



# Director's Report

**Date:** May 8, 2025

**To:** The Urbana Free Library Board of Trustees

**From:** Rachel Fuller, Interim Director

**Re:** Director's Report for Board Meeting of May 13, 2025

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## Strategic Plan Progress



### ENHANCE

We steward our physical and financial resources to serve evolving community needs that support growth and sustainability.

- This month's Board packet includes a draft FY26 budget. As mentioned in April, the proposed May budget contains changes based on items that were still in development over the past month. Most notably, \$73,790 has been reallocated from the Library's Special Reserve Fund (the 803s) to Shared IT Costs (80280808 51500). This budget adjustment will allow the Library to move forward with needed technology upgrades in concert with the upcoming remodel project during FY26. Additionally, \$7,500 was reallocated to Legal Services (80280801 52101) to account for anticipated expenses.
- This month's Board packet also includes a resolution with proposals from Imperial Surveillance for updating the access control server, installing three new access readers, and upgrading security cameras. The access control server and access readers will be installed during FY25, while work on the security cameras will occur during early FY26. Staff recommend approval of Resolution 2025-04.
- The Library continues to progress toward the upcoming remodel project, and the board packet includes multiple related documents and resolutions. Staff recommend approval of the resolutions for the construction and furniture proposals, which are Resolution 2025-05 and 2025-06, respectively.

- Communications & Development Manager Lyndzie Taylor presented with Kirstin Gebhart of [Fast Forward Libraries](#) at the [ILA Marketing Forum 2025 Mini-Conference](#). Lyndzie and Kirstin presented a webinar titled, “Going Beyond Programs: Creating an Effective Newsletter that Showcases your Whole Library.” The full webinar can be [found on YouTube](#). For their presentation, skip to time stamp 3:45:00.



## EMBRACE

We learn about and respond to our community in order to create a welcoming environment that cultivates equity, mutual respect, and belonging.

- This April, the Library once again partnered with the Urbana School District for the Annual Battle of the Books program, where student teams compete to answer trivia questions covering a list of twenty or more books, fostering literacy and enthusiasm for books. The Library supports this collaborative project with the purchase of additional copies of books on the Battle List in multiple formats, emceeding school Battle assemblies, and emceeding the district-wide Celebration Battle at the I-Hotel.



## EMPOWER

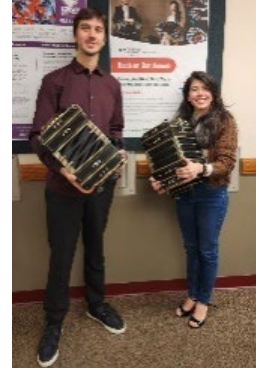
We connect people with tools and resources for learning, knowledge exchange, and personal growth that leads to greater fulfillment.

- This year’s Fairy Tale Ball was our most ambitious ever, with over 1,650 community members attending. The Library worked with three different University partners to create activities and decor for the event. Undergraduate theatre students designed and built sets to decorate, transforming the Library for the ball. An RST class created two popular activities for children and their families. Students in the Informatics



418 class created a quest line for children, complete with a storyline about summoning heroes to defeat a dragon. Ballet dancers from Dance Theatre of Illinois performed solos and taught dance steps, and a book fortune teller matched people with titles. In addition to these events, there were the ball favorites like dancing with the English Country Dancers.

- The Library hosted multiple events and art shows for this year's Boneyard Arts Festival. Two internationally-known musicians - Heyni Solera and Rodrigo Avalos - performed both classical and traditional tango music, arranged for the traditional Argentinian bandoneon. The enthusiastic crowd of 86 included many UIUC musicians and local tango lovers. It's now a tradition to host a reading by the Red Herring Writers for Boneyard Arts, and seven writers shared their work as well. Choir students from Leal and Thomas Paine schools performed for an audience of over 70 family and friends. And, on top of the performances, the Library hosted an art exhibit featuring all three Artists in Residence and works created by Urbana elementary students.
- April's Illinois Libraries Present (ILP) speaker was Alexis Nikole Nelson (aka the Black Forager). She was a dynamic speaker who, with moderator Natalie Evans, discussed foraging, its history, how the anti-foraging movement has racist roots, and modern-day laws and best practices. This was one of the best-attended ILP virtual talks this fiscal year, with 44 Urbana community members attending.
- With the help of UIUC practicum student, Chloe Miller, Archives staff published a digitized version of the [1863 Alexander Bowman map of Champaign County](#). In addition, information about the map was added to a new digital exhibit called [Mapping Champaign County: The Legacy of Alexander Bowman](#). One of Champaign County's earliest maps, the Bowman map provides geographical information about the area and includes illustrations of notable buildings and homes. The new digital exhibit provides further context about some of the map's historical structures and profiles some of the property owners, many of whom were influential at that time.
- With the help of volunteers, Archives staff recently finished digitizing and transcribing two journals written by early Urbana resident, Joseph Oscar (J.O.) Cunningham. Cunningham was an active community member during the mid-to-late 1800s and into the early 1900s. Cunningham also wrote the 1905 book titled *History of Champaign County*. [The journals were donated to the Archives in 2014](#) by Cunningham Children's Home after they were rediscovered at a home in Kerrville, Texas. The transcriptions of these two journals are now viewable to anyone through the [Local History Online catalog](#).



## Action Item Details & Additional Information

- This month's packet includes the annual invoice from Champaign Public Library for Board approval. The invoice includes charges for Polaris, LinkedIn Learning, e-content integration, server/software, Library Elf, National Library Week ads, and staffing/operation of the automation system.
- Staff request approval of the budget changes listed below to pay the final invoice from Organizational Architecture for the executive director search process:
  - \$5,000 decrease to Shared IT Costs (80280808 51500)
  - \$5,000 increase to Recruiting Expenses (80280801 52904)

# Communication

## Library Newsletters

- The TUFL Times, May 2025: <https://uflil.patronpoint.com/email/preview/164>
- The TUFL Times: Youth Edition, May 2025: <https://uflil.patronpoint.com/email/preview/165>
- Archives Newsletter, May 2025: <https://uflil.patronpoint.com/email/preview/163>

## Library News

- April 1, 2025 – smilepolitely.com - Five things in arts: April 2025  
<https://www.smilepolitely.com/arts/five-things-in-arts-april-2025/>
- April 2, 2025 – smilepolitely.com - In a deluge of science information, a boat to keep you afloat  
<https://www.smilepolitely.com/opinion/in-a-deluge-of-science-information-a-boat-to-keep-you-afloat/>
- April 2, 2025 – chambanamoms.com - Champaign-Urbana Weekend Planner – Welcome, April  
<https://www.chambanamoms.com/2025/04/02/welcome-april/>
- April 7, 2025 – wcia.com - MTD offering free rides for National Library Week  
<https://www.wcia.com/news/champaign-county/mtd-offering-free-rides-for-national-library-week/>
- April 8, 2025 – wcia.com - Fairy Tale Ball at the Urbana Free Library 2025 ciLiving  
<https://www.wcia.com/ciliving-tv/ciliving-stories/ciliving/fairy-tale-ball-at-the-urbana-free-library-2025-ciliving/>
- April 10, 2025 – smilepolitely.com - The Weekender: April 11-13  
<https://www.smilepolitely.com/culture/the-weekender-april-11-13/>
- April 12, 2025 – wcia.com - Urbana Free Library holds 17th Annual Fair Tale Ball  
<https://www.wcia.com/ciliving-tv/ciliving-stories/ciliving/fairy-tale-ball-at-the-urbana-free-library-2025-ciliving/>
- April 23, 2025 – news-gazette.com – C-U native headed home as Urbana Free Library’s new director  
[https://www.news-gazette.com/arts-entertainment/c-u-native-headed-home-as-new-library-director/article\\_228dd3cb-e6a3-4f81-b860-2738187bbfa0.html](https://www.news-gazette.com/arts-entertainment/c-u-native-headed-home-as-new-library-director/article_228dd3cb-e6a3-4f81-b860-2738187bbfa0.html)
- April 24, 2025 – ipmnewsroom.org - LabEscape in Urbana celebrates the International Year of Quantum with a blend of science and fun  
<https://ipmnewsroom.org/labescape-in-urbana-celebrates-the-international-year-of-quantum-with-a-blend-of-science-and-fun/>
- April 25, 2025 – youtube.com - ILA Marketing Forum 2025 Mini-Conference Virtual Session  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yb86RPX5pxE>
- April 29, 2025 – ipmnewsroom.org - WILL Call: What’s Happening in Champaign – Urbana May 01 – May 04  
<https://ipmnewsroom.org/will-call-whats-happening-in-champaign-urbana-may-01-may-04/>

# Budget Information

Budget and Financial Reports: <https://urbanafreelibrary.org/about-us/your-right-to-know/financial-reports>

Bank reconciliations for the last day of the month: July 2024 - June 2025						
	July	August	September	October	November	December
<b>**Illinois Funds account</b>	\$ 229,049.51	\$ 230,094.72	\$ 231,083.43	\$ 232,055.85	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Busey Bank Cash accounts</b>	\$ 3,325,335.18	\$ 3,493,511.49	\$ 3,095,150.44	\$ 4,026,436.77	\$ 3,747,579.27	\$ 3,405,816.30
<b>Busey Bank Web account</b>	\$ 107,613.47	\$ 111,788.42	\$ 114,332.89	\$ 117,950.09	\$ 122,400.96	\$ 125,985.42
<b>Total</b>	\$ 3,661,998.16	\$ 3,835,394.63	\$ 3,440,566.76	\$ 4,376,442.71	\$ 3,869,980.23	\$ 3,531,801.72
	January	February	March	April	May	June
<b>Illinois Funds account</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ -			
<b>Busey Bank Cash accounts</b>	\$ 3,597,677.03	\$ 3,254,518.21	\$ 2,892,504.01			
<b>Busey Bank Web account</b>	\$ 130,042.46	\$ 132,303.24	\$ 135,423.91			
<b>Total</b>	\$ 3,727,719.49	\$ 3,386,821.45	\$ 3,027,927.92	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>**Illinois Funds account has been closed. Money was moved to Busey Cash account.</b>						