

Aurora Public Library District

Decennial Committee on Local Government Efficiency

Report Date: September 25, 2024

Library Information

- The Aurora Public Library District's main office is located at 101 S. River Street, Aurora, Illinois, 60506.
- The District's facilities include two branches and a bookmobile.
- The District is serves parts of Kane, DuPage, Kendall, and Will Counties.
- The District's boundaries are currently contiguous with the City of Aurora, Illinois.
- The population of the District is 180,582, according to the 2020 Census.
- The District employs 161 full and part time staff.
- The annual budget of the district for FY25 is \$18,625,000.
- The District's EAV for 2023 is \$5,290,664,598.

Committee Membership

Committee Roster

- Joe Filapek, Board President
- Matthew Orr, Vice President
- Melinda Riddick, Treasurer
- Suzanne Stegeman, Secretary (until July 31, 2023)
- Paul LaTour, Secretary
- Katrina Plonczynski, Trustee
- Kevin O'Neill, Trustee (effective July 26, 2023)
- Joe Sanchez, Trustee (effective November 15, 2023)
- Michaela Haberkern, Executive Director, Aurora Public Library District
- Christina Campos, District Resident
- Philip Giannattasio, District Resident

Meeting Dates

1. May 24, 2023
2. February 28, 2024
3. September 25, 2024

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Core Programs and Services

The Aurora Public Library District offers the following core programs and services:

- Reading materials for all ages, in print and electronic format
- Movies, music, games and TV on DVD, CD, and streaming
- Lending collection of physical items like fishing poles, sewing machines, and cameras
- Research databases
- Educational and entertaining programming for all ages
- Access to high-speed internet, updated computers, and printing services
- Makerspace services and equipment
- Meeting and study rooms
- Comfortable and inviting spaces
- Friendly, expert staff

Additional Programs and Services

The Aurora Public Library District offers the following additional programs and services, based on expressed and anticipated community need:

- Free notary service
- Small business development support
- Local history and genealogy materials and research help
- Materials, programs, and assistance in multiple languages, especially Spanish
- Access to other library's collections through participation in multiple consortia
- Easy access to library staff via phone, text, email, social media messaging

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Intergovernmental Agreements

The Aurora Public Library District has intergovernmental agreements with the following other governments:

- City of Aurora for repayment of bonds and distribution of PPRT
- Fox Valley Park District for a shared facility
- West Aurora School District 129 for a shared facility
- Illinois Libraries Present for cost sharing for top-level public speakers

Efficiencies

The Aurora Public Library District has increased efficiency through intergovernmental cooperation in the following ways:

- Resource sharing with other libraries in Illinois and nationwide avoids duplicating services
- Shared facilities promote convenience for residents
- Sharing costs allows for access to nationally-known public speakers

Community Partnerships

The Aurora Public Library District partners with the following organizations:

- Aurora University
- SPARK
- Family Focus Aurora
- Boys and Girls Club Aurora
- DuPage Children's Museum
- Kane County Law Library and Legal Self Help Center
- many, many more
- * Alive Center
- * Paramount Arts Center
- * Aurora Downtown
- * Multiple chambers of commerce
- * Kane County Health Department

Efficiencies

The Aurora Public Library District has increased efficiency through community partnerships in the following ways:

- Partnerships have a multiplier effect on service provision
- Partnerships help avoid duplication of efforts
- Partnerships help families and individuals more easily access needed services offered by partner agencies

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Review of Laws, Policies, Rules and Procedures, Training Materials and Other Documents

We have reviewed the following, non-exhaustive list of laws, policies, training materials, and other documents applicable to the library district in order to evaluate our compliance and to determine if any should be amended or revised:

- State laws applicable to libraries
- Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/1 et seq.)
- Policy on public comment
- Designation of OMA officer (5 ILCS 120/1.05(a))
- All Board Members have completed OMA Training (5 ILCS 120/1.05(b))
- Schedule of Regular Meetings of the Board of Library Trustees (5 ILCS 120/2.03)
- Illinois Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140/1 et seq.)
- Designation of FOIA Officer (5 ILCS 140/3.5(a))
- FOIA Officer Training (5 ILCS 140/3.5(b))
- Computation and Retention of FOIA Requests (5 ILCS 140/3.5(a))
- Posting Other Required FOIA Information (5 ILCS 140/4(a); 5 ILCS 140/4(b))
- List of Types or Categories of FOIA Records under Library Control (5 ILCS 140/5)
- Semi-Annual Meetings to Review Executive Session Minutes (5 ILCS 120/2.06(d))
- IMRF Total Compensation Postings (5 ILCS 120/7.3)
- Designation of Whistleblower Auditing Official (50 ILCS 105/4.1 et seq.)
- All applicable officials have filed statement of economic interests (5 ILCS 420/4A-101; 5 ILCS 420/4A-101.5 et seq.)
- Sexual harassment prevention training (775 ILCS 5/2-109(C))
- Our intergovernmental agreements
- Our budget and financial documents
- State Ethics Laws, including, but not limited to the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (5 ILCS 430/1-1 et seq.)
- Local Government Efficiency and Size in Illinois: Counting Tax Revenues, Not Governments by Wendell Cox (2016)

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Materials Management Efficiency Report

In the second half of 2018, the library's Collection Services Department embarked on a project to assess how long it took to "process" new materials. Before new items can be checked out to customers they must be ordered, received, added to the online catalog, and made ready to circulate by adding covers, stickers, RFID tags, and similar elements.

- The department manager worked with an outside supply chain consultant, who volunteered his time to collect data and shadow staff as they worked. He then used Lean management tools to map out where there were bottlenecks in their processes and suggest improvements.
- Using that report, the department planned changes to shorten the amount of time items were spending in the "Order to Available" pipeline.
- *At the time of that report, the average amount of time it took for an item to be made shelf-ready after it was received was more than 40 days.*

Examples of changes that were made include:

- Cross-training staff to eliminate work lags due to vacations, leaves, or other staffing interruptions.
- Documenting workflows and processes to standardize work.
- Creating u-shaped work areas for better flow.
- Making smaller and more frequent orders to ensure more regular and predictable deliveries.
- Scheduling bi-weekly, one-on-one meetings between managers and their direct reports to discuss workflow issues and ideas for improvement.

In 2023, the library assessed the data from the last 3 years of ordering and found the following:

- Items are generally ordered 45-55 days in advance of publication.
- Order sizes are consistent from month to month, with some small variations due to publishing schedules.
- *The amount of time it took to make items shelf-ready after receipt had dropped to, on average, 15 days. By the end of FY24, the time was 12.5 days. For Q1 of FY25, the time was 10.5 days.*

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Materials Management Efficiency Report

The Collection Services Department has embraced the idea that continuous improvement can equal real gains. Time in processing will never drop to zero -- delivery time from the Collection Services Department to the branches, weekends, holidays, other library-closed days, and items that are embargoed or received before publication will always necessitate some period of time between the time an item is received and the time it is available to the customer. However, the steady downward trend shows that the library is making overall progress getting items out to customers faster.

The department plans to continue to refine existing processes. Recent examples include:

- Highlighting account numbers on invoices instead of re-writing them by hand on every invoice. This saves time and avoids unnecessary duplication of work.
- Streamlining the book donation and bookplate process, taking fewer steps and less time from the time the customer requests the memorial to the time the materials reach the shelf.
- Evaluating the processing services provided by book and a/v vendors with an eye towards improving order shipping time and reducing processing costs.

Future Improvement Plans:

- Reviewing the mix of positions and skills needed for the department, adjust staffing when the opportunity arises to better meet needs of the library.
- Adapting Lean principles to the acquisition and processing of items for the Library of Things. The marketplace for these materials is not as unified and organized as the marketplace for traditional library materials, and packaging and cataloging is similarly less rationalized.