two alternatives were discussed:

1. Reduce interior dimensions to accommodate the required thickness.
2. Eliminate the gap between the two buildings, which may allow recovery of the needed inches.

Mr. Schretter provided an update on furniture by area. The Makerspace will be furnished with all new seating, tables, workstations, and storage units. The Meeting Rooms will retain existing chairs and obtain new tables. Youth Services will reuse existing workstations, some tables and chairs, and some shelving; additional tables and chairs and new soft seating are planned. The Archives will receive additional new shelving, along with a new table, chair and workstation. There is a meeting on Thursday to select fabrications. The current furniture quote is around \$444,000, compared to a budget of \$400,000. The team will work to reduce costs to better align with the budget.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

President Olian’s report included the following:

- There are no new developments in outstanding MOU’s.
- President Olian noted that the Board has provided strong support for the fundraising campaign and reported that the Library is receiving positive responses from a recent round of letters sent to former donors, former trustees and City Council members.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Director Smith asked trustees if they had any questions regarding her report in the board packet. There were no questions.

BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Chair Biederman reported that City Council approved the FY2026 budget and the 10-year Capital Improvement Plan on November 24. At its meeting last night, the Council also approved the levy at 9.5%. The FY2026 budget was approved in the amount of \$6,734,000.

The salary line includes a total increase of 8%, consisting of a 4% across the board increase, a 2% additional compensation pool, and 2% for two new mid-year positions in 2026. In addition, HR Source provided a benchmark for salary ranges this year at 2.2%.

Trustee Biederman moved and Trustee Wolfe seconded a motion to approve the FY2026 budget. The motion passed unanimously.

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

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED

Trustee Biederman moved and Trustee Zotos seconded a motion to approve the updated 2026 salary ranges. The motion passed unanimously.

Ayes: Basofin, Biederman, Hoffman, Lapin Olian, Nathanson, Olian, Wolfe, Zotos
Nays: None
MOTION CARRIED

DEVELOPMENT LIAISONS

Chair Hoffman reported that the campaign has raised almost \$650,000 to date and noted the community's strong and enthusiastic response. She and Trustee Lapin Olian met with Director Smith to identify items to address before the end of the year and into the next year. As mentioned, the campaign is running out of naming opportunities. President Olian suggested considering the naming of some existing spaces. Trustee Lapin Olian noted the importance of pursuing additional major named spaces while continuing to engage with larger donors.

President Olian expressed appreciation to the liaisons for their continued good work.

Trustee Hoffman moved and Trustee Lapin Olian seconded a motion to approve the Anita and Matt Testa naming agreement. The motion passed unanimously.

Ayes: Basofin, Biederman, Hoffman, Lapin Olian, Nathanson, Olian, Wolfe, Zotos
Nays: None
MOTION CARRIED

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

President Olian presented the slate of officers for 2026: President – Irene Hoffman, Vice-President – Peter Zotos, Secretary – Ashley Lapin Olian, Treasurer – Rob Biederman.

Trustee Olian moved and Trustee Wolfe seconded a motion to approve the slate of officers as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Ayes: Basofin, Biederman, Hoffman, Lapin Olian, Nathanson, Olian, Wolfe, Zotos
Nays: None
MOTION CARRIED

OPERATIONS & POLICIES COMMITTEE

Chair Zotos reported that the Committee completed the annual review of the Personnel Policy. The current document is 82 pages and is being restructured into a more general employee manual with specific appendices for reference. Chair Zotos recognized David Buzard for his contributions to this work. The Committee met on December 13 to review new legal requirements including amendments to the Nursing Mothers in the Workplace Act, the Illinois Military Leave Act (to include paid leave for funeral honors), and the Employee Blood and Organ Donation Leave Act. The Library will comply with all amendments effective January 1, 2026. The updated policy will be brought to the January Board meeting for approval.

Director Smith echoed Trustee Zoto's comments about David Buzard, noting that the project would not have been completed without his contributions.

OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

None.

CLOSED SESSION

Trustee Lapin Olian moved and Trustee Zotos seconded a motion to adjourn to closed session at 7:53 p.m. to discuss the Executive Director evaluation and 2026 compensation, the approval of

June 17, 2025 and October 21, 2025 closed session minutes, the approval of opening June 17, 2025 closed session minutes, and the approval of destroying recordings from February 20, 2024 and June 18, 2024 closed sessions. The motion passed unanimously.

Ayes: Basofin, Biederman, Hoffman, Nathanson, Lapin Olian, Olian, Wolfe, Zotos
Nays: None
MOTION CARRIED

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

President Olian adjourned the closed session at 8:20 p.m. and reconvened an open session at 8:21 p.m.

President Olian moved and Trustee Zotos seconded a motion to increase Executive Director Smith's FY 2026 salary by 4%. The motion passed unanimously.

Ayes: Basofin, Biederman, Hoffman, Nathanson, Lapin Olian, Olian, Wolfe, Zotos
Nays: None
MOTION CARRIED

Trustee Wolfe moved and Trustee Zotos seconded a motion to approve the June 17, 2025 and October 21, 2025 closed session minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Ayes: Basofin, Biederman, Hoffman, Nathanson, Lapin Olian, Olian, Wolfe, Zotos
Nays: None
MOTION CARRIED

Trustee Lapin Olian moved and Trustee Hoffman seconded a motion to destroy the recordings from February 20, 2024 and June 18, 2024 closed sessions. The motion passed unanimously.

Ayes: Basofin, Biederman, Hoffman, Nathanson, Lapin Olian, Olian, Wolfe, Zotos
Nays: None
MOTION CARRIED

Trustee Wolfe moved and Trustee Biederman seconded a motion to approve the opening of June 17, 2025 closed session minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Ayes: Basofin, Biederman, Hoffman, Nathanson, Lapin Olian, Olian, Wolfe, Zotos
Nays: None
MOTION CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Wolfe moved and Trustee Biederman seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. President Olian, presiding, adjourned the meeting at 8:25 pm. The motion passed unanimously.

Ayes: Basofin, Hoffman, Lapin Olian, Nathanson, Olian, Wolfe, Zotos
Nays: None
MOTION CARRIED

Submitted by: Pamela Siegel
Reviewed by: Heidi Smith
Approved: Rebecca Nathanson