



DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Palos Heights Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting
March 19, 2026

Library News

Budget Update

Per our discussion at February's meeting regarding interest on the overpaid distribution from the County, I have created a spreadsheet to track those funds. The interest earned on the overpaid funds in January (credited to our General Fund money market account on 1/31) was \$661.23. The interest earned on the overpaid funds in February (credited to our General Fund money market account on 2/28) was \$1,877.61. I will continue to track these totals until this situation has been reconciled with the County.

I requested a legal opinion from our attorney as to whether the County might be entitled to request the interest earnings on the overpaid amount back from us at some point. She stated that she doesn't believe there is any legal mechanism to take back interest on funds that were mistakenly distributed. "Their legal right is only to the taxes improperly paid by taxpayers (whether to the taxpayer or to a different taxing body)." So I don't think the risk is high that they will try to get any interest back, but I will continue to track this interest going forward regardless. She also verified that the most likely recourse for the county to recoup funds mistakenly distributed to us is to deduct from future installments, and she is able to negotiate with the county on our behalf if things get messy with them in the future.

Though they were promised by March 1, the County Treasurer's office has yet to produce any reports on the funds distributed in January. So we and they cannot yet determine exactly how much we were overpaid, who those funds were actually supposed to go to, and what we can expect to be deducted from our next round of distributions, due to go out in a few weeks. I will continue to keep you posted as this situation develops.

Building Envelope Project

Our Owner's Representative, engineer, and contractor have been working behind the scenes to get everything ready for this project to begin. We had a final pre-construction meeting on March 4th and were able to identify the color of the material that will most closely match our existing metalwork. Construction is scheduled to begin on April 6th and is expected to take about six weeks, depending on weather interruptions. I was impressed by the contractor's questions about protecting our landscaping as much as possible and how they can ensure proper protection of the building while walls are opened up. The engineer was also adamant that he be able to inspect the installation of each layer of material to ensure it's being done precisely to his specifications from start to finish. I believe we are in good hands. We have

a construction progress meeting scheduled for April 9th to review the current state of construction and any issues that might have arisen in the first few days of work.

Other News

Requests for Statements of Economic Interest have been sent out. Please let me know if you haven't received it in your personal email. Also, please let me know if you have any issues filling it out. You should receive a confirmation email (which will contain no private information) once you have successfully completed the filing. Please forward me a copy of that confirmation email so that I can keep it on file, in case anyone ever comes looking for it. The filing is due by May 1st, and there is a small financial penalty for not filing on time.

I have been asked to do some public speaking in the coming weeks. I will be presenting at Directors University Advanced on April 28th on the topic of Capital Needs Assessments. This is a four-day retreat for experienced library directors that happens every other year. I'll also be attending that retreat to brush up on the latest in best practices in just about every aspect of this job. And I have been asked to speak to the board of the Alsip-Merrionette Park Library on the topic of responsible levying at their meeting on April 14th.

Upcoming Events

- Thursday, March 19th – Regular Board Meeting, 6:30pm
- Thursday, April 16th – Committee Meeting, 5:30pm
- Thursday, April 16th – Regular Board Meeting, 6:30pm

Agenda Items

Item 1: Bloodborne Pathogen Policy

I am regularly working on behind the scenes reviewing various library policies, both to keep my memory fresh regarding our existing policies and to keep an eye out for policies in need of updating. There are a lot of policies that could use very minor tweaks, so my plan is to start bringing those to your attention one at a time in the coming months. My hope is that these will be quick and painless reviews, for the most part.

The first such review is our existing Bloodborne Pathogen Policy. This is a simple policy that was mandated by statute back in the 1990s. It simply lays out how the library will handle potentially contagious body fluids, which is something that staff do have occasion to come into contact with every once in a while.

The two proposed revisions are changing the wording of "Palos Community Hospital" to the more general "medical" personnel. The previous wording would seem to require staff to only seek treatment at our local hospital. It seems prudent that we might want to allow an exposed staff member to seek treatment from medical personnel at another institution, should circumstances warrant.

The other change is to put this policy on the triennial review track rather than the annual review schedule. I believe this is warranted as the content of this policy is unlikely to change at all from one year to the next.

Recommendation: I recommend that you approve the revised Bloodborne Pathogen Policy.

Item 2: National Library Workers Day Honoraria

It is our tradition every year to recognize National Library Workers' Day by giving a gift card to each staff member in the amount of \$25. Staff have always been very appreciative of this gesture, and I recommend that we continue it. In the past, these gift cards have been purchased from various local restaurants. We currently have 27 employees, so the total cost of these cards would be \$675. Certainly, if the board has any suggestions for a different way of honoring our employees on National Library Workers' Day or if you have suggestions for specific restaurants or other businesses from which to purchase these, such input is welcome. The cost of these honoraria has already been factored into this year's budget.

Recommendation: I recommend that you approve National Library Workers Day honoraria in a total amount of \$675.

Respectfully submitted,
Jesse Blazek
Library Director