



**The
Urbana
Free
Library**

Director's Report

Date: September 4, 2026

To: The Urbana Free Library Board of Trustees

From: Taliah Abdullah, Executive Director

Re: Director's Report for Board Meeting of September 8, 2026

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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.

- The Archives and Library was recently awarded a \$5,000 grant from the [Illinois State Historical Records Advisory Board \(ISHRAB\)](#). The grant funds will help support the digitization of some audio-visual materials from the [Chanute Collection](#). The first batch of tapes have been sent off to a vendor for digitization, and we look forward to their return. Once the funds are received from the state, a budget amendment to accept the grant will be included in a future board packet.
- Cunningham Township Supervisors Office have been providing staffing in the second -floor computer lab to assist community members who are Township clients to use library resources to apply for assistance, make copies, set up accounts with various agencies, and look for housing and employment. Client demand has led to the Township office to increase their presence at the Library from two days a week to five days a week including Saturdays.



EMBRACE

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

- In the computer lab on the 2nd floor of the Library, on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month, Champaign County Health Care Consumers (CCHCC) shares information about Medicaid, SNAP, hospital financial assistance, and Get Covered Illinois and can provide enrollment services as needed. CCHCC also shares information about local healthcare resources and is able to connect patrons to other CCHCC teams like Medicare and Disability services.



EMPOWER

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

- We have appreciated the new college and university students who have visited the library to register for a new library card, explored the library building, and borrowed the resources that are available to them. Thank you to the parents and caregivers, and higher education staff and faculty who have introduced and encouraged students to make a public library card a part of this chapter of their life. Thank you to library staff who have welcomed new residents, made library cards, notarized documents, assisted patrons in locating the holds shelf, provided guidance on using the self-check machines and so much more.
- The start of a new school year brings new apprentices, interns, and practicum students to The Urbana Free Library from the University of Illinois-UC iSchool. During this academic year, students will receive hands-on training and experience in various areas of the Library. Please join us in welcoming Kenny Strongs as an Archives Apprentice, Katie Beller as a Patron Services and Programming Apprentice, Caden Miller as a Special Collections Processing Intern in the Archives, and Ray Krueger as a Patron Services Practicum student. We look forward to the mutual learning, collaboration, and support that will occur for students and staff.
- Check out the segment from The Archives Department titled "What's New in the Archives?" The "What's New" segment can be found quarterly in the Archives' monthly newsletter, and highlights newly available materials, updates to existing projects, and other items that are of interest. To sign up for the Archives newsletter (or any of the Library's newsletter), visit <https://urbanafreelibrary.org/about-us/newsletters>.
- August Circulation notables:
 - Library of Things: Mobile Hotspots 60 circs
 - Fiction: Whistler by Ann Patchett 10 circs
 - DVD: The Super Mario Galaxy movie 13 circs
 - Children's: Lord of the Fleas graphic novel by Dav Pilkey 13 circs
 - Young Adult: Mockingjay by Suzanne Collins 4 circs

Action Item Details & Additional Information

- Staff request approval of the following FY27 budget amendment, to pay the worker's comp insurance and unemployment tax:
 - \$10,500 decrease to 80280800-50110 (Library Administration Salary – Regular Employees)
 - \$10,500 increase to 80280801-52721 (Worker's Comp Claims)
- Staff request approval of the following FY27 budget amendment, to pay the additional liability insurance needed to support the circulation of tools in the Library of Things collections:
 - \$250 decrease to 80280802 51802 80103 (New Collections)
 - \$250 increase to 80280801 50210 (Insurance)
- Up for the regular review cycle and without any substantive changes are the Photography and Recording Policy, and the Public Posting Policy. Staff recommend reaffirming both of these policies.
- Digital Library statistics:
 - Overdrive:
 - Ebooks: 4,757 circs / 71,837 titles in collection
 - Audiobooks: 6,549 circs / 40,713 titles in collection
 - Magazines: 2,792 circs / 6,855 titles in collection
 - Total: 14,140
 - Kanopy: 1,600 plays
 - Comics Plus: 401 checkouts; 270 users (cumulative)

Communication

Library Newsletters

- TUFL Times, September: https://tufl.moosend.com/show_campaign/52b9b41f-0ffd-402b-bfc8-1b1632ec352d
- Archvies Newsletter, September: https://tufl.moosend.com/show_campaign/e0549ab9-d5ba-44d8-a4bf-0e4eca732d32

Library News

- **August 12, 2026** - *wcia.com* - Urbana Free Library expands community resources through new partnerships <https://www.wcia.com/news/champaign-county/urbana-free-library-expands-community-resources-through-new-partnerships/>
- **August 15, 2026** - *dailyillini.com* - The Urbana Free Library expands its services https://dailyillini.com/life_and_culture-stories/around-town/2026/08/15/the-urbana-free-library-expands-its-services/

Budget Information

- Budget and FY27 Financial Reports: <https://urbanafreelibrary.org/about-us/your-right-to-know/financial-reports>

Bank reconciliations for the last day of the month: July 2026 - June 2027						
	July	August	September	October	November	December
Busey Bank Cash accounts	\$ 3,514,314.26					
Busey Bank Credit Card account	\$ 197,523.33					
Total	\$ 3,711,837.59	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	January	February	March	April	May	June
Busey Bank Cash accounts						
Busey Bank Credit Card account						
Total	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -