



220 W. 23<sup>rd</sup> Ave.  
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## **PrairieCat Finance Committee Minutes June 18, 2026**

The Committee met on Thursday, June 18, 2026, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm in person at the Sycamore Public Library, 103 East State Street, Sycamore, IL 60178-1440 and at the RAILS Coal Valley Service Center., 220 W. 23<sup>rd</sup> Street Ave, Coal Valley, IL 61240. The meeting will also be available online via Zoom.

[Register to attend the meeting: https://support.prairiecat.info/events/prairiecat-finance-committee-meeting-2026-06-18](https://support.prairiecat.info/events/prairiecat-finance-committee-meeting-2026-06-18)

**We require an in-person quorum for this meeting.**

1. Call to order, introductions

Present at Sycamore: Lauren Offerman (Chair-TC), Kim Halsey (SY), Jason Shirley (BY), Megan Gove (TF), Maria Meachum (WL),

Present at Coal Valley: Carolyn Coulter (PrairieCat), Bryon Lear (MX), Angela Campbell (RP), Chelsey Knippel (PrairieCat)

Present via Zoom:

Absent: Nick Weber (WO), Elizabeth Smith (PrairieCat), Michael Skwara (HC)

Offerman (TC) called the meeting to order at 10:31 am

2. Introduction of guests and public comments

Elena Mendoza introduced herself as the RAILS Staff Accountant who handles the accounting and books for PrairieCat.

3. ACTION: Approve minutes of March 19, 2026, meeting  
**Motion #1: Gove (TF) moved and Shirley (BY) seconded to approve the March 19, 2026, meeting minutes as presented. There was no discussion on the motion. Motion carried by vocal affirmation.**
  
4. ACTION: Approve meeting dates for FY27  
**Motion #2: Meachum (WL) moved and Gove (TF) seconded to approve the FY27 meeting dates as presented. There was no discussion on the motion. Motion carried by vocal affirmation.**
  
5. Review and discussion, CD renewal options (Elena Mendoza, RAILS/PrairieCat accountant)  
Mendoza (RAILS) explained At the end of August 2025, PrairieCat invested \$481,500 in two CDs - one for \$250,000 with Bank Orion, at a 4.05% interest rate maturing on September 29, 2026, and a second for \$231,500 with the Public Treasury Management and Advisory (PTMA), at a 3.969% interest rate maturing on August 27, 2027. We have reached out to financial institutions to inquire about investment options for the Bank Orion CD that will be maturing at the end of September. The remainder of PrairieCat's funds are maintained in three interest bearing accounts. The checking account with Bank Orion holds the bulk of PrairieCat's funds with a balance of \$1,057,617 as of June 2. The current interest rate on this account equals the rate offered by Bank Orion for their money market accounts (.30%). The Illinois Funds money market account balance is currently \$332,459 and has earned year-to-date interest of \$11,581, with a rate that closely tracks the rate set by the Federal Reserve. The PTMA iPrime ISC money market account balance is currently \$5,305 and has earned year-to-date interest of \$492, with a rate that also closely tracks the rate set by the Federal Reserve. PrairieCat has a long relationship with Bank Orion, and, over the years, they have been extremely responsive and attentive. The rate they offered for their 9-month CD was the third highest among all quotes received. The CD that matures at the end of September is from Bank Orion. PrairieCat has been a client of PTMA for almost three years and maintains a depository account as well as a CD that matures at the end of August 2027. PTMA came in slightly higher on their 12 and 24-month CDs than Bank Orion. As we re-evaluate investment options this year, PrairieCat must keep in mind the



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economic uncertainty and the recent change in leadership that may affect the Federal Reserve's interest rate expectations. At their last three meetings, the Federal Reserve has held its target borrowing rate between 3.50% and 3.75%. Their decisions about interest rates are being driven by inflation and employment statistics. The projections they shared in December 2025 for calendar year 2026 and 2027 interest rates have remained unchanged at 3.4% and 3.1%, respectively.

Mendoza continued stating that since interest rates are predicted to decrease over the next two calendar years, we are recommending that PrairieCat secure a 24-month CD with PTMA to lock in interest rates for longer. The investment would be completed once the 13-month CD with Bank Orion matures on September 29, 2026, for an amount that would keep the total investment under the \$250,000 FDIC insurance coverage limit, including the projected net interest earned over the CD term. To do this, PrairieCat will need to transfer the matured CD funds of \$250,000 plus accrued interest from Bank Orion to the PTMA ISC account.

The remaining balance in the Bank Orion account could be transferred to Illinois Funds or PTMA to float with the market. Currently, the average interest rates as of May for the PTMA ISC money market account and Illinois Funds are 3.510% and 3.737%, respectively.

Coulter (PrairieCat) asked Mendoza to explain the difference between a traditional CD and a DTC CD. Mendoza stated that a traditional CD is placed directly with a financial institution and they cannot be bought or sold in a secondary market. The interest rate earned from a traditional CD is paid out at maturity and is subject to an early penalty withdrawal. A DTC CD is traded on primary and secondary markets through a DTC (Depository Trust Company) and the interest is paid out twice a year.

Gove (TF) stated that it makes sense to go with the PTMA DTC-CD. The Committee agreed. Mendoza noted that PrairieCat will need to invest an amount under \$250,000 FDIC limit, for example we invest \$230,000 in the PTMA DTC-CD and put the remaining money Illinois Funds. The Committee agreed to recommend to the Administrative Council placing an amount determined by the accountants under the FDIC limit in the PTMA DTC-CD, or whichever



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investment group/bank has the highest interest rate in August 2026 and placing the remaining money in Illinois Funds or PTMA, whichever has the best interest rate at the time.

6. Discussion, insurance options for FY28

Knippel (PrairieCat) explained that due to the rapidly increasing cost of health insurance, PrairieCat feels obligated to investigate alternative coverage options that will lower the cost for PrairieCat while maintaining affordable options for the employees. Currently, PrairieCat offers the PPO 1000, PPO 2000, and HDHP plans through LIMRiCC. For employee only coverage, PrairieCat pays 80% of the premiums. For family coverage, PrairieCat pays 70% of the premiums. This applies to any plan chosen. Below are a few different alternatives:

Alternative 1A

PrairieCat would pay 80% for all coverage levels of the HDHP plan. PrairieCat would still offer the PPO 2000, however, the employee would pay the premium difference for the PPO 2000. This alternative would save PrairieCat \$26,102.84 for the year. This alternative inequitably increases the cost for employee-only coverage by \$116/month and family coverage by \$15.80/month.

Alternative 1B

Similarly to alternative 1A, PrairieCat would pay for the HDHP plan premiums, but we would cover 80% for employee-only coverage and 75% for family coverage. PrairieCat would still offer the PPO 2000, however, the employee would pay the premium difference for the PPO 2000. This change would save PrairieCat \$31,658.38 for the year. It would also be a more equitable cost increase for employees choosing to go to the PPO plan regardless of their coverage level.

Alternative 2A

In this scenario, PrairieCat would only offer the HDHP plan, but would contribute to an HSA account. We would pay 80% of the premiums for all coverage levels and contribute to HSA account: \$1,500 for employee only coverage and \$3,000 for family coverage. This would only save PrairieCat \$6,602.84. This would save employees money on premiums, but it forces them to take a HDHP plan, which is not ideal for all employees.

Alternative 2B



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This scenario is the same as Alternative 2A, except with PrairieCat contributing less to the employees' HSA accounts. PrairieCat would contribute \$1,000 to employee only coverage and \$2,000 for family coverage. This would save PrairieCat \$13,102.84, but again forces employees to the HDHP plan with no other options.

#### Alternative 3

PrairieCat would continue to offer both the PPO and HDHP plans. To push employees to the HDHP plan, we changed the premium percentages that PrairieCat would cover. PrairieCat would only cover 60% of the premiums for any coverage level of the PPO plan but would cover 80% of the premiums for any coverage level of the HDHP plan. Assuming all employees stay with the PPO plan, this would save PrairieCat \$36,878.98. This would increase the monthly cost for employees by \$200-\$300 per month. On the other hand, if we assume all the employees jump to the HDHP plan, this will save PrairieCat \$26,102.84. This would also lower the premium costs for employees.

Coulter (PrairieCat) noted that LIMRiCC announced they are looking into a merger with WIN, which is another insurance cooperative, and this could help decrease premiums a bit.

Offerman (TC) asked if we decide to make a change, when would the change be effective?

Knippel stated any changes would take effect on January 1, 2028. The Committee agreed to continue the conversation while believing that Alternative 1B is the best option.

#### 7. Discussion, Innovative SMS contract options

Coulter (PrairieCat) explained that PrairieCat has been looking at the Vega Interact SMS system which would replace our current outdated system. Vega Interact SMS would offer improved functionality including easier opt-in processes, message aggregation, and 75 additional staff users for \$4,000. This would be easier for patrons, allowing them to link out to a portal and opting into text messaging. Our libraries would be able to customize those texts messages.

Innovative is asking us to sign a 3-year contract for the Vega Interact contract, which forces us into a renewal of our contract for Sierra and Vega that comes up for renewal at the end of FY27. The likelihood of us moving off Sierra is very low and Innovative has offered to co-term this SMS contract with any new contract that we sign. We are still going to put out an RFI and a few



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PrairieCat staff are going to attend a Polaris demo at the upcoming ALA conference. After we review the results of the RFI we can write up an RFP if we so decide. If we receive an RFP that makes the membership want to switch to a different ILS, we would move after the next contract with Innovative. Moving to a new system before our current contract with Innovative is unrealistic.

The Committee agreed to recommend signing the Vega Interact SMS system to the Administrative Council.

#### 8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:17 am.

Next meeting: September 17, 2026, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm, in person at the Sycamore Public Library, the Coal Valley Service Center, and online via Zoom