



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

## **PrairieCat Delegates Assembly Minutes**

### **January 28, 2026**

The Delegates Assembly met on Wednesday, January 28, 2026, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm in person at the New Lenox Public Library District, Princeton Public Library, Freeport Public Library, and the RAILS Coal Valley Service Center. The meeting will also be available online via Zoom. Delegates Assembly participation is required of all Fully Participating and Basic Online libraries and the four Union List reps. As always, please remember that only officially designated Delegates or their Alternates can vote on behalf of their library. Substitutes will not be permitted to vote, and there are no proxy votes if a delegate is not present.

[Register to attend the meeting](https://support.prairiecat.info/events/prairiecat-delegates-assembly-meeting-2026-01-28) (<https://support.prairiecat.info/events/prairiecat-delegates-assembly-meeting-2026-01-28>).

#### **1. Call to order and welcome**

**Present at Coal Valley:** Ann Whitaker-Reid, April Hoste, Karen Lonergan, Bianca Sierra, Becky Duncan, Bryon Lear, Lisa Boles, Kathy Peschang, Victoria Blackmer, Kim Brozovich, Angela Campbell, Tori Drews, Beth Tepen, Michelle Bailey, Elizabeth Smith

**Present at Freeport:** Raina Dyck, Emily Faulkner, Deb Kolenko, Amanda Meyers, Karen Sutera, Laura Watson, Mindy Long, Daisy Mechler, Beth Ryan, Brittany Gaulrapp, Dennis Latimer, Jon Mark Bolthouse, Elizabeth Green, Penny Bryant, Stephanie Nissen, Barbara Posinger, Melissa Weidman, Valerie Woodley, Jenna Diedrich, Chelsey Knippel

**Present at New Lenox:** Kelly McCully, Leah Bill, Renee Martinez, Alexandra Tyle Annen, Amy Walsh, Joanna Kluever, Cassidy Steinke, Ashley Hopper, Cathy Palmer, Karen Barowsky, Michelle Krooswyk, Melissa Badger, Debbie Griggs, Maria Meachum, Shelby O'Hara, Matt Maturo, Megan Murray

**Present at Princeton:** Jason Shirley, Lynette Heiden, Jill Simpson, Melanie Berg, Emily Kofoid, Jourdan Wendt, Janet Clark, Heide Trettenero, Anna Allison, Deanna Howard, Julie Wayland,



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Renee Kozeal, Marilyn Calbow, Laura Youngstrum, Betsy Sobin, Beth Wood, Megan Gove, Jaclyn Trujillo, Carolyn Coulter, Lexi Sullivan

**Present via Zoom:** Jill Kohlert, Pennie Miller, Kimberly Udstrand, Shelley Augustine, Amy Runkle, Jennifer Barton, Laura Crisp, Jodie DePatis, Paige Frechmann, Julie Voss, Sue Stevens, Kimberly Martin, Britni Hartman, Michele Thurston, Jennifer Shugrue, Heather Black, Emily Gundry, Jacqy Peterson, Carol McSweeney, Jamie Lockwood, Sarah Flanagan, Allison Beasley, Marie Monaco, Michelle Krooswyk, Dana Fanslow, Rylie Roubal, Resa Mai, Jason Jensen, Melissa Landis

**Libraries represented:** See vote and quorum sheet.

Gove (Chair-TF) started the meeting at 10:31 am. Gove welcomed everyone.

2. Introduction and welcome new delegates or alternates

Becky Duncan introduced herself as the new Director and Delegate for Erie Public Library.

Dennis Latimer introduced himself as the Alternate for Marengo-Union Public Library District.

Amanda Myers introduced herself as the Interim Director at Freeport Public Library. Cassidy

Steinke introduced herself as the Director and Delegate at Limestone Township Library District.

Karen Barowsky introduced herself as the Interim Director and Delegate at Morris Area Public Library District. Anna Allison introduced herself as the Director and Delegate of Oglesby Public Library District.

3. Introduction of guests

Lexi Sullivan from Richard A. Mautino Memorial Library in Spring Valley introduced herself.

Megan Murray from Morris Area Public Library District introduced herself.

4. Review of agenda for additions/changes

There were no revisions.

5. Consent agenda

5.1. Approve minutes for October 29, 2025, PrairieCat Delegates Assembly meeting

5.2. Central Site report including financial and statistical reports

5.3. Quarterly PrairieCat staff report

**Motion #1: Diedrich (GA) moved and Heiden (BP) seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented. There was no discussion on the motion. Motion carries by vocal affirmation.**

**Ayes: 88**

**Nays: 0**

**Abstentions: 0**

6. Administrative Council report

6.1. Finance Committee report – report from 12/18/2025

Coulter (PrairieCat) stated that the Finance Committee met on December 18, 2025. The Committee discussed the draft FY27 budget. The draft budget that was discussed was the same as what this group has today, besides the percentage of reserves. We had a 2% reserves saving, however that raised the aggregate percentile increase to a little over 5%. Coulter had also presented the Committee with a draft budget that included the mobile app for all circulating members, but that brought the percentile increase to over 7%, so this was quickly dismissed by the Finance Committee. We took the draft budget with the 2% reserves and 5% aggregate to the Administrative Council. Based on the recommendation of the Administrative Council, we are presenting a budget today with a 1% reserve savings.

6.2. Resource Sharing Committee report – No report

7. PrairieCat membership update, training and outreach report

Smith (PrairieCat) gave the membership update stating that PrairieCat has 138 member libraries. We have 82 Fully Participating members, 22 Basic Online and 34 Union Listing members. We are in the midst of the FY26 Delegate Assembly meetings. The next and last



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Delegates Assembly meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 29<sup>th</sup> at Senica's Oak Ridge Golf Club in LaSalle, IL. This meeting is only going to be held at this one in-person location. There will be a Zoom option available for those who need to attend virtually. Please be sure that PrairieCat has the correct Delegate and Alternate listed for your library. The list of Delegates and Alternates can be found on the PrairieCat website under About – Governance. You can contact Chelsey Knippel (PrairieCat) or Elizabeth Smith (PrairieCat) to make changes to your library's Delegate or Alternate.

Smith highlighted some upcoming member events. Shelby O'Hara (PrairieCat) will be hosting two online Vega Discover Homepage Builder Q&A sessions. These are informal sessions held online via Zoom where folks can drop in and learn more about how to customize their library's Vega sites. We hold quarterly New Directors Welcome meetings, and our next one is scheduled for Tuesday, March 10<sup>th</sup>. Also on March 10<sup>th</sup>, in the afternoon, we will be hosting a Union List Members meeting. PrairieCat holds a meeting for the Union List members annually to address any questions and review what's going on with PrairieCat. Smith also reminded the Delegates to save the date for Director's University in April. This is a statewide initiative, and details can be found on the ILA website. Smith reminded the Delegates to also save the date for the annual PrairieCat Resource Sharing Summit. We have scheduled this for Tuesday, May 5<sup>th</sup> at DeKalb Public Library. This will be an in-person event only. The topic for the event is being refined and will be sent to the membership once the topic is finalized.

Smith gave an update on the Mobile App project. Support information and resources are now available on the PrairieCat website where our policies and procedures documentation is stored under Resources. Just to note that Solis has been updating their documentation so you might run into some errors or links that do not work while their site is under construction. We do have an upcoming PrairieCat libraries quarterly mobile app check-in and Q&A in April. We had one a few weeks ago that was useful for those who attended. We do have mobile video guides available on YouTube that you can share with staff and with patrons. There's a longer 10-minute video and also some shorter clips. O'Hara (PrairieCat) has been working on getting the training courses for the content management system side of the mobile app, which will be available in

TalentLMS.

Smith continued stating that February 3<sup>rd</sup>, My Bookshelf will become My Account Portal. This will be an automatic global update. This will just change how My Account looks in Discover. The icon in the upper right corner will still be there, but it will say My Account Portal. When you click on that icon you will see a block for holds and a block for checkouts. On the left-hand side, you will see the account tab where you can find your name, home library, address, checkout request, fines, and your saved bookmarks. Account linking is a feature of My Account Portal that will also be activated next week. This allows for patrons to set up a one-way connection or a two-way connection between library accounts. For example, a caregiver and a child or two adults who live in the same household that want to connect accounts. Account linking will use a passphrase method that can be shared with the person/s you are wanting to link your account with. Account linking is managed separately in Vega Mobile and Vega Discover. They are currently not connected, so you will need to set up account linking in both Vega Mobile and in Vega Discover. In the future, the linking will be unified, and patrons will only need to link once. PrairieCat does have some documentation and FAQs posted on the website, but once the change goes live next week, we will be able make more support materials.

8. Review, PrairieCat FY27 draft budget and fees.

Coulter (PrairieCat) presented the draft FY27 budget and fees. This budget includes a 3% staff salary increase (COLA) and 1% merit increase for all staff. The option to expand the mobile app project to all members is not included in this budget. The budget also shows an increase in the library fee and hosting fee of 3% increase over last year. Reserves were calculated at approximately 1% of expenditure to minimize the impact of the higher insurance costs on the overall percentage of increase for the year. This reduced the overall percentage of increase across all libraries from 5.04% (at a rate of 2% of reserves) to 3.22%. Union List per library and reserve fees have been recalibrated to reflect the rate of 25% of the Fully Participating rates, as detailed in the General Policy Manual. This was calculated on the per-library fee and does not include the hosting fees that are incorporated for circulating members. A remote PUG Day is reflected, as was instructed by Administrative Council. This decision was based on feedback

we have received from members via Strategic Planning surveys that reflect a desire to alternate between in-person and remote events. Increases to health insurance that we will incur in FY26 are reflected at 14.32%. We have included an additional 15% increase in the last six months of FY27, as an estimation of the following year's increase in premiums. This budget also includes short-term disability insurance. Other insurance increases are reflected based on FY25 and FY26 numbers, considering an average increase based on previous years. This budget reflects our IMRF rate for FY27, which declined to 11.16% from the FY26 rate of 11.29%. This budget also reflects the RAILS grant amount. We have been notified that our grant amount for FY27 will be \$588,629.53. Accounting services, which will be charged against this amount, will come to \$54,142.75, leaving the amount of \$534,486.78 in revenues for FY27. This budget also shows Reserves expenditure for a replacement vehicle that will be needed in FY27. Our current van is 10 years old and has over 78,000 miles on it currently. This budget also reflects the sunsetting of Encore in FY27 and thus saving the Encore hosting fees (approx. \$9,150.00). Aside from the cost savings in eliminating this platform, Innovative has made it clear that they are sunsetting this product and will not be developing it or making it accessible in the future. Watson (HC) asked how many libraries are still using Encore. Coulter replied that she cannot be sure, but believes that very few people are using it.

9. Presentation: Cybersecurity presentation, Matt Maturo, PrairieCat

Maturo (PrairieCat) gave a presentation on cybersecurity.

10. Public comments via previously submitted email (see above), in person or online

There were no public comments.

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:57 am.

Next regularly scheduled meeting, April 29, 2026, Senica's Oak Ridge Golf Course, LaSalle, IL.