Northeast Ohio Regional Library System
Minutes of Board Meeting held on October 21, 2025 at Ritter Public Library at 11:00am

Call to Order
This meeting was called to order at 11:00am by President Jen Grill.

Roll Call (RC)
Board members present: Robin Bartley, Jen Buch, Bali Culver, Jen Grill, Meghan Harper, Melissa Mallinak, Patrick Manning, Pam Matthews, Laura Ponkivar, Cheryl Slater, Marisha Sullivan, Scott Trimmer, Jen Welsh

Board members absent: Carrie Kibby, Katie Cooley

Late arrivals: None

Board members attending via Zoom: None

Staff members present: Ragan Snead, Hillary Brown, Jill Grunenwald, Mary Ellen Powers

Absent: Melissa Lattanzi

Introduction of Guests: None

Approval of Agenda (V)
Melissa Mallinak moved, and Scott Trimmer seconded a motion to approve the agenda, as amended. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Approval of Minutes of Sept 16, 2025 Meeting (V)
Robin Bartley moved; Baladine Culver seconded a motion to approve the minutes. Motion carried by voice vote.

Correspondence:
President, Jen Grill has nothing at this time.

Ragan Snead had lovely emails from the letters of intent being sent out letting us know that their libraries really appreciate the value of their NEO membership.

Reports:
Fiscal Officer/Financials (Enc 2) (RC):
Fiscal Officer Mary Ellen Powers reports that the first quarter money was received on time and nothing unusual has occurred. More workshop fees coming in over the next few months. We will be over our budget for membership revenue this cycle!

- Melissa Mallinak moved; Pam Matthews seconded a motion to approve the financials. Motion carried unanimously by roll call.

Executive Director (Enc 3)

Ragan Snead submitted a written report for the Board packet highlighting the following:

- ROI for letters of intent was more difficult to run than anticipated and were not universally beneficial to include, but we do have a process to include it in the future. Instead, the letters of intent included a one-sheet on how to maximize memberships, especially with vendor discounts.
    - Scott offers to use PowerQuery in Excel to produce reports around the ROI with much less work.
- All public and special libraries have been sent out and 23 have been returned. A few public libraries have downgraded to Silver, but they were ones that had already spoken with Ragan Snead in the past about changing their membership level.
- Is there a way to see if people are using vendor discounts? We can ask the vendors to pull the number of people who are pulling the code.
- Successfully moved everything out of the office to Wickliffe Public Library and was able to pare down the amount of documents and supplies.
    - No response from the State regarding retention policies, but we were still able to decrease our number of items.
    - We don't typically keep paper files outside of the physical files and file them into the master regularly.
- Going to the State Library Retreat on Thursday to present to the board.

Continuing Education Coordinator (Enc 4)

Melissa Lattanzi submitted a written report and sent the following highlights along for Ragan to support

- We had three very large webinars (100+) in 2024 during this same period, resulting in a drop in total attendance from last year.
- Shoutout to Melissa Lattanzi for helping with finding CE for inappropriate discussions between staff and members of the public. Nothing was in the archive, so Melissa is now planning one with Andrew Sanderbeck.

Marketing and Engagement Coordinator (Enc 5)

Jill Grunenwald submitted a written report and highlighted the following:

- Creating marketing collateral (handouts, signage, etc) for the open house, ALAO, and OLC this fall.
- We have a new Instagram account! KPI for this account coming next meeting.
- LinkedIn has been doing excellently in the metrics over the last month.
- Shoutout to Jen Buch for always commenting on the Coffee and Contemplation posts and increasing our engagement.
- Great interaction on the cohorts for Leadership and New Supervisors training.
- Are we doing different formats of post for the different platforms?

  - Yes! Message is the same, but the posts are different.

Programs and Services Associate (Enc 6)
Hillary Brown submitted a written report and highlighted the following:

- Helped with the move, beginning inventorying on the tech kits and their infrastructure (cords, chargers, etc).
- Thinking about strategies for improving usage of the tech kits—want to promote at OLC and ALAO.
  - Right now we are including program ideas in the folders, but we want to include real-life examples of usage—photos, testimonials, examples of programs at other libraries.
  - There may be some libraries who are no longer using them because they have purchased the devices for their own libraries already.
  - Stark County DD have been doing assistive technology kits—this might be a good option for a new kit, possibly grant-funded from LSTA Open or the state office Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities.
  - Scott Trimmer has been promoting the gaming/VR tech kit on the merit of more interest in gaming in academic libraries.
  - The general survey that is out right now that has some tech kit questions included.
- Have been supporting CE with Melissa Lattanzi, hosting some webinars, and starting to host in-person.
- Have been leading Active Learning Communities and have been adding message boards a little faster than anticipated. We're getting great feedback!
  - Board members who have been in the active learning community demos have also appreciated the quality of the demos and the speed of the rollout.

Board Officers
Nothing at this time.

Committee Chairs
Personnel Committee: Jen Welsh

- Discussed reviewing salary ranges—Marisha Sullivan is assisting with getting information from other organizations.
- Fiscal officer restructuring and workload has resulted in us needing to increase hours for this position to a 20-24 hour through March 27, 2026 while Mary Ellen Powers continues her onboarding process. This will be discussed and voted on later in the agenda.

Bylaws/Policy Committee: Marisha Sullivan

- After reviewing both documents, mostly non-substantive mistakes were found—mostly spacing. The following are the substantive changes needed:
  - In Appendix C of the Administrative Policy Manual, "Networking Groups" needs to be changed to "Active Learning Communities" and made platform agnostic rather than saying what platform they will be hosted on.

- A new cybersecurity policy and training section will need to be added in accordance with Ohio HB 96.
- The group also discussed, upon request of Ragan Snead, the viability of a corporate membership or sponsorship model from for-profit organizations. We have received questions in the past about this and it may represent a viable revenue stream as we look towards the future.

Advisory Groups

Special Libraries: Ragan Snead and Marisha Sullivan

- It was an active meeting with a few new academic libraries joining the group.
- We received a significant number of CE topic recommendations, including archives for non-archivists, cataloging for non-catalogers, and a library fundamentals series for those without a Masters/library experience in librarian roles
    - There's a session at OLC this year called cataloging for non-catalogers.
- The vendor discount page was also discussed—both in terms of a need for a reorganization of the resources and how useful it was.
- Special libraries are interested in partnerships and resource-sharing with public libraries and would be interested in promoting via the messaging board. This led to a wider discussion about ways that the two sections of our field could work together—the academic/special libraries providing specialized subject area expertise (articles, potentially programming) while the public libraries provide audience and connection to the communities.
    - Maybe call the section of the messaging board for this "Libraries Helping Libraries".

Current Business

Board Training

Both Jen Grill and Ragan Snead each met with David Holmes from Candid to ask about him providing board training. He is very willing to come in and assist with a Board 101 training that will be specialized to our board and seems excited to work with us. He may also make a great webinar speaker in the future.

- Should the staff be there? There's probably benefit to both them being present and not present. We'll ask David Holmes his thoughts on it. If partial staff should attend, Ragan Snead and Melissa Lattanzi would be priorities.
- Mary Ellen Powers may be absent for jury duty the week of the training.
- Consider bringing a lunch/snack, as it will be a longer day.

Storage Update

All moved out and files are at Wickliffe. Most of the CE supplies are at Howland branch of Warren-Trumbull. The PO box is up and running and has started receiving mail, but mail could not be forwarded from GCPL. Will continue to pick up mail there in the short term.

Audit Update
Mary Ellen reports that the 2023 withholdings documentation has been sorted through and the IRS somehow reported an incorrect number for our first quarter withholdings. The IRS has received the documentation three weeks ago via certified mail but did not process it yet, but we have done all of our work and have the paperwork backed up locally. There may be some small fines/fees if it goes the way Mary Ellen suspects.

We cannot start the new audit until the old one clears, but Mary Ellen will investigate whether we can do some pre-work on it.

- Ragan has gotten confirmation that the new audit's continuation has made it to the state level and the 941X documentation has been received. They have 16 weeks to process it, apparently.
- The 2022 missing 941 has arrived and is documented. Apparently, they're missing one from 2021, though. Which has already been audited. Ragan is sending it in with a note about it being a second attempt.
- Future board members: please keep 941s for way longer than you think we should. If you want to talk to someone at the IRS, opt for a callback rather than sitting on hold.

New Business
State Library of Ohio 1st Quarter Report (Enc 7)
We have submitted a quarterly report, none of which should be new to our board members. Mostly about the move, wrap-up of strategic planning, and statistics from CE and marketing.

- Scott asks if we see the other regionals' reports. We do not and they do not see ours.
- These reports are required in order to receive our funding.

Fiscal Officer Hours Bd Res #2026-11 (Enc 8) (RC)
Proposal to increase hours in order to allow for more comprehensive onboarding and to ensure sufficient hours are allotted for the work required for the position.

- Add "weekly" to resolution to clarify frequency of hours.
- Board members should consider what types of financial information should be included in the board reports and what kinds of questions should be asked so we can provide guidance to Mary Ellen.
- Scott: are there fiscal officer groups that she could join for community and networking purposes? Yes! Lisa Haviland has recommended one—Ohio Library Fiscal Officer Association.
- Jen Welsh moved; Melissa Mallinak seconded a motion to adopt the resolution as amended. Motion carried unanimously by roll call.

2025-2026 Executive Director Goals, (Enc 9)
Ragan has shared her goals with the Personnel Committee, received feedback from the committee, and is now sharing the edited versions with the board.

- Discussion around goal 1A: Create and implement a schedule for regular library visits and/or member meet and greets across the region, to visit at least 10 libraries annually.

  - How do we decide who we visit?
    - Historically mostly from requests, but staff are looking into the website's scheduling module to see if it could be used.
    - Discussion of how to be more deliberate in selecting libraries—discussed library type, engagement level with NEO, those undergoing leadership or infrastructure changes, and any current board vacancies as potential factors.
    - Perhaps add a pre-visit engagement report and post-survey or post-visit measurement of engagement level from that library to create a measurable for this goal?
- Other goals discussed non-substantively. They are good goals.

Items too Late for the Agenda:

Website Notes

Pam Matthews brought up issues she'd noticed on the website.

- Vendor page is not sorted, as noted in Special Libraries Advisory Group. Jill is already on it!
- The agendas and board minutes are a significant mess—there are some missing and some links point to the wrong files.
  - Looks like an IT problem.
  - Marisha Sullivan proposes combining all closed fiscal years into single pdfs and keep only the last three years online.
- Discussion of web accessibility and the best way to display documentation online. Accessible pdfs are easy to make in Word and Adobe!

Public Comments:

None

Upcoming Meetings

FULL BOARD MEETING
Friday, November 14, 2025 | 11:00 a.m.
Westlake Porter Public Library
27333 Center Ridge Rd
Westlake, OH 44145

BOARD TRAINING
Friday, November 14, 2025 | 1:30 p.m.
Westlake Porter Public Library
27333 Center Ridge Rd
Westlake, OH 44145

Adjournment:

Melissa Mallinak moved, and Patrick Manning seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 12:31pm.