



220 W. 23rd Ave.
Coal Valley, IL 61240
877-542-7257
support.prairiecat.info

PrairieCat Finance Committee Minutes March 20, 2024

The Committee met on Thursday, March 20, 2024, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm in person at the Sycamore Public Library, 103 East State Street, Sycamore, IL 60178-1440. The meeting will also be available online via Zoom.

[Register to Attend the Meeting: \(https://support.prairiecat.info/events/prairiecat-finance-committee-meeting-2025-03-20\)](https://support.prairiecat.info/events/prairiecat-finance-committee-meeting-2025-03-20)

We require an in-person quorum for this meeting.

1. Call to order, introductions

Present at Sycamore: Carolyn Coulter (PrairieCat), Bryon Lear (MX) Beth Ryan (Chair-JO), Megan Gove (TF), Michael Skwara (HC), Lauren Offerman (TC), Angela Campbell (RP), Kim Halsey (SY), Maria Meachum (WL), Chelsey Knippel (PrairieCat), Elizabeth Smith (PrairieCat)

Present via Zoom:

Absent: Nick Weber (WO)

Ryan (JO) called the meeting to order at 10:30 am

2. Introduction of guests and public comments

There were no public comments. Kat Solheim introduced herself as working on her practicum at the Johnsburg Public Library.

3. Approve minutes from December 19, 2024, meeting

Motion #1: Gove (TF) moved and Offerman (TC) seconded to approve the September 19, 2024, meeting minutes as presented. There was no discussion on the motion. Motion



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carried by vocal affirmation.

4. Review and discussion, budget considering proposed changes to reserves structure and hosting fees

Coulter (PrairieCat) went over the proposed budget for FY26. This includes a 3% staff salary increase (COLA) and 1% merit increase but also reflects the salary re-alignments we discussed last year due to our benchmarking survey outcomes. As we discussed, these scenarios reflect a combined per library fee and hosting fee, with each receiving a 5% increase over last year. Reserves were calculated at 2% of expenditures. There are a couple of differences in this draft. We cut out of state travel and added in the Innovative mobile app for those who opt in. This will be charged back to the libraries so there is no net cost to the consortium. Overall, a 3.89% aggregate increase. Union List went down \$11.

5. Review and discussion, Innovative mobile app demonstration and pricing

Coulter (PrairieCat) stated as you may know, the existing contract with OCLC/Capira for our mobile app expires in October of 2025. Currently, 57 member libraries participate in this project, and more have expressed interest once the new contract is in place. PrairieCat operates as an intermediary with these sites, paying for the costs and then charging the libraries to reimburse the consortium. In this way, the project has no impact on the consortium's expenditures.

Over the past months, the UX Committee has done several demonstrations and reviewed the written responses from vendors. We received responses from Innovative Interfaces, OCLC/Capira, Communico, and Bibliocommons. When requesting costs, however, we also desired to see what the impact to providing every circulating library with access would be, and how it would reflect in the FY26 budget.

Coulter continued, given the other elements of the FY26 budget that have caused a larger than usual increase in membership fees, it is suggested that we consider leaving the mobile app as an opt-in, reimbursement platform in FY26, and reevaluate in FY27. A draft budget and App A fee schedule reflecting the costs in the FY26 budget is included in the packet and as you can

see the impact is significant this year. I have configured this budget to reflect taking the \$15,000 in installation fees from the reserves budget in this scenario. If we did not take this from reserves and decide to move forward in FY27 with expansion to all circulating members, we will need to come up with a reimbursement solution for the existing members of the project who would have to shoulder these costs in FY26. Also included is the scoring done by the UX committee based on the demonstrations and written responses that we have received. Included is also the costing information received from all the vendors.

At their meeting on 3/6/2025, the UX committee voted to recommend that we proceed with the Innovative Interfaces proposal. The features as well as the costs for potential expansion to the entire consortium were their deciding factors. There is a great deal of enthusiasm among the members for extending this project to all the circulating membership.

The Committee agreed to take the \$15,000 out of Reserves for the mobile app and then send the FY26 draft budget to Administrative Council for review.

6. Update, in-person quorum and potential changes to remote meeting rules

Coulter (PrairieCat) discussed the possibility of changes to the allowance of remote meetings for the Committee, citing the lawyer's opinion regarding PrairieCat qualifying for the OMA exception due to its service area square mileage. Coulter explained that there will have to be an approved Bylaws change by the Delegates Assembly before this can happen. The remote meetings would have to happen in designated public buildings with the agenda posted at each location. Each attendee must have the ability to be heard during the meetings. More information will follow if the Delegates Assembly approves the Bylaws changes in April.

Knippel (PrairieCat) mention that the next Finance Committee meeting falls on Juneteenth and suggested rescheduling. The Committee agreed to change the June 19, 2025, meeting to June 12, 2025.



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7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:20 am.

Next meeting: June 19, 2025, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm at the DeKalb Public Library, 309 Oak Street,
DeKalb, IL and online via Zoom **MOVE TO JUNE 12**