



**EVANSTON
PUBLIC
LIBRARY**

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

LIBRARY COMMITTEE PACKET

Tuesday, January 21, 2026, at 5:00 PM
Main Library, Community Meeting Room, and via Zoom

Zoom Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85480732960>



MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, January 21, 2026, at 5:00 PM

Main Library, Community Meeting Room, and remote

Zoom Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85480732960>

Members of the public are invited to provide comments in person during the Public Comment portion of the meeting or by submitting written comments in advance via the following link: <https://forms.gle/16fGTFeqEFR6tmro8>

Written comments will be attached to the Board minutes and distributed to Trustees.

MEETING AGENDA

- 1. CALL TO ORDER / DECLARATION OF QUORUM**
- 2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT**
- 3. CITIZEN COMMENT**
Not to exceed 45 minutes
- 4. OLD BUSINESS**
 - a. Board Policies
- 5. NEW BUSINESS**
 - a. Agenda items for next meeting
 - b. Recording Board Meetings (Discussion & Action)
 - c. Strategies for Public Communication (Discussion & Action)
- 6. EXECUTIVE SESSION**
- 7. ADJOURNMENT**

Next Meeting: February 18, 2026, at 5:00 pm via Zoom and hybrid

The City of Evanston and the Evanston Public Library are committed to ensuring accessibility for all citizens. If an accommodation is needed to participate in this meeting, please contact the Library at 847-448-8650 or TDD/TTY number 847-866-5095 at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting so that arrangements can be made for the accommodation if possible.



MEMORANDUM

To: Evanston Public Library Board of Trustees

From: EPL Communication Sub-Committee

Subject: Addition to Board Bylaws - 1.6 Meetings of the Board of Trustees; Regarding Public Recordings of Library Board Meetings

Date: January 21, 2026

Purpose

To increase transparency and public access, Evanston Public Library (EPL) will publish recordings of all open, scheduled full Board of Trustees meetings, including captions and transcripts, within a short timeframe prior to the next full Board meeting. This practice will supplement—but not replace—the official record of approved minutes required under the Illinois Open Meetings Act (OMA).

Addition to Board Bylaws, Section 1.6: Meetings of the Board of Trustees

Evanston Public Library (EPL) will record and publish open, scheduled full Board meetings with accessible captions and transcripts within a short timeframe and prior to the following full Board meeting. Closed-session recordings and access are governed separately by OMA and are not published. Each meeting webpage will clearly label recordings/transcripts as supplemental and include a link to where the Board packets and minutes are located, briefly explaining the process for approving minutes.

Technology failures or emergencies may delay posting; ED or staff designate will post as soon as practicable and note the reason for delay on the meeting page. Applies to all noticed and open full meetings of the EPL Board of Trustees that are conducted in-person, hybrid, or virtually (e.g., via Zoom).

Posted recordings/transcripts will be maintained online for 12–24 months, subject to the Illinois Local Records Act and EPL's Local Records Commission-approved schedule; minutes and agendas remain permanently accessible as required.

Proposed Effective Date: January 21, 2026.



References:

- DOJ ADA Title II web rule fact sheet and Federal Register final rule (WCAG 2.1 AA standard for state/local governments). [ADA.gov+1](#)
- ADA Title II Web and Mobile Application Accessibility Rule - State and local government compliance guidance. [ADA.gov-Web Rule](#)
- IITAA 2.1 (Illinois) – requires WCAG 2.1 AA conformance; effective June 24, 2024. [DoIT Illinois+1](#)
- Illinois OMA FAQs (AG) – minutes required for all meetings; verbatim recording required for closed sessions. [Illinois Attorney General](#)
- W3C WCAG 2.1 and WAI guidance – captions for prerecorded video; auto captions not sufficient unless confirmed fully accurate. [W3C+1](#)



MEMORANDUM

To: Evanston Public Library Board of Trustees

From: Ellen Riggsbee, Marketing and Communications Manager

Subject: Introduction of Board of Trustees FAQ Page for Public Transparency

Date: January 21, 2026

Background

In response to recent public questions and ongoing community conversations about Evanston Public Library and the role of the Board of Trustees, the Communications Sub-committee has developed a set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for inclusion on the Library Board of Trustees page of the EPL website. These questions reflect themes and topics that community members have raised through public meetings, direct outreach, and general engagement with the Library.

The FAQ document is intended to clarify the Board's role, responsibilities, and decision-making processes, as well as to provide context around current issues that may be discussed publicly. By proactively addressing common questions, the Board aims to reduce confusion, ensure consistent messaging, and provide accurate, accessible information directly from the Board.

Summary of Intent

The purpose of the Board FAQ page is to support transparency, openness, and trust between the Board of Trustees and the Evanston community. The FAQs are designed to clearly explain Board actions, governance responsibilities, and how decisions are made—while reinforcing the shared commitment of the Board and Library staff to fiscal responsibility, public service, and community-centered leadership.

This resource is not intended to replace formal policies or Board materials, but rather to serve as a plain-language, public-facing guide that helps residents better understand how the Library is governed and how Board decisions align with the Library's mission and values.

Please feel free to share feedback or suggested revisions. Once finalized, the FAQ page will be published on the EPL website and referenced as an ongoing transparency resource for the public

Frequently Asked Questions

[The Library Collection: Digital Materials](#)

[The Library and the City of Evanston](#)

[The Library Board of Trustees](#)

The Library Collection: Digital Materials

What happened to the digital resources the Library used to have?

In mid-2025, Evanston Public Library transitioned away from a high-fee, shared consortium and began building an interim independent digital library, with the long-term goal of forming a new, free-to-us consortium with other libraries.

The process was not as smooth as we hoped and were promised, and as a result, the number of available digital resources is currently fewer than before. We're sorry for the disruption and frustration this change has caused.

We recognize that this has been inconvenient for our community. Our focus now is on restoring access to more titles as quickly as possible, improving both the size of our digital collection and the process moving forward. We are actively working to build a more stable, reliable digital library that best serves Evanston residents. In the meantime, Library staff are always available to help patrons find alternatives and access what they need. We intend to share updates as this evolves.

Why did the Board of Trustees approve the change to the digital library?

In approving changes to the digital library, the Board carefully considered all available options and listened to staff recommendations, with the goal of ensuring Library funds were being used as responsibly and sustainably as possible. These decisions were made with a focus on balancing access, service quality, and fiscal responsibility.

The Board works collaboratively with Library leadership, the City of Evanston, and the public to guide decisions transparently and thoughtfully, always with the intention of being good stewards of public resources and ensuring the Library can continue to serve the community well—both now and into the future.

The Library and the City of Evanston

What is the Library's relationship with the City?

The Library has been an independent organization since 2014. It is not a separate district with an elected board and full taxing/borrowing authority, nor is it a City

department. That said, the City owns the main library building and the Crown branch building. The Library pays the City for some services (e.g., HR, IT, legal, facilities) by agreement.

What is happening right now between the City of Evanston and the Library?

The City of Evanston and the Library are continuing conversations about how best to work together moving forward. As mentioned above, the Library currently purchases several key services from the City, and both parties intend to continue working together to ensure smooth operations and strong support for patrons and staff.

Additionally, the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between the City and the Library is under review as part of broader discussions to clarify roles, responsibilities, and service delivery expectations. Reviewing agreements like this is a normal process when organizations seek clarity and improvement.

These discussions are centered on clearly defining—in writing—what City-provided services are purchased by the Library, and establishing Service Level Agreements (SLAs), so the Library can continue to operate transparently and maintain its fiscal responsibility to the City of Evanston, Library patrons, and staff.

During these discussions, the Library and its services remain open and operating as usual. Programs, collections, and staff support continue uninterrupted.

Is the Library separating from the City of Evanston?

No. The Library is not separating from the City of Evanston. This topic came up in 2024-25 as part of a study that was conducted solely to research and understand that scenario, so services could be clearly identified and costs quantified. This fact base helps ensure that any forthcoming agreement between the City and the Library is accurate, well-defined, and fiscally responsible.

No changes are taking place, and the Library will continue to work collaboratively with the City. Any future updates will be shared openly through appropriate public processes.

What is happening with the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA)?

As mentioned above, the IGA between the City and the Library is being reviewed as part of broader discussions about roles, responsibilities, and service delivery. Reviewing agreements like this is a normal process when organizations seek clarity and improvement. The Library Board aspires to complete the IGA review, with inputs from the City – including any needed revisions – in 2026. It is important that this move forward so that the Library is up-to-date on how it may responsibly access capital for maintenance and improvements to enhance patrons' experience and safety.

Updates will be shared publicly if changes are proposed.

The Library Board of Trustees

What is the Board of Trustees' role?

The Library has an independent, appointed Library Board. The Mayor appoints Library Board Trustees with City Council advice and consent. The Evanston Public Library Board of Trustees is responsible for the Library's overall governance and long-term stewardship. The Board helps set policy, provides financial oversight, oversees the Executive Director role, and ensures the Library stays true to [its mission](#) while serving the evolving needs of the Evanston community.

Board members are community volunteers who care deeply about the Library, its staff, and the people it serves

Are Board of Trustees meetings open to the public?

Yes. Board of Trustees meetings at the Evanston Public Library are open to the public, and community members are welcome to attend. Time for public comment is included so residents can share questions, feedback, or concerns directly with the Board.

[Agendas](#) are posted on the Library's website in advance of approved meetings and minutes are posted following meetings, so the public can review what will be discussed and what actions were taken. As of 2026, monthly Board meetings are recorded, captioned and made available on our webpage.

Anyone can email any member of the Board directly with questions or concerns. All Board members' email addresses are available on the [EPL Board of Trustees](#) web page.

How can I attend or participate in a Board meeting?

Community members may attend Board meetings in person. Meeting dates, times, locations, and agendas are posted on the Library's website ahead of each meeting ([link](#)).

Public comment guidelines are included on the agenda, and attendees are invited to participate in accordance with those guidelines. The Library welcomes respectful community engagement as part of its governance process.

Are Board meetings recorded or available to watch later?

Yes. Beginning in 2026, Evanston Public Library will share recordings of monthly Board of Trustees meetings to expand access and transparency. Recordings will be available on both the Library's website [[link](#)] and the Library's YouTube channel.

This added option allows community members who cannot attend meetings in person to stay informed about Board discussions and decisions on their own schedule. Sharing meetings, agendas, and recordings is part of the Library's ongoing commitment to openness, accountability, and public trust. The Board and Library leadership believe that clear communication and accessible information help strengthen the relationship between the Library and the community it serves.