



ILLINOIS LITERACY FOUNDATION

Illinois Literacy Foundation
Board of Directors Meeting
December 10, 2024
12:30 p.m.
Offices of the Secretary of State
115 South LaSalle Street, 2nd Floor Conference Room (Crete)
Chicago, Illinois 60603

MEETING MINUTES

PRESENT

Roberto Castaneda (virtual)
Claire Demirjian (virtual)

Michael Mroz (virtual)
Nate Pietrini

John Rosales

NOT PRESENT

Heather Anichini
Hanah Jubeh

Mo Khan
Crystal Reynolds

ILLINOIS SECRETARY OF STATE STAFF PRESENT

Cabell King
Greg McCormick
Maria Ullmann
Amy Williams

GUESTS PRESENT - none

CALL TO ORDER

Board members present did not constitute a quorum. Those present online were invited to participate in discussion. No votes today.

Vice-Chair Chair Rosales called the meeting to order and welcomed members at 12:33 p.m.

MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS

No amendments were proposed for the September 10 meeting minutes.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Dr. Castaneda provided a Treasurer's Report, noting that the account balance on November 30, 2024, is \$19,145.89. There is a grant check from Community Foundation of Northern Illinois for \$2,072.29 not yet deposited.



ADVANCEMENT REPORT

Mr. King summarized advancement activity to date in FY25.

We are in a quiet season for applications. Waiting for significant decisions regarding the Digital Equity Competitive Grant and from the Lohengrin Foundation. Preparing for a Literacy Luncheon cultivation event for corporate and philanthropic partners on January 14.

BOARD DEVELOPMENT REPORT

The Board welcomed two new members at this meeting: Nate Pietrini (present) and Heather Anichini (not present). Brief discussion of additional prospects. There are two remaining seats available. There was discussion about whether there is energy, interest, or strategic reason to recruit for those seats before the next fiscal year begins July 2025.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The ILF continues to entertain supporting adult online high school programming in public libraries, not least because this is the program that might be supported by the Digital Equity Competitive Grant. Also because it is attractive to those inclined to support digital literacy, the library network is strong, the program will produce quantitative indicators, and success with the program will attract attention for the ILF and donors.

A reminder to Board members to complete necessary forms to keep the Board in compliance with state requirements and to prepare for a new website. New members have been provided with a working link for OMA training. All must complete the Conflict of Interest Statement and update contact information for 2025.

A. Williams, General Counsel, advised the Board regarding the applicability of the Ethics Act to the service. In short, the Ethics Act is binding on the ILSOS and ILSOS staff. It is not specifically binding for Board members. Board members do not need to sign the Ethics Act Acknowledgment.

Board members are invited to review the new Board Pledge. To the extent that there are any questions or recommendations, the Pledge could still be edited.

NEW BUSINESS

There was lively conversation regarding the January Literacy Luncheon, an invite-only event for prospective institutional partners. Broad agreement regarding objectives, strategy, and program. There was particular conversation about whether Board members ought to attend. The determination is that all Board members are welcome to the extent that their intention is to work the event: to help encourage attendance, to advocate on behalf of the ILF, and to follow-up with attendees. In these tasks, board members should coordinate closely with C. King. Board attendance is not required or expected. We want the luncheon to feel exclusive and not overstaffed. The Board recognizes that the lunch requires ILF funds. In conversation, it was agreed that up to \$2,500 could be spent without additional, explicit Board approval by vote.

Board members in attendance have been provided with a binder that includes important ILF governance docs. These documents will also be provided in an online drive and will be maintained there.

C. King has drafted a series of financial policies for the ILF and shared them with legal counsel. Motivated by these proposed policies, Legal is drafting Administrative Rules for the ILF. Both the Rules and the Policies will be shared with the Board for comment before the Rules are submitted to legislative committee.



For FY26 Board members are encouraged to increase their active participation in fundraising. Specifically, each Board member is encouraged to identify at least one corporate or philanthropic entity for which they would like to be a steward. Coordinating outreach with the ILF, the Board member will help to solicit their chosen entity for least \$10,000 in the year.

The meeting closed with a brief discussion regarding what the reach of the ILF's mission. Those gathered considered the definition and boundaries of literacy. The conversation was not conclusive but generative. We will continue to consider how much we are invested specifically in basic English language proficiency and how much we might simultaneously support numeracy, training in technology, specific communication systems, and other multiple and/or advanced literacies.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice-Chair Rosales adjourned the meeting at 2:05 p.m.