

Crawfordsville District Public Library Board of Trustees Special Meeting minutes, August 29, 2025

Special Meeting to Approve 2026 Budget

President Benedicks called the special meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 3:02 p.m. Trustees present were Dr. Benedicks, Ms. Smith, Mr. Parke, and Mrs. Helms. Mr. Foster and Mr. Brewer was absent. Mr. Phil Littell, who may soon be appointed to the board by the County Council, attended in an advisory role. Ms. Theresa Tyner, library director, and Ms. Steelman Wilson, library assistant director, were also present.

Public comments – No public comment.

Old Business: 2026 Budget Proposal – Ms. Tyner presented a revised 2026 budget, which cut expenditures in the General Fund to \$1,935,780 in order to operate within reduced tax receipts. The goal had been to find a minimum of \$268,000 in order to maintain a cash balance of \$560,000 with additional cash if possible. Proposed changes included no longer opening on Sundays, eliminating employee raises, allowing two job positions to remain unfilled, reducing the anticipated health insurance premium, eliminating our current janitorial service and hiring two part-time custodians, eliminating AT&T contracts by replacing the fax line with RightFax service, rebidding the photocopier lease, and other reductions to various budget lines to decrease spending.

Ms. Tyner also presented a list of estimated revenue changes resulting from the passage of SB 1 when additional large cuts will be necessary for the next few budget years.

Dr. Benedicks asked what the staff morale currently was, and Ms. Tyner said that she had updated all staff the previous day via email to reduce concerns.

Mr. Littell clarified the mandated 8% required to be spent on library collection items is based on operating expenses, including personnel. As a result, reductions in expenses result in a smaller mandated collection cost.

Mrs. Helms asked about the impact to part-time staff, and Ms. Tyner responded that she is hoping to reduce staffing by attrition rather than any layoffs.

Dr. Benedicks thanked Ms. Tyner for her impressive work in preparing the amended budget.

Mr. Littell said that long-term alternatives to funding the CMMC would need to be considered. Ms. Tyner stated that currently exhibit, program, and some professional development are funded by the Friends of the Carnegie Museum nonprofit, but Mr. Littell pointed out that in 2024, \$170,000 was expended on the CMMC and is one of the largest expenses in the budget.

Ms. Tyner said that now that the Carnegie Museum is a Historic Designated Property, special grants may be available for maintenance of the building's exterior. Given that the museum operates as a department of the library, CDPL currently maintains it.

Mrs. Helms noted the visitation levels are different between the CMMC and CDPL.

Ms. Tyner reviewed the financial situation, with property tax impacts to reduce the library's funding by an additional \$45,460 in 2027, and \$177,250 in 2028. She stated that moving to the

Evergreen Consortium Integrated Library System from Polaris will save the library \$29,000 in the first year [when the Evergreen fees are subsidized], then half of the Evergreen fees the next year. The estimated Evergreen fees for CDPL are \$12,000. The cost of Evergreen is based on the last five years of operating expenses, meaning the cost may be adjusted to be lower after the current budget is reduced.

Mrs. Helms asked about the Other Advertising budget line. Ms. Tyner responded that it includes items such as Facebook sponsored posts to increase attendance at special programs and the CMMC highway signs.

Mr. Littell asked about the public reaction to budget cuts. Ms. Tyner verified that everyone she has spoken to in person about the cuts have been upset about them. Dr. Benedicks suggested a story in the Journal Review may help fundraising.

Ms. Tyner said that the Journal Review was currently planning an article on the 20th anniversary of the new building and would be talking with her about it next week. The article's approach could be either celebratory or we could also address the funding situation.

Mr. Littell asked about the proposed schedule of open times, and Ms. Tyner currently proposes that the library be open Monday-Thursday 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., Friday and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and closed on Sunday.

There followed a discussion of part-time vs. full-time staffing and costs, moving to a discussion of meeting room hours.

Mr. Littell suggested that meetings could shift in response to closing earlier, and suggested a transition to long-range hours, perhaps closing at 8 p.m.

Ms. Smith asked how the public is notified of the budget, and Ms. Tyner responded that it will be published in the Gateway system, with the Department of Local Government Finance representative and Ms. Tyner making final adjustments in the next week. Ms. Tyner suggested that an article could be written to advise the public about the revenue decreases, and also to post notices on social media and the website.

The subject of earlier weekday closures was reintroduced. The consensus of the discussion was that the public would adjust meeting hours to the new time frame available. The subject of decreasing winter hours was tabled to discuss at the next library board meeting.

Dr. Benedicks motioned to approve the amended budget, with Mrs. Helms seconding. The motion carried.

The board expressed their thanks to Ms. Tyner for her hard work on preparing the changes to the budget.

Ms. Tyner will determine the timeline for the public hearing and contact the board members to re-schedule it.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn was made by Dr. Benedicks, seconded by Mrs. Helms. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.