

**Kitchigami Regional Library System
Board Meeting, January 15, 2026, 6:00 p.m.
Kitchigami Headquarters Building, Pine River, MN**

Board members present: Jeremy Engholm (Park Rapids), Lynn Eaton (Bemidji), Tom Krueger (Hubbard Co.), Scott Bruns (Cass Co.), Brent Norman (Pine River), Neil Tobiason (Longville), Jamie Lee (Crow Wing Co.)

Board members present by interactive technology: Joe Gould (Beltrami Co.), Cecil Reams (Cass Lake)

Board members absent: Donald Johnson (Blackduck, alt.), Jerecho Worth (Walker, alt.), Mary Koep (Brainerd), Murlyn Kreklau (Wadena Cty.)

Others present, non-voting: In Person: KRLS Director Melissa Whatley, Admin Asst. Svetlana Lang, Carol Christensen, Mary Beth Durham

Interactive Technology: Troy Bauch (AFSCME Council 65), Sherilyn Warren, Val McCormic, Dan Touchette, Rhoda Jackson, CYN, Tami Beto

Chair Tom Krueger called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and requested participation in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Election of 2026 KRLS Officers Chair turned the election proceedings over to Melissa Whatley, who called for KRLS nominations from the floor for the 2026 board officers.

Motion by Brent Norman, seconded by Scott Bruns, for Tom Krueger to continue as Chair. Roll call vote was taken.

Yes: In-person – Lynn Eaton, Jeremy Engholm, Scott Bruns, Brent Norman, Jamie Lee, Neil Tobiason; via Zoom: Cecil Reams, Joe Gould. Tom Krueger abstained. **Motion carried.**

Motion by Brent Norman, seconded by Tom Krueger, for Murlyn Kreklau to continue as Vice-Chair. Roll call vote was taken.

Yes: In-person – Lynn Eaton, Jeremy Engholm, Tom Krueger, Scott Bruns, Brent Norman, Jamie Lee, Neil Tobiason; via Zoom: Cecil Reams, Joe Gould. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Motion by Jamie Lee, seconded by Jeremy Engholm, for Lynn Eaton for Treasurer. Roll call vote was taken.

Yes: In-person – Lynn Eaton, Jeremy Engholm, Tom Krueger, Scott Bruns, Brent Norman, Jamie Lee, Neil Tobiason; via Zoom: Cecil Reams, Joe Gould. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Motion by Jeremy Engholm, seconded by Scott Bruns, for Brent Norman to continue as Secretary. Roll call vote was taken.

Yes: In-person – Lynn Eaton, Jeremy Engholm, Tom Krueger, Scott Bruns, Brent Norman, Jamie Lee, Neil Tobiason; via Zoom: Cecil Reams, Joe Gould. **Motion carried unanimously.**

KRLS Oath of Office

Mark Lunde has been appointed as the board representative for the City of Wadena, and Duke Harrison as the alternate representative. The City of Walker had not appointed a new board representative at the time of this meeting.

All new appointees will be sworn in at a future meeting.

Approval of Agenda

Director Whatley requested several changes to the agenda:

- Item 8b KRLS/AFSCME 2026-2028 Contract be changed to a board discussion;
- Item 8c-2 2026 City County Budgets Final Budgets and 2026 Wage Scale be reviewed and approved;
- Bemidji Personnel Proposal be added to the agenda.

Motion by Jeremy Engholm, seconded by Brent Norman, to approve the agenda as amended. Roll call vote was taken.

Yes: In-person – Lynn Eaton, Jeremy Engholm, Tom Krueger, Scott Bruns, Brent Norman, Jamie Lee, Neil Tobiason; via Zoom: Cecil Reams, Joe Gould. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Public Input

An emailed letter submitted by Valerie McCormic will be included as public correspondence in the Consent Agenda.

Consent Agenda

Motion by Lynn Eaton, seconded by Jamie Lee, to approve the consent agenda Items A-D.

- a. Minutes: Nov. 20, 2025, and Dec. 18, 2025**
- b. Bills: December 2025**
- c. Financial Statements: November-December 2025**
- d. Director's Report**

Roll call vote was taken. Yes: In-person – Lynn Eaton, Jeremy Engholm, Tom Krueger, Scott Bruns, Brent Norman, Jamie Lee, Neil Tobiason; via Zoom: Cecil Reams, Joe Gould. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Old Business

No old business.

New Business --
2026 KRLS Board Committee
Assignments

Committee members for 2026:
– The Budget Committee will consist of County commissioners Chair Krueger, Gould, Bruns, Lee, and Kreklau.
– The Personnel/Union Negotiation Committee will consist of Chair Krueger and Vice-Chair Kreklau, and Jeremy Engholm.
– The Audit Committee will consist of Chair Krueger and Treasurer Eaton.

- The Strategic Planning/Policy Committee will consist of Chair Krueger, Secretary Norman, Treasurer Eaton, and Jeremy Engholm.
- The Internet/Electronic Resources Committee will consist of Chair Krueger, Secretary Norman, and Joe Gould.
- Northern Lights Library Network delegates will be Joe Gould and Jamie Lee.

KRLS/AFSCME 2026-2028 contract

There was discussion and a decision made to call a special meeting when a signed agreement has been received from the union.

2026 City County Budgets and Updated 2026 Wage Scale Approval

Director Whatley asked that the 2026 City and County Budgets and Wage Scale be approved in their current versions for the purpose of distributing the payroll. Beltrami County, Bemidji, and Blackduck were not included at this time due to budget reductions.

Motion by Jeremy Engholm, seconded by Lynn Eaton, to approve all of the budgets except for Beltrami County, Bemidji, and Blackduck.

Roll call vote was taken. Yes: In-person – Lynn Eaton, Jeremy Engholm, Tom Krueger, Scott Bruns, Brent Norman, Jamie Lee, Neil Tobiason; via Zoom: Cecil Reams, Joe Gould. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Bemidji Union Personnel Proposal Request

Motion by Tom Krueger, seconded by Jeremy Engholm, to apply as much funds as needed to prevent cuts to Bemidji Public Library and to apply KRLS buydown funds earmarked for Beltrami County to prevent cuts to Blackduck Community Library, as well.

Roll call vote was taken. Yes: In-person – Lynn Eaton, Jeremy Engholm, Tom Krueger, Scott Bruns, Brent Norman, Jamie Lee, Neil Tobiason; via Zoom: Cecil Reams, Joe Gould. **Motion carried unanimously.**

2026 RLTA Priority 2 Application
1:24:20

Director Whatley described for the Board’s information that RLTA funding supports remote internet through hotspots, database access, and e-materials, and tech repair services.

Chair’s Report

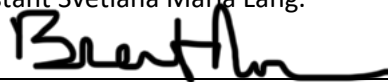
There was no report at this meeting.

Motion by Lynn Eaton, seconded by Jeremy Engholm, to adjourn at 7:14 p.m.

Roll call vote was taken. Yes: In-person – Lynn Eaton, Jeremy Engholm, Tom Krueger, Scott Bruns, Brent Norman, Jamie Lee, Neil Tobiason; via Zoom: Cecil Reams. Abstain: Joe Gould. **Motion carried.**

Minutes respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant Svetlana Maria Lang.

Minutes signed by Board Secretary Brent Norman



Date 3-12-26