

Eldora Public Library
Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, January 27, 2026 – 5 p.m

Minutes were approved. Bills were approved.

Old Business

- Joan submitted the library's accreditation, and Kristin Gehrke signed off on it. We have always been a Tier III Library and will remain so. This is renewed every 3 years.
- Joan has not yet heard back about the Carnegie Library Grant. It is for \$10,000 with no restrictions.
- Jessi's last day was on January 9, and Joan advertised for an assistant director in several places. No qualified applicants were received. She will proceed with a shared schedule, which is shared in New Business.
- Additionally, Joan submitted a grant to the Hardin County Endowment Foundation. She hopes to fund the replacement of 6 computers.

New Business

- The assistant director's position is going to be split. 40 hours will be shared between Catie, Melissa, and Susan. Catie will work 11, Melissa 17, and Susan 12. Joan feels good about this arrangement for the time being, and we can post for an assistant director when the time comes. Catie will also receive a raise to match the other staff at \$16.50
- Joan is going to post and share an updated policy for the lobby. This is in response to continued misuse by a group of young women. The board added that patrons may not film other patrons. Mary moved, and Joe seconded.
- Joan shaved more than \$700 from the budget, even after last year's cuts. She has been present at all finance meetings with the city. More as things are updated.

Director's Report

- 939 checkouts and 4 new cards in January.

- Joan brought Scott Reister, author, to the elementary with the goal of reaching more students. Goal reached! A group of homeschool children and E-NP grades 3-5 attended the workshop. It was well-received.
- The annual boiler inspection occurred, and Brent from Waldingers was again helpful to supply information to pass this inspection.
- The annual fire alarm inspection was also passed.
- Joan recently participated in Apollo training to refresh new features in our system, and will attend the virtual ILOC this Thursday from 9 a.m. – 7 p.m.
- Blind date with a book began with 10 already checked out.
- Joan will be present in many classes at the elementary for World Read Aloud Day.
- There is a finance meeting on February 5 at 3:30. Joan attends all these.
- There is a city council meeting on February 16 at 6 p.m. and a personnel meeting at 3:30 p.m. the same afternoon.
- In other city news, the Kiwanis will hold a brunch to support the aquatic center fundraiser. This will be Sunday, Feb. 15 from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Submitted by Betsy Kuecker – Thursday Jan. 29, 2026

Next Meeting is February 24th at 5 p.m.

MINUTES

Eldora Public Library Board of Trustees

February 24, 2026

PRESENT: Kristin Gehrke, Jerry Trittien, Joe Herring, Emily Stoulil, Bob Alpers, Mary Swartz, and Joan Grothoff

- PUBLIC COMMENTS: Non
- MINUTES from the January 2026 meeting were approved
- BILLS were approved. A large item (\$2,982.61) was for repairs to the boiler.
- Old Business:
 - City Council approved the shared Assistant Library Director position with an hourly wage of \$16.50. Catie will remain Children's Librarian also at \$16.50/hr. All three will split 40 hrs/week. Brenda will remain a sub.
 - \$10,000 was received as a gift to all Carnegie Libraries. It will go into our Trust account and is to be used "to better our services to the community"
- New Business
 - City budget workshops are set for 2/25 and 3/17. Joan expects to be asked to make cuts, which she plans to do in book purchases, periodicals, and other misc. areas. She asks any board members who can attend the March date to be there to help support the library.
 - All Depts. Are on spending freeze; Joan is using Trust to make book purchases, and the City insisted on downgrading our TP quality for the bathrooms.
 - New Cricut has been purchased with Trust money. Supplies are being provided by Friends.
 - Summer reading planning is underway. Five performers lined up so far. Dates TBD based on school calendar.
- Direct's Report was received
 - Good numbers on checkouts
 - February programs went well, including Olympics reading challenge, Blind date + Book
 - After School Kids' Club remains strong; Teen room small but mighty.
 - Joan will attend a national virtual conference – Big Talk for Small Libraries
 - Spring Break (March 16-20) – Library will be closed Friday but open Sat. Several activities are planned for the week.

- Working on resuming adult programming in April
- Joan obtained current Library Board of Director
 - 2026: Kristin, Emily
 - 2027: Jerry, Bob
 - 2028: Joe, Mary, Betsy

Next Meeting: March 31, 2026

Submitted by Joe Herring

Eldora Public Library
Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, March 31, 2025 – 5 p.m.

In attendance: Mary Swartz, Emily Stoulil, Joan Grothoff, Jerry Trittien, Betsy Kuecker,
Kristen Gehrke, Joe Herring

Minutes were approved. Bills were approved.

Old Business

- Kristin attended the budget workshop with the city while Joan was away. The library was not mentioned, but we sent representation for awareness. The library will remain the same. Staff will continue to share 40 hours.
- Cricut and supplies arrived; staff is still learning, and services will start soon.
- Still on a spending freeze.
- Job sharing continues. Brenda subbed while Joan was away on vacation.

New Business

- Joan cut an additional \$18,000 from the budget: \$6,000 from books and other small cuts from many line items. Joan plans to supplement book purchases with trust money and support from the Friends. Other reductions and donations may need to be sought to make things work. Joan continues to be resourceful and creative.
- The library was awarded \$6,000 from the Hardin County Community Endowment Foundation to purchase new computers. Joan plans to attend the awards night on April 9.
- \$2,000 was received from Church Women United to support the summer reading program. Summer reading planning is going well with just a few performers and events to complete.
- NextEra Energy met with Joan to let the library know it is eligible for a \$1,000 grant to support programming. Joan has sent initial paperwork.

Director's Report

- 1375 total checkouts and 2 new cards.
- Spring break activities included a leprechaun scavenger hunt (with more than 50 taking part), take and make crafts (25 taken), and Smash Bros. tournament (7 young people) and a STEM activity (4 attending).

- Friday of spring break the library was closed with no issue. Saturday did see an uptick in visitors.
- Passport services are being used.
- Catie was off the week of the 23rd, and Brenda came to support. Joan stretched staff to save money.
- The library will host the Revolutionary lowans display from March 31-July 31. It is free from PBS to celebrate the country's 250th anniversary.
- During April, the library will host: Tyler Sullivan – Iowa Scenic on Foot (April 2, 1pm), Kim White – Women in History (April 16, 10:30 am).
- Joan will attend a finance meeting on April 9 and the HCCEF awards in Hubbard. There is also a council meeting on April 14. Joan will also attend a POP YS virtual event on April 16 and 17. Department head meetings for the city are moving to Wednesday before and after council meetings.
- Melissa is not free any Saturdays in the spring due to soccer coaching. Catie is also not free, so Joan is absorbing Saturday hours. She will earn comp time, but acknowledges this is not a positive long-term solution.

Submitted by Betsy Kuecker

Next meeting on April 28th

Eldora Public Library
Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, April 28, 2026 – 5 p.m.

In attendance: Emily Stoulil, Joan Grothoff, Jerry Trittien, Betsy Kuecker, Kristin Gehrke

Minutes were approved. Bills were approved.

Old Business

- The library joins the city in its current spending freeze. Joan is using money from the Trust and other support to buy books.
- Joan attended the April 9 HCCEF awards night to receive the \$6,000 grant for new computers.
- New Era Energy sent a \$1,000 grant check to the Friends of the Library. The funding requires recognition, so Joan will list and advertise them as a program sponsor sometime in the future. New Era is also coming to the Hardin Count Library Association meeting in May. Most of their work is in the Radcliffe area.

New Business

- The city budget, including the library, was approved at a special meeting on April 24. Amendments can be made in May. Bev Jones was the only council member not to approve the budget; she does not agree with all the cuts.
- Summer reading is set to run from June 1-July 10. The pool party will be scheduled for Monday, July 13 from 6-8pm. This is a switch from Saturdays; Joan hopes for greater attendance.
- Joan discussed extra staff hours to help with summer reading. Michelle said no, but Joan will work to adjust hours or cut staff hours later to make up for the additional work required for summer reading program.
- The library has been selling pool passes and trash stickers and bags to help the city, since city hall has reduced open hours.
- Donations continue to come in to the Friends of the Library, which is a help for summer reading and book purchases.
- Looking at our FY 2025 budget, there are line items that require corrections. Right now, health insurance is listed at 115% over budget. This is because the city has been charging for Susan's insurance, even though she is at part-time and not receiving that benefit.

- Going forward with the FY 2026 budget, note that the Friends of the Library will support adult programming and Joan will continue to be creative with grants and other donor support to purchase books.

Director's Report

- 1,125 total checkouts and 12 new library cards.
- April highlighted several programs: Tyler Sullivan (10 attendees, not well received), Kim White (8, well received), and Dwight Clark (16, well received).
- The open house had many attendees, and Amy Faris won the grant prize of a flower pot and \$20 gift card to Norby's. She is glad the library is fun, safe and great for everyone to enjoy.
- The new computers have arrived. In addition to the \$6,000 grant, the Friends allocated \$1,500 to finish the purchase. Staff computers are set up, and Scott Swartz will set up patron computers soon.
- After School Club ends May 13. The last Pokemon Club is May 14. The last Teen Room is May 18.
- Hardin County Library Association meets in Ackley on May 19.
- ENP Elementary classes will come to the library the week of May 18 to learn about the summer reading program.
- The library will be closed on Monday, May 25 for Memorial Day. It should be open Saturday, May 23.
- Summer reading sign up begins on Tuesday, May 26 – the last day of school.

Submitted by Betsy Kuecker

Eldora Public Library
Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, May 26, 2026

In attendance: Joan Grothoff, Jerry Tritten, Emily Stoulil, Kristin Gehrke, Rober Alpers

Minutes were approved. Bills were approved.

Old Business

- The spending freeze will end in July.
- City Council will meet on May 26 for final budget amendments. Joan related that Miley Carter has resigned her position. Volunteer names to fill her position are welcomed.
- The library sales of swimming pool passes are going well and is much appreciated by the public.
- A solar panel arrangement for library and other city offices has been contracted by Red Lion Energy. It will be a “solar” car port for parked vehicles. Joan presented a picture of the proposed arrangement and will inquire about head clearance for larger service and delivery vehicles.
- Landscaping for the library’s west side has been requested. The city will till the ground and put down a covering of wood chips, river rock, or white stone. There might be a sitting bench, potted plants, and flowers. Estimates for a cedar privacy fence seemed overly expensive (\$8,800). With budget cuts, it would not appear financially frugal. Joan is looking to find endowment or grant money.
- Friends of the Library will finance up to \$300 for flowerpots at the front entry.
- Summer reading program sign-up begins May 26. The program includes varied activities and will meet every Monday. Joan is hoping to start an Adult Reading Program also.
- The error regarding health insurance overcharge for Susan’s status is being addressed. Joan is advocating that the library receives the financial reimbursement.

Director’s Report

- Using a sign-up procedure for the after-school program was very successful. The same will be used next year.
- Good Shepherd and ENP Elementary classes attended a summer reading introduction. Joan hopes to set a record with sign-ups.

- Our Allen Eskens HCLA October event will include area libraries with information tables. Grant and dues money will finance this event.
- Joan is buying books from an Ackley bookstore, Perennial Pages, which gives area libraries a 50% discount.
- Deb Johnson's Pine Lake history presentation was well received by 38 attendees. It was co-sponsored by the CCC. Stay tuned for Part 2.
- Emily Stoulil will present a strength training class on Thursday from 1-2.
- Our Kickoff event is planned for June 3. A 5:30 hamburger meal is planned and Joan hopes to employ a magician for a show from 6-7.
- Story Time with volunteer city workers will meet on Wednesday mornings for 6 weeks. Crafts, games, and a performer are planned for each week. Joan is offering an adult reading program also.

Next meeting is June 20, 5:00 PM.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:45 PM.

Submitted by Robert Alpers

Eldora Public Library
Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, June 30, 2026 – 5 p.m.

In attendance: Joe Herring, Emily Stoulil, Mary Swartz, Joan Grothoff, Bob Alpers, Betsy Kuecker

Minutes were approved. Bills were approved.

Old Business

- The Solar Array Project (which will be in the parking lot) was approved by City Council. It will look like covered parking. It should begin sometime in coming months; no details yet.
- Mike and Michelle Olson donated the flowers out front.
- Mike from the city will take care of the grass. Friends will buy a bench or picnic table to put under the tree.
- The spending freeze has been lifted by the city.

New Business

- Joan's status as director has been changed from salary to hourly as of July 1. This is a positive move, as Joan can earn comp time at time and half. She wants to earn time off.
- Melissa told Joan she wants to cut her hours due to her personal inability to work. This could have been accommodated in several ways: cut her hours to 8 and fill with other staff, or replace Melissa. Joan is weighing the options of how best to use current staff, and prepare to fill positions in the future. The board discussed this at length. In the end, Mary moved the position advertised as an assistant director who will work 29 hours. Bob seconded the motion. Approved.

Director's Report

- Circulation was 1,823 with 4 new library cards.
- June was full of summer reading happenings: Bubble show and meal to kick off (150 attending), Toby the Kid program (47 attending), Blank Park Zoo (98 attending), 4H Dog Show (78), Recycled Planters (48), Pokemon (6), Make a Splash (21), Rock painting (28), Teen Trivia (4), Pokemon Training (17), Kids Trivia (15).

- Storytimes have also been well attended this summer: Police department (65), public works (46), city hall (25), mayor (49). The day care often brings their classes.
- Fire department will host story time on July 1 and EMS on July 8.
- Robison Reptiles program is slated for July 6 at 1 p.m.
- The pool party to conclude summer reading will be July 13 from 6-8 p.m.
- Teen Smash Bros tournament will be July 17, and Candy Sushi will be July 29.
- Jonathan May, magician, will come to the library on Tuesday, July 27 at 10:30 a.m. This will be paid for by Next Era grant money.
- The library will be closed July 3 and 4 for the holiday.
- Carnegie Library money received in 2026 is still in the trust.
- There was some trouble returning the computer that didn't work. The company claimed it was damaged and will only refund \$499.99 of the \$999. Joan reported the seller on Amazon.
- Scott Swartz is donating his tech services this year, saving the library at least \$500.

The next library board meeting will be Tuesday, July 28 at 5 p.m.

MINUTES: Eldora Public Library Board of Trustees

July 28, 2026

PRESENT: Jerry Trittlen, Kristin Gehrke, Emily Stoullil, Mary Swartz, Joan Grothoff, Joe Herring, Bob Alpers, and Betsy Kuecker

MINUTES were approved. Bills were approved.

Old Business

- Michelle is coming to the August meeting to give an update on city and library budgeting and to speak about the last fiscal year.
- Joan decided to keep staffing steady rather than seek to hire an assistant director at this time. She is going to see how balancing time between Melissa, Brenda, and Susan works before making changes. Melissa has been upfront about her scheduling conflicts, and Joan is able to work around it.
- Current Schedule: Catie is Monday 2-6, Wednesday and Thursday 1-5; Melissa is Monday 1-5, Wednesday 3-5, and coverage for Joan on Fridays as needed; Brenda is Tuesday and Thursday 2-5. Whoever works Saturday gets an extra 3 hours. Everyone is also willing to rearrange the schedule when Joan is away. This schedule is set to begin August 3.
- The grass is dead, so Joan will touch base with Lynn and Ralph Albee to get mulch and rock down. The Friends will buy a bench for the area.

New Business

- Mary is resigning from the board after at least 20 years! We will have a party.
- Sara Anderson will take her place and should be approved at the August city council meeting.
- The Adventure Pass was misused. Joan plans to monitor the pass more closely.
- After School Program will continue on Wednesdays for K-5 with a sign up.
- Teen Room will continue on Mondays twice each month with no sign up.
- Pokemon Club will continue twice a month.
- The State Library of Iowa is experiencing changes in positions and is also finding new vendors for filing annual reports. There will be a delay in filing reports and some funding.
- The Friends agreed to fund Hoopla. Thank you! Without that support, it would likely have been dropped.

Direct's Report

- 1,145 total checkouts in July. 13 new library cards.
- Joan subbed in for the fire department story time (no show). 42 children.

- Other programming attendance: Robison Reptiles 40, EMS story time 37, pool party 84, teens smash bros tourney 2, Jonathan May magician 54 (paid for with NextEra Energy grant).
- Total attendance for summer reading programs was 873, and total minutes read was 93,420.
- Teen candy sushi is scheduled for July 29 at 3 p.m.
- August will be used for planning the school years, reorganizing and cleaning.
- Toadally Toads program is set for August 10 at 1 p.m. Also paid for with the NextEra Energy grant.
- A foam party will be held on Back-to-School night on Thursday, August 20 at 5:30 p.m. Also paid for with the NextEra Energy grant.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, August 25 at 5 p.m.

Eldora Public Library
Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, August 25, 2026 – 5 p.m.

In attendance: Kristin Gehrke, Emily Stoulil, Jerry Trittien, Joan Grothoff, Bob Alpers, Betsy Kuecker,
Michelle Kelley (City Administrator)

Minutes were approved. Bills were approved.

Budget Update

- Michelle Kelley was present to give an update on the city budget and how the library may be affected in fiscal year 2027. LOST money will not come to the library, which is a loss of \$15,000. This is something to be aware of as we come into the season for planning.
- Michelle noted that Joan is exceptional in her creativity in cutting costs AND finding money to support all number of things for the library. The community support has also been wonderful. The board, of course, agrees and has seen much evidence of Joan's commitment to keeping the library not just surviving, but thriving.
- Michelle's visit reminded all that because property taxes cannot be raised due to state legislation, the time of cutting and finding new ways to make things work is not over.

Old Business

- Staff schedules are flowing okay so far. Brenda is filling in a lot, and Joan will reevaluate needs again in a month or so.
- Joan will move forward with landscaping fabrics and mulch. Friends will pay for materials, and Joe Herring has offered to help.
- Joan did reach out to Kailee Tubbs about the misuse of the Adventure Pass. She has agreed to pay the \$70, but it has not been received.
- Sara Anderson was approved to replace Mary Swartz on the board. Welcome, Sara! Sara was absent for a volleyball match.
- Enrich Iowa has been filed. Joan anticipates a \$2,800 check this fall.

New Business

- Joan applied for the Church Women United grant for children's programming and supplies.
- She continues to look for grants all the time.
- Joan will be on vacation Sept. 17-23. She was able to rearrange the schedule with no overtime. She will finish up the comp time she saved while salaried.

- Joan will attend the Iowa Library Association Conference October 7-9 in Cedar Rapids. There is money set aside in the budget, and Michelle Kelley approved.
- Joan is currently working on the annual report, which has library statistics from every library in the state.
- Chair Yoga is going well. Freewill donation has brought in several hundred dollars.
- In August, Joan cleaned out some series and duplicate books and sold them to other libraries.
- Michelle Kelley transferred back \$7,969.86 health insurance costs plus county money (\$1,589) missing from November. A total credit of \$9,573.60 was received.
- An Iowa flag is now required due to SF 2430. One has been ordered and will fly.

Director's Report

- Circulation was 1,095 and 8 new cards were issued.
- Toadally Toads had 71 attendees. Great, interactive program.
- The first day of school was yesterday, August 24. About 20 kids came in after school and some new boundaries have been set. Joan will continue to ride the line of welcoming children and juggling how to best do so.
- Project Meow will present on Thursday, August 27 at 1 p.m.
- After School Kids Club start Sept. 9 and will run on Wednesdays.
- Pokemon Club will be every other week, beginning Sept 10
- Teen Room will also be every other week, beginning Sept. 14.
- Brooke from EMS will do a Q&A about ambulance service on Thursday, September 24 at 10 a.m. Joan encourages the board to attend.
- Ann Hannigan Kotz will present Beyond the Parlor Walls: Iowa Women who Shaped Their Communities on Wednesday, Sept. 21, but no programming will be planned as Joan is gone.

The next library board meeting will be Tuesday, Sept. 29 at 5 p.m.