



220 W. 23rd Ave.
Coal Valley, IL 61240
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support.prairiecat.info

PrairieCat Delegates Assembly

Minutes

July 29, 2026

The Delegates Assembly met on Wednesday, July 29, 2026, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm in person at the New Lenox Public Library District, Freeport Public Library, Princeton Public Library, Ida 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-2026-07-29) (<https://support.prairiecat.info/events/prairiecat-delegates-assembly-meeting-2026-07-29>).

1. Call to order and welcome

Present at Coal Valley: Ann Whitaker-Reid, Michele Thurston, April Hoste, Karen Lonergan, Bianca Sierra, Claire Crawford, Bryon Lear, Lisa Boles, Pubali Kundu, Angela Campbell, Kim Brozovich, Tori Drews, Jill Sullivan-Bennin, Chelsey Knippel

Present at Freeport: Linda Schreiber, Deb Kolenko, Julie Voss, Emily Schaub, Carolyn Miller, Laura Watson, Brittany Gaulrapp, Mary Cheatwood, Elizabeth Green, Pennie Miller, Danielle Bazarek, Valerie Woodley, Elizabeth Smith

Present at Ida: Jill Simpson, Heather Black, Ashley Elshoff, Sarah Flanagan, Beth Kerns, Mindy Long, Daisy Mechler, Alie Stansbury, Janet Clark, Kimberly Martin, Sondra Terry, Jill Kohlert, Dana Fanslow, Jen Finnerty, Nicole Johnson, Stephanie Nissen, Trix Welch, Emily Wittke, Brenda Weinberg, Melissa Weidman, Kim Halsey, Nicholas Weber, Carolyn Coulter

Present at New Lenox: Jodie DePatis, Leah Bill, Renee Martinez, Thomas Webb, Emily Faulkner, Rene Leyva, Cassidy Steinke, Jamie Lockwood, Heide Trettenero, Cathy Palmer,



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Jackie Hanson, Michelle Krooswyk, Sarah Ehlers, Jennifer Shugrue, Lauren Offerman, Maria Meachum, Shelley Augustine, Magda Bonny

Present at Princeton: Jason Shirley, Lynette Heiden, Emily Kofoid, Jourdan Wendt, Resa Mai, Deanna Howard, Jason Jensen, Julie Wayland, Jay Kalman, Laura Youngstrum, Tari Sangston, Beth Wood, Yana Serdyuk, Melissa Badger

Present via Zoom: Emily Gundry, Kelly McCully, Michelle Bailey, Allison Beasley, Amy Runkle, Paige Frechmann, Kimberly Udstrand, Julie Harte, Janice May, Jennifer Barton, Laura Crisp, Amy Walsh, Jaclyn Trujillo, Melissa Landis, Roy Arey, Victoria Blackmer

2. Introduction and welcome new delegates or alternates

Trix Welch introduced herself as the Student Success Librarian at Rockford University. Ashley Elshoff introduced herself as the Director at Creston-Dement Public Library District. Alie Stansbury introduced herself as the Director at Johnsbury Public Library District. Beth Kerns introduced herself as the Director at Havard Diggins Library. Emily Wittke introduced herself as the Alternate for Sandwich Public Library District. Nicole Johnson introduced herself as the Alternate for North Suburban Public Library District. Danielle Bazarek introduced herself as the Director at Pecatonica Public Library District. Jill Sullivan-Bennin introduced herself as the Director at United Township High School District.

3. Introduction of guests

There were no guests.

4. Review of agenda for additions/changes

There were no revisions.

5. Consent agenda

5.1. Approve minutes for April 29, 2026, PrairieCat Delegates Assembly meeting

5.2. Central Site report including financial and statistical reports

5.3. Quarterly PrairieCat staff report

Motion #1: Fanslow (KR) moved and Long (BL) seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented. There was no discussion on the motion. Motion carries by vocal affirmation.

Ayes: 84

Nays: 0

Abstentions: 0

6. Administrative Council report

6.1. Finance Committee report – report from 6/18/2026

Coulter (PrairieCat) explained that the Finance Committee had a presentation from our accountant at RAILS, Elena Mendoza, who discussed PrairieCat's investment options. At the time, it looked like Illinois Funds and PTMA were going to give us the best rates so that is what they recommended to the Administrative Council. The Administrative Council agreed to go with the institutions who will give us the best rate at the time of renewal. The other topic of discussion at the Finance Committee meeting was alternative ways to provide health insurance to the staff. There was no decision made on the topic; however, we are doing our due diligence because of the continuing high cost of insurance.

6.2. Resource Sharing Committee report – no report

7. PrairieCat membership update, training and outreach report

Smith (PrairieCat) stated that PrairieCat has 136 member libraries, 81 Fully Participating, 23 Basic Online, and 32 Union Listing members. Of those 136, 104 are public libraries, 30 are school libraries and 2 are academic libraries. End users have access to 1.2 million unique titles and 5 million items through the shared catalog. There are 380,550 cardholders in the PrairieCat system and approximately 56,000 monthly interlibrary loan transactions. Smith shared the Delegates Assembly meetings for FY27. She reminded the Delegates that Attendance at

Delegates Assembly is required of all Fully Participating and Basic Online PrairieCat members and the four Union Listing representatives, per the PrairieCat Intergovernmental Agreement. PrairieCat is subject to the Open Meetings Act, and, to ensure quorum, Non-Attendance Fines were put in the Bylaws. If a member library or Union List Delegate is not represented by their Delegate or Alternate at **two** scheduled Delegates Assembly meetings, a fine in the amount of \$150 will be assessed to that member library. The maximum annual fine for non-attendance for each member library will be \$150. Please be sure to make sure your Alternates are up to date. A current listing can be found on the PrairieCat website under Governance. PrairieCat has a few other upcoming events: an IPLAR Q&A will be held via Zoom on August 11th, a Technical Services Committee meeting on August 14th online via Zoom, a Circulation Committee meeting on August 25th online via Zoom, and a PrairieCat New Directors Welcome will be held online via Zoom on September 8th. PrairieCat Users Group Day (PUG Day) is an annual event dedicated to professional development, networking, and continuing education for member library staff. PUG Day will alternate each year from in person to virtual. This year will be a virtual event held on September 24th and 25th. A highlight of a couple sessions at PUG Day will be a First Amendment Audit Training for Frontline Staff and Keep Cool Under Pressure.

Smith went over some Vega Discover updates stating Account Portal is now live. It seems to be functioning as expected. But, if you experience any issues, please put in a Help Desk ticket. Account Linking is another feature that will be turned on later this week. This allows patrons to link accounts in Vega Discover. It is different from Sierra Account Linking and it is also different from Vega Mobile Account Linking. Eventually, Innovative will combine Vega Mobile and Vega Discover Account Linking so patrons will only have to link to an account on one platform and it will work in both platforms. Account Linking can be set up as a one-way connection that allows one patron to view the checkouts, holds and related information of another patron. This would be best for guardian/minors. Patrons can also choose a two-way connection that allows both patrons to view and manage each other's account activity. There is an FAQ about Account Linking on the PrairieCat website and we will be sending out communications to the membership once this feature is enabled. Smith also reviewed Vega Reports with the Delegates. Vega Reports provides statistics on your interactions, page views, top searches, etc.



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for your Vega Site. If you would like access to Vega Reports, there is a course in TalentLMS that you will need to complete and then PrairieCat will grant you those permissions.

8. ACTION: Approve Trinity College of Nursing and Health Sciences/UnityPoint Health library departure from PrairieCat due to closure of library

Coulter (PrairieCat) stated that on June 6th, 2026, we were notified that the Trinity College of Nursing and Health Sciences (a union listing member) was transferring to Augustana College on 7/1/2026 and closing their library permanently. They will therefore no longer be able to participate in PrairieCat. Since their notification did not come 180 days before the beginning of the fiscal year (as per our IGA and bylaws), they will be charged for FY27 union list fees. Even though the library will no longer exist, Delegates must formally approve their departure from the consortium. It is recommended to accept the withdrawal of Trinity College of Nursing and Health Services.

Motion #2: Weber (WO) moved and Halsey (SY) seconded to approve the withdrawal of Trinity College of Nursing and Health Sciences/UnityPoint Health Library from PrairieCat.

There was no discussion on the motion. Motion carries by vocal affirmation.

Ayes: 86

Nays: 0

Abstentions: 0

9. Presentation: Updates from Suzanna Jones, Illinois State Library, regarding IRIS: Illinois' Reliable Information Sources database project

Jones (Illinois State Library) gave a presentation on IRIS (Illinois' Reliable Information Sources) database project.



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10. PrairieCat 20th Anniversary (short presentation)

Coulter (PrairieCat) gave a presentation celebrating PrairieCat's 20th anniversary.

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

Mai (PU) presented plans for the first Illinois Small and Rural Library Conference, scheduled for March 12, 2027 at the State Library. The one-day conference aims to address isolation and support small and rural libraries through networking, professional development, and potential scholarship support from community foundations. She invited attendees to join the steering committee, participate in sessions, or provide feedback through the QR code survey, noting that the conference would be accessible to libraries of all sizes.

12. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:26am.

13. Next regularly scheduled meeting, October 28, 2026