Northeast Ohio Regional Library System
Minutes of Board Meeting held on September 16, 2025 at Mentor Public Library at 11:00am

## Call to Order

This meeting was called to order at 11:07am by President Jen Grill.

## Roll Call (RC)

Board members present: Robin Bartley, Katie Cooley, Bali Culver, Meghan Harper, Carrie Kibby, Patrick Manning, Pam Matthews, Laura Ponkivar, Cheryl Slater, Marisha Sullivan, Scott Trimmer, Jen Welsh

Board members absent: Jen Buch, Melissa Mallinak

Late arrivals: Katie Cooley, 11:28am

Board members attending via Zoom: None

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

Absent: None

Introduction of Guests: Jo Phillips (Stark Library)

## Approval of Agenda (V)

Pam Matthews moved, and Patrick Manning seconded a motion to approve the agenda, as amended. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

## Approval of Minutes of July 15, 2025 Meeting (V)

Robin Bartley moved; Jen Welsh seconded a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

## Correspondence:

President, Jen Grill has nothing at this time.

Ragan Snead has a few emails as correspondence, one of which was on the stress management webinar saying it was the best webinar they'd ever taken. Another was forwarded from Scott Trimmer who said that they have staff in non-library areas that take our webinars!

## Reports:

### Fiscal Officer/Financials (Enc 2) (RC):

Fiscal Officer Mary Ellen Power presented the financial report. She reports that the Hinkel Report items are included in this month's packet. At the bottom of the report, you can see our cash balance, which matches our fund balances when totaled and can help us better understand the breakdown of how we spend our money. Additionally, she has included end of fiscal year justification of the budget to show where all the money ended up. We had a lot of revenue come in during August and September, so those aren't shown in the reports yet.

- Marisha Sullivan 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:

- Have been able to maintain a high level of collaboration within the staff over the summer
- Wrapped Warren-Trumbull strategic planning, had a meeting with Willoughby-Eastlake about doing theirs.
- Kickoff meeting for salary survey next year
- Awards committee is meeting at the end of the month
- Annual report is included later in this packet—and it's pretty and easy to read thanks to Jill Grunenwald!

## Continuing Education Coordinator (Enc 4)

Melissa Lattanzi submitted a written report and highlighted the following:

- Still working with libraries to find them staff day speakers
- Programming proceeds apace, business as usual
- Great program attendance and archived webinar attendance with a significant increase over last year
    - We seem to be hitting the needs of the library staff, especially around self-care and stress management. Jill Grunenwald's promotion of our sessions is also likely a contributing factor.

## Marketing and Engagement Coordinator (Enc 5)

Jill Grunenwald submitted a written report and highlighted the following:

- Attended Digipalooza to connect with vendors and has onboarded two new vendors to our vendor discount program
- Started emailing MLIS programs to advertise to students—emailed University of Alabama, Kentucky, and Albany. University of Alabama clearly advertised, as we had an influx of their students. There's some extra overhead to verify student status that has not been figured out.
- Newsletter and social media stats continue to do very well. Newsletter is above benchmark and the social media engagement has been great—event recaps continue to perform well and some weird one-offs like Shark Week outperforms expectations! Jill Grunenwald is struggling with pulling social media stats, as they do not line up as nicely as we would prefer. She is working on figuring out how to get them fixed.

## Programs and Services Associate (Enc 6)

Hillary Brown submitted a written report and highlighted the following:

- Continuing to lead yoga webinars and hosting others. First of the story time series is next week!

- Message boards have been built as beta for a few active learning communities with a manual opt-in. Slow roll out continues and have been demoed in the active learning communities with great reception.

### Board Officers
No reports at this time, but we love the message boards!

### Advisory Groups
Technology:
- Objectives and goals that were set in 2022; have either been accomplished or are no longer relevant. Will create new goals among the staff, to be implemented next year. Likely addressing tech kits as part of this.
- NEOThink is our vendor for keeping our hardware up to date.
- Staff should probably take the cybersecurity trainings that NEO-RLS offers.
- On a good tech replacement schedule.

DEIA:
- Looked at goals for the year, has done a ton over the last few years around policy and bylaws. Goal concepts include:
  - DEIA resources page review
  - Message board for “hot topic” resources rather than longer-term items
  - Website accessibility hasn’t been done for a few years and is on the list to work on with the Technology Advisory Board

### Committee Chairs
Awards Committee:
- Selection group logistics were discussed, have been successfully recruited and rubrics have started coming back. Meeting on 9/30 to tally and decide winners.
- Physical awards themselves on a previous vendor were expensive and took a while. We’re going to be using Etsy for both timing and pricing purposes.
- Got some excellent multimedia submissions for the awards and we received over 20 nominations for all awards.

Finance Committee:
- Met this morning, it was long! Very thorough update from Mary Ellen Powers around the audit and the end of fiscal year.
- Committee members discussed Mary Ellen Powers’s request for an increase in hours to be discussed with Personnel today and the board next month.

## Current Business
### Annual Report (Enc 7)
It’s in the packet and, while the information is the same stats from last year, it is much prettier and super colorful thanks to Jill Grunenwald.

- We moved some highlights to the front page and moved the letters from the staff/board to the inside and financials to the back. Shortened the letters as well to give a bit of extra space to our impact.
- It is much easier to find the highlights and to skim through and get the high-level details we want to impart.
- Will go out tomorrow, 9/17, so please alert Ragan to any corrections.

### Storage Update and Tri-C Storage Agreement Bd Res #2026-9 (Enc 8) (RC)

We have moved much of the Tech Kits to Wickliffe Public Library and most of the CE materials to Howland branch of Warren-Trumbull Public Library. We have decreased the number of filing cabinets which are yet to move. There are a few items left to move and will have a moving truck coming out.

- We have obtained a new P.O. box in Twinsburg.
- The filing cabinets will be moved to Tri-C pending approval of resolution #2026-9
    - Our insurance will cover this as a location and Tri-C finds our coverage acceptable.
    - We are going to be offering an incentive payment of $500 annually. This year will be a straight monetary payment, following years will be a voucher towards NEO-RLS services
    - Consider reaching out to State Library for contract review and legal services.
    - The term of the contract is 2 years, so we will need to revisit this again in a few years.
- Marisha Sullivan moved, and Baladine Culver seconded a motion to adopt the resolution pending review by an attorney representing NEO-RLS's interests. Motion carried by roll call with Scott Trimmer abstaining.

## New Business

### RLS Directors' Meeting Update

Ragan Snead met with the other regionals on 9/5

- LSTA carryover funds (~20k annually) is on hold for at least the first half of the year. If we get anything, we will get it towards the end of their fiscal year dependent on what money is available from the State. We will be fine.
- The other regionals will be potentially looking at pooling resources to provide CE.
    - The other regionals typically operate by purchasing PCI webinars (People Connect Institute).
    - We used to sell webinar seats to other regionals and may want to consider this again going forward.
- IMLS funding is looking positive, but still not settled.
- The State Library is looking at starting a foundation or other supporting group
- The State Library also has a bid out for Strategic Planning
- We will have our own table at OLC since it's in Cleveland this year.

### Letters of Intent for 2026-2027 (Enclosure 9) (V)

Will be going out in October (not on a specific date, but within the month)

- No changes other than dates.
    - A few small edits will be made per the board's discussion—change "Networking Groups" to "Active Learning Communities" and fix formatting issues
- Ragan is considering adding an ROI portion to the letters of intent
    - Discussion about the balance of how to best use this piece of data
    - Will also be of potential use to the board
- Will the address change to the new P.O. box make this difficult?
    - Not likely for Letters of Intent, but we will be communicating this, likely with postcards to fiscal officers.
- Scott Trimmer moved, and Jen Grill seconded a motion to approve the letters of intent as presented. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

### Auditor Contract Extension Bid Res #2026-10 (Enclosure 10) (RC)

The State allows two five-year contracts consecutively for an auditor and the auditor we have been working with is going to be out of contract this year.

- In past positions, Mary Ellen Powers has requested a one- to two-year extension
- Ragan has made a request with the state regarding our request for an extension. We have not yet heard back.
- Pam Matthews moved, and Katie Cooley seconded a motion to adopt the resolution as amended pending the decision of the State. Motion carried unanimously by roll call.

### Board Training Topics

We have time for training scheduled (11/14) and Ragan would like input on what we should be trained about.

- Last training was the Diversity Center of NE Ohio
- Consideration of board basics, management of a board, and building an effective board
- Potential future training topics include cybersecurity and accessibility
- Send ideas for speakers to Ragan Snead

## Items too Late for the Agenda:

### 2023 Audit

The audit didn't close due to unanswered questions in FY23 Q1

- We thought it was a missing 2022 941 form. We received the transcripts and it showed it had not been filed. We have rectified this.
- There is a new problem. We are being told we owe $2100 plus penalty and interest (equivalent of 3 months). Mary Ellen Powers is requesting our bank statements and payment portal information (online they only go back 2 years).
- There is an identical excess payroll balance in July of 2023-2025 of $673; it should be zero. Three quarterly 941s filed in 2023 were filed late and Mary Ellen Powers couldn't get it reconciled. Mary Ellen Powers believes that we do not owe $2100 and instead owe a month's worth to the IRS, which may be the same $673.
- We do not have sufficient information at the moment to know what happened, but the payment portal information should help resolve this.

## Public Comments:

Jo Phillips: Thanks for letting me join the party!

## Upcoming Meetings

BYLAWS/POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, October 21, 2025 | 9:30 a.m
Ritter Public Library
5680 Liberty Ave,
Vermilion, OH 4408

FULL BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, October 21, 2025 | 11:00 a.m.
Ritter Public Library
5680 Liberty Ave,
Vermilion, OH 4408

## Adjournment:

Jen Welsh moved, and Scott Trimmer seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 12:43am.