EVANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Special Management Committee Meeting

Meeting Packet

September 30, at 5:30 pm

Main Library Board Room and via Zoom

Join the Board of Trustees Zoom Meeting

Special Management Committee Meeting

- **Date:** Wednesday, September 30, 2026
- **Time:** 5:30 PM
- **Location:** Main Library Board Room and via Zoom.
- **Zoom Link:** Join the Library Board Meeting

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.

- **Written Comments:** Submit comments via the Online Form
- **Note:** Written comments will be attached to the Board minutes and distributed to Trustees.

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 least 48 hours in advance of the meeting so that arrangements can be made.

- **Phone:** 847-448-8650
- **TDD/TTY:** 847-866-5095

Meeting Agenda

1. **Call to Order:** Declaration of a quorum.
2. **Land Acknowledgment**
3. **Approval of Virtual Participation**
4. **Citizen Comment:** Public session not to exceed 45 minutes.
5. **New Business**
    a. Board Retreat Planning
    b. Executive Director Search Update and Discussion
6. **Adjournment**

Next Scheduled Meeting: September 16, 2026, at 6:30 PM (Hybrid format).

EVANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

DSG | Koya

Executive Director Search Timeline

PHASE	ACTION	TIMING
1. Needs Assessment and Search Launch	• Kick-off discussion about position aspirations and search process • Additional conversations and survey with other key constituents, including Board and staff • Development and finalization of the position profile • **Target Search Launch:** Week of October 12 • **Wednesday, October 21 Board Meeting:** Koya team introduced to the Board • Development of targeted search strategy/nominations process	**September 2026 – October 2026**
2. Outreach, Sourcing, and Candidate Development	• Targeted outreach to identified/nominated potential candidates and sources (ongoing) • Potential candidates interviewed by DSG | Koya team • **Bi-weekly Search Update Meetings with Jean and Kerry:** Beginning the week of November 2	**November 2026**
3. Interviews and Referencing	• Search Committee identify candidates for First Round Interviews • First Round Interviews with Search Committee • Second Round Interviews with Search Committee • Final Round Interviews with staff and community • DSG | Koya conducts 360° references on finalist candidate(s)	**November 2026- January 2026**
4. Offer, Negotiations, and Announcement	• Preferred candidate selected and offer made • Offer negotiated and accepted • Announcement of appointment	**January 2026**

Dates listed above are approximate, and the timeline may be adjusted depending on availability of Search Committee members and candidates.

Please note that the DSG | Koya offices are closed the following dates:

- Monday, October 12: Columbus Day/Indigenous Peoples Day
- Wednesday, November 11: Veterans Day
- Thursday, November 26 & Friday, November 27: Thanksgiving Break
- Thursday, December 24 - Friday, January: Winter Break

DSG Global Recording Policy: *The search team is your thought partner in this process and will work with you to manage the logistics of scheduling and facilitating interviews. We also understand that, on occasion, all members of a Search Committee may not be available to participate in interviews and there may be a desire to record interviews/meetings for convenience. As a matter of policy, DSG I Koya does not record candidate interviews or candidate-related meetings. In instances where the client wishes to record, the client will be furnished with guidelines to secure proper consents and will be required to utilize their own systems to comply with data privacy and retention guidelines/laws. We appreciate your understanding and support in adhering to this policy.*

Description - DRAFT

About the Community:

Evanston, IL, a city of 76,000, sits on the shores of Lake Michigan directly north of Chicago. Home to an incredibly diverse and engaged community, Northwestern University, and Endeavor Health, Evanston boasts an active downtown, nationally recognized school system, and an award-winning public library, Evanston Public Library (EPL). Evanston has a vision to create the most livable city in America.

Evanston Public Library "connects our diverse community through learning, discovery, and shared experiences, providing equitable access to resources, fostering personal growth, and creating inclusive spaces where everyone can belong, learn and connect." EPL currently serves our community in two permanent physical locations, the Main Branch located in the heart of Evanston's downtown, and Robert Crown, a branch located in a bustling community center on the city's west side. In 2025, the library enjoyed 446,448 visits, with patrons checking out 967,993 digital and physical items. Our FY 2025 budget was over $9m and we relied on the support of 239 volunteers and over 90 employees.

The Evanston Public Library Board of Trustees envisions a community in which the Library engages all residents in reaching their aspirations. The Library's staff, collections, programs, technology and leadership help ensure that:

- All Evanston residents of every background and ability have the opportunity to enjoy an intellectually and culturally rich life
- Every child experiences the pleasure of reading, the joy of learning, enters school with the requisite developmental skills and continues to develop critical thinking skills including functional literacy
- Our community celebrates, appreciates and supports its diversity in all of its forms
- Those in need can find assistance and information with ease
- Every resident experiences the pleasure of reading and the joy of lifelong learning

The Evanston Public Library endorses and embraces the **American Library Association's Equity of Access Statement** and **Freedom to Read Statement**.

Key Expectations:

The Executive Director of Evanston Public Library will guide the organization through the next chapter of its collective story, working to realize the EPL **Vision and Mission**. The Evanston Public Library is governed by an engaged board of nine trustees, seeking an excellent communicator able to develop and empower staff through authentic engagement, partnership, training and support. The Executive Director must be financially astute, able to manage the budget process, and committed to building on the library's history of fundraising and grants by creatively seeking additional sources of revenue. This visionary leader will collaborate with the community, staff, and City of Evanston, as well as engage and leverage the Board of Trustees as a valued resource, and work to fulfill Evanston Public Library's mission and vision. The executive director will lead the organization through a strategic planning process and help foster purposeful and meaningful connections with the community including those most in need of access to the library's literature and technology resources.

Key Responsibilities

Setting and implementing the EPL strategic plan

- Direct and participate in long-range planning for the library to improve internal functions and delivery of services to the community including overseeing the Library's marketing and development activities.
- Model innovation, creativity, and thought leadership that is inclusive, transparent, and empowering in a manner that upholds the organization's vision and drives its mission.
- Foster a culture of continuous improvement by evaluating the organization's effectiveness using qualitative and quantitative data and refining the strategy to ensure success and sustainability.
- Ensure written and spoken communication is consistent with organizational goals and priorities, and advocate for EPL in ways that enhance our collective impact based on those goals and priorities.

Building strong relationships with transparency

- Build and maintain collaborative, trusted, engaged and effective working relationships with the community, Board of Trustees, the City of Evanston, the community, and other organizations (including elected officials, donors, foundations and grantors).

- Use Asset-Based Community Development to nurture a sense of belonging among staff, volunteers, and the community as a whole.
- Initiate, cultivate and lead efforts to generate philanthropic support and community partnerships and support for EPL's mission and vision, leveraging the Board as needed.
- Manage strong relationship and partnership with the Board of Trustees, maintaining regular and ongoing communication to ensure effective governance of EPL.

Hiring, managing and developing a strong team

- Coach, develop and support members of the senior leadership team to be effective in their roles and in their management of their teams and functional areas.
- Promote and foster equitable and inclusive recruiting, hiring, and onboarding practices to find, grow, and retain a diverse team.
- Develop and regularly update the succession plan for key positions in the organization.

Ensuring accessibility, high-quality programming and relevant patron experiences

- Ensure program excellence and evaluation, including documentation to meet government and grantor policies, to meet or exceed reporting requirements.
- Invest in maintaining and accumulating a robust collection that is inclusive and meets the needs and voices of Evanston's diverse community including our local schools and institutions of higher education.
- Create proactive systems that garner feedback from key stakeholders to inform program success and outcomes.

Operational effectiveness, safety and financial management

- Partner with the senior leadership team to manage the daily operations and to keep the services of the library system current with public/community needs.
- Systematize key functions in the organization to maximize efficiency, enhance productivity, and increase transparency and access to necessary information for internal stakeholders.
- Ensure the safety and security of all branches, providing the necessary support to keep staff and patrons safe at all times.
- Oversee the development and preparation of the annual Library operating budget that includes both revenue and expenditure history analysis and future projections and is clearly aligned with the library strategic goals and equity-driven priorities.

- Ensure maximum resource utilization, budget management, and maintenance of the organization to put the organization in a positive, productive and sustainable financial situation.

Key Competencies

Champion for diversity, equity, access and inclusion

- Set ambitious goals to advance equity, and cultivate a culture of diversity, equity, inclusion, and access in the Library and throughout its engagement with patrons, the Evanston community, and Library staff.
- Engage meaningfully with diverse stakeholders in challenging dialogue and critical self-reflection around implicit bias, systemic racism, and structural inequities.
- Address inequities with urgency in order to improve the lives of current and future patrons in Evanston.

Authentic and honest communicator and listener

- Communicate clearly, authentically and with transparency while being mindful of the audience and mode of communication.
- Demonstrate ability to transition quickly from individual, detail oriented projects to collaborative, people oriented conversations.
- Navigate difficult conversations with a focus on and commitment to understanding others' perspectives that lead to progress.

Relationship builder and influencer

- Maintain visibility and presence in the branches and the community and work collaboratively with diverse stakeholders at all levels.
- Build positive relationships and coalitions both within the organization and outside of the organization that is inclusive of staff, patrons, community partners and city leaders.
- Facilitate conversations and establish buy-in for projects, programs, and initiatives aimed at supporting the goals of EPL.

Strategic planning, change management and effective execution

- Solve problems strategically while weighing the advantages and disadvantages of each approach with a systems level and equity lens.
- Exhibit a strong focus on short and long-term goals, accountability, and results; establish clear metrics for success.
- Think critically and lead thoughtful, transformative action within a complex organization.

- Use data and research based practices to analyze problems and translate those insights into systemic action.
- Analyze the conditions for change and offer innovative solutions to seemingly intractable problems and adapt strategy to changing conditions.

Requirements

Minimum Requirements:

- Must possess a Master's degree in Library Science
- Must possess three (3) or more years of Library administration and supervisory experience, in addition to five (5) or more years of increasingly responsible experience in a library setting.
- Demonstrated experience working effectively with an economically and ethnically diverse staff and community.
- Must possess 2-5 years of experience engaging with the public.
- Experience planning, organizing, directing, and conducting the administrative and management functions of a multi-divisional department.
- Experience in organizations with collaborative management concepts and strong customer service.
- Demonstrated skills and experience in problem solving, management, budgeting, fundraising, and financial management.
- Experience working in conjunction with the Board to identify priorities, establish goals, monitor progress, and produce outcomes in service to stakeholders
- A growth mindset and belief that continuous improvement happens through constant learning
- Ability to travel locally and nationally.

Physical Requirements of Work:

- Ability to work primarily in a stationary position, occasionally using force to lift, carry or otherwise move objects normally found in an office setting.
- The employee is primarily subject to inside environmental conditions and outdoor conditions as appropriate.

Supervision:

The Library Director is a direct report to the Library Board of Trustees and receives specific library policy direction from the Library Board. Performance is reviewed through written evaluation, observation, completion of projects, status reports, conferences, and on-going communication with the Library Board. Work performance is formally evaluated by the Board at least annually. Feedback on performance is provided on an on-going basis.

Public Contact:

The Library Director has regular and frequent contact with Board members, City officials, City and Library employees, members of the public, and representatives of other agencies. The Library Director serves as the City's official representative as appropriate at meetings, presentations, conferences, and related matters directly related to the Evanston Public Library.

Benefits

The salary range for this integral leadership position is TBC and commensurate with prior experience. In addition, a comprehensive benefits package will be included in the ultimate offer for the identified sole finalist. We look forward to discussing details with you as the interview process progresses.

Evanston Public Library is an equal opportunity employer committed to a diverse and inclusive work environment. Evanston Public Library does not discriminate in any aspect of employment on the basis of race, color, ancestry or national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, disability, veteran status, genetic information, or age.

EPL Executive Director Search – Staff Survey – DRAFT

9/25/26

Dear EPL Staff,

We're excited to share that the Evanston Public Library (EPL) has begun its search for a new Executive Director. We've partnered with DSG Koya, a national executive search firm, to lead the search and help us identify the next leader for EPL.

As we get started, we want to hear from you. Staff perspective is an important part of this process, and we want to understand what you believe EPL needs in its next Executive Director, as well as the qualities and experience that will be important for this person to be successful.

To help gather your input, DSG Koya has created a short survey that we're asking staff to complete. Your feedback will help inform the position description and the qualities we look for as we begin meeting with candidates.

E*vanston Public Library Executive Director Search: Needs Assessment Survey – Fill out form*

The survey will be open through **X DATE**. There will also be opportunities for staff to connect directly with the DSG Koya team to share more about your perspective

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The DSG Koya team supporting the search is Trisha Sutrisno and Shelby Woods. They will be working closely with EPL throughout the search and are looking forward to hearing from you.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to share your perspective. We appreciate your participation as we get this process underway.

Warmly,