

**Re: Formal Ethics Complaint Against the Rochester Public Library District for Illegal
Electioneering Activity**

11/18/2024

Per Rochester Public Library Ethics Ordinance

Director Janet McCallister
Rochester Public Library District
1 Community Drive
Rochester, IL 62563
director@rochesterlibrary.org

Brian Costin
Deputy State Director
Americans for Prosperity – Illinois
1843 Hicks Road, Suite B
Rolling Meadows, IL 60008
(847)513-4326
bcostin@afphq.org

Ethics Complaint # 1

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Board President Sarah Deen

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities

Violation: Deen appeared in a Facebook video on library property using the official logo to encourage support for the "Vote Yes Committee."

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State's Attorney for Prosecution.

On July 12, 2023 on the Rochester Public Library District Facebook page Board President, Sarah Deen, is seen on a video, on library property, with the official Rochester Public Library District logo encouraging people to join "Vote Yes Committee" or to email her or the Director of the Library to join the campaign.

It is accompanied by the text, *"Interested in joining the Strategic Committee or Vote Yes Committee - please email Library President, Sarah Deen sarahdeenrpld@gmail.com or Director, Janet McAllister director@rochesterlibrary.org"*

<https://www.facebook.com/rochesterlibrary/videos/789915979345142>

It should be further investigated if additional employees or library representatives participated in the filming or posting of this video to Facebook.

Ethics Complaint # 2

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Director Janet McCallister, Board President Sarah Deen, Trustee Elain Honomich-Lewis, Trustee Robert Tepatti, Trustee Erich Schroeder, John Chrastka EveryLibrary. Ashley Stewart EveryLibrary.

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities

Violation: Coordination with EveryLibrary (a 501(c)4 PAC) to develop strategies and communications to promote the referendum.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State's Attorney for Prosecution.

Page 66-67. On October 27th, 2023, John Chrastka from EveryLibrary sent an email to Board President Janet McAllister and others about "*Rochester Library Target Audiences for referendum and how to best communicate.*" EveryLibrary describes itself as a 501(c)4 Political Action Committee. On its ballot watch 2024 page, it documented their efforts to pass the Rochester Public Library District tax hike referendum – along with 6 others across the nation - it states, "EveryLibrary is providing strategic guidance, voter engagement, and GOTV support to ensure these measures succeed."

This email from John Chrastka is a meeting invitation with communications for campaign strategy to pass the referendum. The meeting invitation was sent to library employees, library board members, and the director of the library. A portion of this email was redacted without explanation from Rochester Library.

While EveryLibrary as a 501(c)4 may make expenditures for political campaign activities, a local government body like Rochester Public Library District cannot assist or coordinate such activities.

Ethics Complaint # 3

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Director Janet McCallister & President Sarah Deen

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities

Violation: Emails between Deen and McAllister included the "Vote Yes Campaign Plan," which was also discussed in a board meeting.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State's Attorney for Prosecution.

Page 68. On January 11th, 2024 Sarah Deen sends an email with an attachment, "*Vote Yes Campaign Plan*" to Library Director Janet McCallister.

On January 12th, 2024 McCallister responds, "Do you want me to share with board members?". Deen responds, "I sent the documents to all of them as BCCs. Per published Rochester Library Board meeting minutes, this "Vote Yes Campaign Plan" was discussed at the 1/11/2024 meeting.

Ethics Complaint # 4

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: President Sarah Deen, Treasurer Diana Fairchild, Vice President Jessica Ingold, Trustee Erich Schroeder, Trustee Bob Tepatti, and Secretary Elaine Honomichl Lewis.

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities

Violation: Board members discussed and approved components of the "Vote Yes Campaign Plan," including prohibited political activities, during the January 11, 2024 board meeting.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State's Attorney for Prosecution.

Page 69 - 75. The Vote Yes Campaign Plan was shared and discussed with board members at the 1/11/2024 Rochester Library Board Meeting. Includes "*Campaign Events*", "*Media & Marketing*", "*Advertising*", "*Website*", "*Soliciting Donations*", "*Vote Yes Presence at Farmer's Market*".

Board minutes from the 1/11/2024 meetings indicate President Sarah Deen, Treasurer Diana Fairchild, Vice President Jessica Ingold, Trustee Erich Schroeder, Trustee Bob Tepatti, and Secretary Elaine Honomichl Lewis were present. All except for Vice President Jessica Ingold approved the minutes at the 2/8/2024 board meeting.

The minutes include this passage indicating prohibited political activities at the board meeting. "*VI. Membership Recruiting Ad Hoc Committee: The board discussed how to structure the Vote Yes honorary chairs and others who can serve on the committee. Deen has drafted a campaign plan and will share. The Board and committee will continue to discuss at the next meeting.*"

Ethics Complaint # 5

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Board President Sarah Deen, Director Janet McCallister and the other board members who approved contract with Creative Entourage, which is revealed to included work for prohibited political activities.

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities

Violation: Contracted Creative Entourage for campaign-related services using public resources, with no campaign finance disclosures, violating local ordinance and Illinois law.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State's Attorney for Prosecution. State Board of Elections undisclosed campaign donation.

Page 74. As part of the "*Vote Yes Campaign Plan*" emailed by Board President Sarah Deen to other board members via BCC and to Director Janet McCallister on January 11th, 2024 the presentation includes "*Questions for Creative Entourage*" that are political in nature.

Specifically, it references "*Vote Yes*" and a budget, text blast social media ads, yard signs, and how the library can raise funds for a "*Vote Yes*" campaign. "*How other libraries successfully ran a Vote Yes campaign?*"

Library employees are coordinating with Creative Entourage for advice for the "*Vote Yes*" committee, but no such expense for Creative Entourage appears in Illinois State Board of Elections campaign finance reports.

The contract between the Rochester Public Library and Creative Entourage appears to have produced a work product political in nature and supports the "*Vote Yes*" campaign. Thus, it is an illegal contract and violation of Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities.

Ethics Complaint # 6

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Board President Sarah Deen & unknown attorney, possible the attorney for the Rochester Public Library District.

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities

Violation: Sought legal advice using public resources on prohibited activities for the "Vote Yes" campaign, including setting up a committee.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State's Attorney for Prosecution.

Page 75. As part of the "*Vote Yes Campaign Plan*" presentation emailed by Board President Sarah Deen on January 11th, 2024, the email details "*Questions for Attorney*". An unknown attorney is being asked questions and/or given legal advice to the library board/Sarah Deen about what they can and cannot do as the board as part of a prohibited "*Vote Yes*" political campaign. It also gives advice in regards to how to start a campaign committee in support of the referendum.

Ethics Complaint # 7

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Director Janet McAllister

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities

Violation: Distributed the "Vote Yes Campaign Plan" via email to board members in preparation for a meeting.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State's Attorney for Prosecution.

Page 77. On January 30, 2024, Director Janet McAllister again sends email (BCC) presumably to board members with the "agenda and documents for the February meeting." Includes a "*Vote Yes Campaign Plan* - PDF attached."

Ethics Complaint # 8

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Director Janet McAllister & Board President Sarah Deen

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities

Violation: Used library resources to support the setting up of the "Vote Yes" campaign committee.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State's Attorney for Prosecution.

Page 78. On February 9, 2024, an email from Janet McCallister to Board President Sarah Deen explained, "*I have asked Carole Strick to remind me who filled out the previous vote yes paperwork (maybe Mike Trello) and does she know if the copies were kept. She might have copies which would be helpful.*" Having the director of the library providing help to the new "Vote Yes for Rochester Public Library" committee is not permitted under Illinois state law or Rochester Public Library District code.

Ethics Complaint # 9

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Director Janet McAllister & Board President Sarah Deen

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities

Violation: Communicated about prior campaign filings to assist with a new political campaign committee.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State's Attorney for Prosecution.

Page 78. On February 11, 2024, there was an email from Board President Sarah Deen to Janet McAllister, about finding the previous campaign disclosure filing for the "*Vote Yes For Rochester Public Library*" committee. Implied to be helpful for setting up the new political campaign committee.

Ethics Complaint # 10

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Director Janet McAllister, Board President Sarah Deen, Board Treasurer Diana Fairchild.

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities. State Board of Elections Campaign Finance Violation of an Unreported Donation.

Violation: Collaborated with Friends of the Library using public resources to fund campaign-related events without required campaign finance disclosures.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State's Attorney for Prosecution.

Page 82. February 22, 2024. Email from Board President Sarah Deen to Board Treasurer Diana Fairchild, CC'ing Director Janet McAllister on coordinating campaign strategy with Friends of the Library.

- *"Board of Trustees request the Friends of the Library to sponsor 2024 Farmer's Market and Fall Festival"*
- *"Both events are important to the planned Vote Yes campaign"*
- *"Both events will give Vote Yes volunteers a lot of valuable face time to interact with the community."*
- *"The Cost of these events are as follows: Fall Festival \$1500, Farmer's Market \$2,100"*

If the Friends of the Library made these payments to the Rochester Public Library District, and the purpose of the event was to support the Vote Yes campaign, then both organizations are making donations to the Vote Yes campaign. Those donations need to be disclosed to the State Board of Elections but are not. The Rochester Public Library District cannot donate to the Vote Yes campaign under state of Illinois law.

Ethics Complaint # 11

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Director Janet McAllister. Treasurer Diana Fairchild.

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities.

Violation: Pressuring the Friends of the Rochester Library to contribute funds to the "Vote Yes" campaign via public resources and communication channels.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State's Attorney for Prosecution.

Page 83. Rochester Library Director Janet McAllister details pressuring the Friends of the Rochester Library nonprofit to make a campaign donation to the Vote Yes committee from her public email address.

In an email to herself and possibly others on BCC on February 27, 2024, Rochester Library Director Janet McAllister notes, "*How the Friends can donate up to 20% of their peor [sic] year's finds.*"

McAllister continued, "*Diana (Board Treasurer) reiterated the information asking for Farmers Market and Fall Festival funds.*" More, "*She will also be asking for a request for a request for the Friends to sponsor programs and how those programs will help with the referendum.*"

Ethics Complaint # 12

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Director Janet McAllister..

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities.

Violation: Recruitment of a volunteer for the "Vote Yes" campaign using a public email account, referencing the political activity of a library employee's spouse.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State's Attorney for Prosecution.

Page 84. Rochester Public Library Director Janet McAllister recruits a volunteer for Vote Yes Committee.

In an email on her public account to Board President Sarah Deen on March 4, 2024, McAllister states, "*I spoke with Beth Haupt about the Vote yes - she said to keep her in the loop and she would be happy to help (not run it) she will also talk her husband into helping - now that he is no longer a state employee.*"

Ethics Complaint # 13

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Director Janet McAllister. Board President Sarah Deen.

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities.

Violation: Sharing confidential patron survey data with campaign personnel, constituting a breach of confidentiality and in-kind contribution.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State's Attorney for Prosecution.

Page 85. Rochester Public Library Director Janet McAllister sends confidential phone numbers and emails from Creative Entourage survey to Board President Sarah Deen for Vote Yes Committee. Mentions Audrey Mock, Treasurer of the Vote Yes committee.

In a March 5, 2024 email titled “*Vote Yes,*” McAllister sent an email to Sarah Deen and possibly others saying, “*here is the link with names and phone numbers/emails from the survey.*”

Sharing emails and phone numbers from the confidential Creative Entourage survey violates the promise to patrons to keep respondents' information confidential. It also constitutes a campaign contribution from the library to the campaign committee, violating state of Illinois election interference.

The email mentions “*Beth and Henry Haupt*” and “*Audrey Mock*”. Audrey Mock is the Treasurer of the Vote Yes for Rochester Public Library committee. It appears parts of the email is redacted including a possible link to non-public information shared with Board President Sarah Deen and the campaign Vote Yes for Rochester Public Library committee.

Ethics Complaint # 14

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Director Janet McAllister. Board President Sarah Deen. Library employee Lorachelle Eck.

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities.

Violation: Facilitating campaign support through library communications, including sharing supporter contact information and recruitment efforts.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State’s Attorney for Prosecution. Referral to the Illinois State Board of Elections for a Campaign Finance Violation.

Page 88. On May 22, 2024, Library Director Janet McAllister sends an email to Board President Sarah Deen in relation to communicating supporters of the vote yes campaign committee. “*Karen Johnson spoke with Lorachelle this morning. Her granddaughter wanted a sucker (which we no longer have). She is purchasing a bag of suckers and wants to help with Vote Yes.*”

Sarah Deen responds and, in a followup email, Director Janet McAllister communicates, “*Here is Karen’s email address.*” Email was redacted. McAllister continues, “*Who would have guessed the end of suckers would gain us vote yes support.*”

Ethics Complaint #15

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Director Janet McAllister. Board President Sarah Deen.

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities.

Violation: Coordination of campaign supporter engagement using public email and resources.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State’s Attorney for Prosecution. Referral to the Illinois State Board of Elections for a Campaign Finance Violation.

Page 88. On May 22, 2024, Library Director Janet McAllister sends an email to Board President Sarah Deen in relation to communicating supporters of the vote yes campaign committee. *“No Suckers - wants to help with Vote Yes. Heather Cremeens (email redacted.)”*

Sarah Deen responds and, in a followup email, Director Janet McAllister communicates, “Here is Karen’s email address.” Email was redacted. McAllister continues, *“Who would have guessed the end of suckers would gain us vote yes support.”*

Ethics Complaint # 16

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Director Janet McAllister. Board President Sarah Deen, Ashley Stewart of EveryLibrary. John Chrastka of EveryLibrary. Krista Jiroutek, Chair Vote Yes for Rochester Library

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities.

Violation: Strategic planning with EveryLibrary PAC for the "Vote Yes" campaign, including coordination of newsletters and meetings.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State’s Attorney for Prosecution. Referral to the Illinois State Board of Elections for a Campaign Finance Violation.

Page 90 - 91. Library Director Janet McAllister correspondence with EveryLibrary about campaign strategy for a vote yes campaign in apparent violation of State of Illinois election interference laws and campaign finance laws.

Page 91. In a June 7th, 2024 email from Rochester Public Library Director Janet McAllister to EveryLibrary’s John Chrastka explaining campaign operations, “Hi! We are moving forward with the referendum in November. *We have a Chair for Vote Yes and they are setting up the legal stuff.”*

Director McCallister continues to talk about a quarterly newsletter and asking EveryLibrary – a PAC active in supporting the referendum - for suggestions on the Sept, Oct. and November newsletter, *“Who should I go after this next newsletter? This will be the most important newsletter as it will be covering the time of the vote.”*

John Chrastka from EveryLibrary responds on June 7th, 2024, “My colleague Ashley will be your day to day partner in the run up to the Election. She’s copied here to set up a regular call and to think through your questions below.”

Ashley Stewart from EveryLibrary responds to Director McCallister on June 7th, 2024 in relation to having Director McCallister to coordinate and put her in contact with the Vote Yes committee and setting up regular meetings, *“I would also like to have the contact information for your lead vote yes committee members – please pass my info along to them so we can get a meeting scheduled as well. I am getting ready to launch biweekly meetings – both for info-only campaigns as well as vote yes committee.”*

Ethics Complaint # 17

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Director Janet McAllister. Board President Sarah Deen, Krista Jiroutek, Chair - Vote Yes for Rochester Public Library campaign committee.

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities.

Violation: Collaboration between library leadership and Vote Yes Committee Chair to advance campaign efforts using public resources.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State's Attorney for Prosecution. Referral to the Illinois State Board of Elections for a Campaign Finance Violation.

After a June 7th email from Ashley Stewart, Campaign Strategist of EveryLibrary, to Library Director Janet McAllister to facilitate communication with the Vote Yes Committee. *"I would also like to have the contact information for your lead Vote Yes Committee members."* Director McAllister sends an email to Board President Sarah Deen, "Sarah, Please share with Krist."

Deen sends an email dated June 9, 2024 to a redacted email address, presumably Krista Jiroutek, former Library Board Member and the Chair of the Vote Yes for Rochester Public Library campaign committee.

Ethics Complaint #18

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Director Janet McAllister. Board President Sarah Deen

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities.

Violation: Sharing campaign yard sign proofs linked to Vote Yes committee activities, with direct familial ties to campaign leadership.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State's Attorney for Prosecution.

Page 92-93. Rochester Public Library Director Janet McAllister shares a PDF proof of "Support Your Library: Vote Yes November 6" Yard Sign which is "Paid for by Vote Yes for Rochester Library Committee." to Sarah Deen, Board President.

Also, Theodore Deen is the listed Treasurer of the Vote Yes for Rochester Library Committee's Treasurer and lives at the same address as Sarah Deen.

Ethics Complaint #19

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Board Member Robert Tepatti

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities.

Violation: Providing campaign advice and materials for public presentations supporting the referendum, violating ethics rules.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State's Attorney for Prosecution. Referral to the Illinois State Board of Elections for a Campaign Finance Violation.

Page 97. Rochester Library Board Member Robert Tepatti, sends an email and presentation on the referendum with campaign advice for the “Vote Yes Group” to make public presentations in support of the referendum.

In an email to Board President Sarah Deen, Board Secretary Elaine Lewis, and Library Director Janet McAllister Board Member Robert Tepatti *“anyway, that’s my 2 cents worth for the Vote Yes Group. Please tell them that I am willing to help create any power points that they might like for public presentation purposes.”*

Later in the email Tepatti mentions further campaign strategy regarding the homestead and senior exemptions, “Providing that kind of info might get us a few additional votes.”

Ethics Complaint #20

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Library employee Cassie Merideth

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities.

Violation: Using public email to connect a supporter offering professional services to the "Vote Yes" campaign.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State’s Attorney for Prosecution. Referral to the Illinois State Board of Elections for a Campaign Finance Violation.

Page 105. Using her public email address, Library employee Cassie Merideth sends an email to Library Director McAllister to connect a volunteer to the “Vote Yes Campaign.” who would like to donate his professional services to the campaign.

“He would like to offer a free concert with his band and possibly others to get the word out about the Vote YES campaign.”

Ethics Complaint #21

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Library Director Janet McCallister, Board President Deen.

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities.

Violation: Forwarded an email from Library Employee Kendall Tracy about a potential campaign volunteer offering a free concert supporting the Vote Yes campaign.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State’s Attorney for Prosecution.

Page 105. Library Director Janet McAllister forwards an email about a potential campaign volunteer from a Library employee Kendall Tracy to Board President Deen in an offer to conduct a free concert supporting the Vote Yes Campaign.

Ethics Complaint #22

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Library Employee Kendall Tracy

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities.

Violation: Used a public email address to propose dates for Vote Yes volunteers to speak with residents before the election.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State's Attorney for Prosecution.

Page 106. Using her public email address, library employee Kendall Tracy sent an email to Library Director Janet McAllister, suggesting eight different dates “for the Vote Yes volunteers to come and speak with residents before the election.”

Ethics Complaint #23

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Library Director Janet McAllister

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities.

Violation: Forwarded an email concerning Vote Yes campaign volunteers. Recipient details were redacted.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000 per violation. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State's Attorney for Prosecution.

Page 106 Library Director Janet McAllister forwarded an email concerning the Vote Yes campaign volunteers “to come and speak with the residents before the election.” But who that email was sent to appears to have been redacted.

Ethics Complaint #24

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Library Employee Kendall Tracy and Board Member Sarah Deen

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities.

Violation: Used library property for Vote Yes Committee activities at Farmer's Market events on multiple dates, positioning campaign stalls adjacent to library stalls, creating the appearance of library endorsement.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000 per violation. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State's Attorney for Prosecution.

Page 107-108. Using library property for the “Vote YES Committee” at the August 11th Farmer's Market event. Library Employee Kendall Tracy emailed to vendors of the Farmer's Market on library property, that the “Vote YES Committee” had a booth spot for the August 11th Farmer's Market event. The Vote YES Committee's stall is placed in spot “1A” directly adjacent to the Library's spot in “1” further giving the appearance of the Library endorsing the “Vote Yes” referendum.

Page 118-119 Using library property for the “Vote YES Committee” at the August 25th Farmer’s Market event. Library Employee Kendall Tracy emailed to vendors of the Farmer’s Market on library property, that the “Vote YES Committee” had a booth spot for the August 25th Farmer’s Market event. The Vote YES Committee’s stall is placed in spot “1A” directly adjacent to the Library’s spot in “1” further giving the appearance of the Library endorsing the “Vote Yes” referendum.

Page 121. Using library property for the “Vote YES Committee” at the September 8th Farmer’s Market event. In an email correspondence between library employee Kendall Tracy and Board President Tracy Deen, Deen confirms with Tracy the “Vote Yes committee” will have a spot in the Farmer’s Market event. **Pages 123-124.** An additional email from Kendall Tracy confirms the Vote YES Committee’s stall is placed in spot “1A” directly adjacent to the library’s spot in “1” further giving the appearance of the Library endorsing the “Vote Yes” referendum.

Page 121. Using library property for the “Vote YES Committee” at the September 22nd Farmer’s Market event. In an email correspondence between library employee Kendall Tracy and Board President Tracy Deen, Deen confirms with Tracy the “Vote Yes committee” will have a spot in the Farmer’s Market event. **Pages 126-127.** An additional email from Kendall Tracy confirms the Vote YES Committee’s stall is placed in spot “1A” directly adjacent to the library’s spot in “1” further giving the appearance of the Library endorsing the “Vote Yes” referendum.

Ethics Complaint #25

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Library Employee Lorachelle Eck

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities.

Violation: Sent an email about distributing Vote Yes signs and campaign literature to a local business, Cocoa Blue. Portions of the email appear redacted.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000 per violation. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State’s Attorney for Prosecution.

Page 114. Circulation manager, Lorachelle Eck send an email to Director Janet McAllister and Board President Sarah Deen about distributing a “Vote Yes Sign” and campaign literature to a local business, Cocoa Blue. It appears this email may have been forwarded to others, but that portion of the email appears to be redacted.

Ethics Complaint #26

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Library Employee Lorachelle Eck & Board President Sarah Deen.

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities.

Violation: Discussed distributing Vote Yes signs to named individuals via email. Portions of the email were redacted.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000 per violation. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State’s Attorney for Prosecution.

Page 115. Circulation manager, Lorachelle Eck send an email to Director Board President Sarah Deen about distributing a “Vote Yes Sign” to people named Heather Andrade and Amber Owen. It appears this email may include email addresses for these individuals and to have been forwarded to others, but portions of the email appear to be redacted.

Ethics Complaint #27

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Director Janet McAllister

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities.

Violation: Sent an email about coordinating with Friends of the Library for Vote Yes fundraising and campaign efforts. Portions of the email may have been forwarded to others but are redacted.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000 per violation. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State’s Attorney for Prosecution.

Page 116. Director McAllister using her public email address sent an email to herself – and possibly others on BCC – about speaking to Friends of the Library and requesting for them to send their “members an email regarding the Vote Yes Committee” and about a fundraising check from Friends of the Library to the Vote Yes committee.

Ethics Complaint #28

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Director Janet McAllister

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities.

Violation: Sent an email to Board President Sarah Deen and Vote Yes campaign committee chair about an email campaign targeting Friends of the Library members with Vote Yes-related materials. Portions of the email were redacted.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000 per violation. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State’s Attorney for Prosecution.

Page 117. Director McAllister sends an email to Board President Sarah Deen and Vote Yes for Rochester Public Library campaign committee chair about coordinating an email to be sent to the Friends of the Library members about the Vote Yes campaign.

The email detailed items to be included to email to Friends of the Library members including, “*Who to contact to join the Vote Yes, if they want a sign in their yard and link to the Vote Yes facebook page.*” It appears that information may have been redacted in regards to emails for Jeanette and Anne.

Ethics Complaint #29

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Board President Sarah Deen, and Library Employee Kendall Tracey

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities.

Violation: Used public email addresses to coordinate Vote Yes events at the library-managed Farmer's Market, including adding the committee to market maps.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000 per violation. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State's Attorney for Prosecution.

Page 121: To and from Board President Sarah Deen and Library Employee Kendall Tracey using public email addresses to coordinate multiple Vote Yes events at the library managed farmer's market. Tracey writes, *"I noticed the Vote Yes committee is not listed. Will the Vote Yes committee be joining our September 8th and/or our September 22nd markets."* Deen writes on behalf of the campaign using her public email address, *"Yes. We are meant to be there until the Farmer's Market ends."* Tracey finishes the email thread with *"Thank you! I will add your organization to the map."*

Ethics Complaint #30

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Library employee Ayla Yeargain and Board Member Elaine Honomichl-Lewis

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities.

Violation: Coordinated distribution of Vote Yes yard signs via public email, providing patron contact information. Portions of the email were redacted.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000 per violation. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State's Attorney for Prosecution.

Page 128: Library Employee Ayla Yeargain coordinates distribution of Vote Yes yards signs with board member Elaine Honomichl-Lewis to John and Cathy Wells, using public email addresses.

Yeargain emails Honomichl-Lewis and email titled *"Vote Yes Sign – Patron Request"*, including *"John and Cathy Wells are interested in a yard sign. Here is their contact information."* Honomichl-Lewis responds, *"Thanks for the info."* Parts of the email appear to be redacted.

Ethics Complaint #31

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Board Member Robert Tepatti

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities.

Violation: Tepatti used a public email to discuss Vote Yes campaign strategy with other board members and campaign chair Krista Jiroutek.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000 per violation. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State's Attorney for Prosecution.

Page 129: Board Member Robert Tepatti using his library email address sends email to Board Member Honomichl-Lewis, Board Member Sarah Deen, Director Janet McAllister and Vote Yes for Rochester Public Library chair Krista Jiroutek on Vote Yes campaign strategy.

Tepatti's email to fellow board members, Deen, Honomichl-Lewis, Director McCallister and Vote Yes campaign chair Krist Jiroutek talks about campaign strategy include the comment, "*Based on comments at the last Vote Yes Meeting I attended this is the lay it on the line communication that I propose—for the Vote Yes Page, For Whose Your Teacher, Talk Rochester, etc.*"

Ethics Complaint #32

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Library Employee Lorachelle Eck, Board Member Sarah Deen, and Board Member Robert Tepatti

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities.

Violation: Coordinated the distribution of Vote Yes signs via email with board members Deen, Tepatti, and campaign chair Jiroutek.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000 per violation. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State's Attorney for Prosecution.

Page 131: Library employee Lorachelle Eck coordinates distribution of "Vote yes sign" to member of the public with Board Member Robert Tepatti, Board President Sarah Deen and Vote Yes for Rochester Public Library Chair Krista Jiroutek.

In an email from Library employee Lorachelle Eck to Board Members Sarah Deen and Bob Tepatti she writes, "*Heather Andrade wants a sign. Said give as many as you want to put in yard as she's a corner lot! She said the more the merrier.*" Board Member Robert Tepatti wrote back, "Done". Lorachelle Eck forwarded an email response of, "Thank You" to Board Member Robert Tepatti, Board President Sarah Deen, and Vote Yes for Rochester Public Library Chair Krista Jiroutek.

Ethics Complaint #33

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Financial Communication Ad Hoc Committee Members Trustee Erich Schroeder, Trustee Diana Fairchild, Trustee Robert Tepatti

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities.

Violation: Financial Communication Ad Hoc Committee meetings were held to support the Vote Yes campaign, violating election laws. At least seven meetings were documented.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000 per violation. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State's Attorney for Prosecution.

Financial Communication Ad Hoc Committee was created to support the "Vote Yes" efforts and conducted at least 7 different committee meetings according to public meeting agendas and minutes records.

The Rochester Public Library District Board created the Financial Communication Ad Hoc Committee for the primary purpose of supporting the "Vote Yes" efforts. Per section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities, each meeting of this subcommittee where "Vote Yes" efforts are discussed is a separate election interference violation of state law and local ordinance.

6/8/2023 Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

- *“New business agenda items: Ad hoc Committee Financial Communications; Recruiting Members for Vote Yes committee tabled until July meeting”*

7/13/2023 Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

- *“Ad hoc Committee-Financial Communications—it was discussed and agreed this committee is needed. A motion by Deen with a second by Kurtenbach and passed with acclamation.”*

Additional Meetings of the Financial Communication Ad Hoc Committee occurred on the following dates.

8/24/2023 Financial Communication Ad Hoc Committee Agenda

9/7/2023 Financial Communication Ad Hoc Committee Agenda

10/12/2023 Financial Communication Ad Hoc Committee Agenda

10/27/2023 Financial Communication Ad Hoc Committee Agenda

1/25/2024 Financial Communication Ad Hoc Committee Agenda

2/12/2024 Financial Communication Ad Hoc Committee Agenda

5/1/2024 Financial Communication Ad Hoc Committee Agenda

Note: The documents above are agendas - and not minutes. Therefore, they do not show who attended the meetings. However, to meet Illinois Open Meetings Act quorum rules at least 2 of the 3 committee members must attend a meeting to establish quorum. These meeting may have been attended by other board members or employees of the library.

Each meeting of a public committee with the purpose of supporting a “vote yes” referendum campaign would be a violation of state law and local ordinance.

Ethics Complaint #34

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Membership Recruiting Ad Hoc Committee Members Trustee Jessica Ingold, Trustee Diana Fairchild, Trustee Elaine Honomichl Lewis

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities.

Violation: Membership Recruiting Ad Hoc Committee meetings were held to support the Vote Yes campaign. Some meetings lacked proper agenda postings, violating Open Meetings Act requirements. At least seven potential meetings were documented.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000 per violation. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State’s Attorney for Prosecution.

Membership Recruiting Ad Hoc Committee was created to support the “Vote Yes” efforts and conducted what appears to be at least 7 different committee meetings according to public meeting agendas and minutes records.

The Rochester Public Library District Board created the Financial Communication Ad Hoc Committee for the primary purpose of supporting the “Vote Yes” efforts. Per section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities, each meeting of this subcommittee where “Vote Yes” efforts are discussed is a separate election interference violation of state law and local ordinance.

7/13/2023 Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

“Ad hoc Committee–Recruiting Members for Vote Yes Committee; it was discussed and agreed this committee is needed. A motion by Deen and a second by Tepatti and passed with acclamation.”

Additional Meetings of the Membership Recruiting Ad Hoc Committee occurred according to board minutes and agendas posted on the RochesterLibrary.org website. However, the agendas for most of the Membership Recruiting Ad Hoc Committee meetings don’t appear to be posted online per Open Meetings Act requirements.

1/11/2024 Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

“Membership Recruiting Ad Hoc Committee: The board discussed how to structure the Vote Yes honorary chairs and others who can serve on the committee. Deen has drafted a campaign plan and will share. The Board and committee will continue to discuss at the next meeting.” *Indication of meeting occurring without proper posting of agenda online, per OMA.

6/13/2024 Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

“Membership Recruiting Committee–board to provide names; committee completed and will Disband.”
*Indication of meeting occurring without proper posting of agenda online, per OMA.

5/9/2024 Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

“Membership Recruiting Ad Hoc Committee: Talking to, and organizing list of volunteers” *Indication of meeting occurring without proper posting of agenda online, per OMA.

4/11/2024 Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

“Membership Recruiting Ad Hoc Committee: Talking to, and organizing list of volunteers” *Indication of meeting occurring without proper posting of agenda online, per OMA.

2/8/2024 Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

“Membership Recruiting Ad Hoc Committee: Review document and next steps” *Indication of meeting occurring without proper posting of agenda online, per OMA.

11/9/2023 Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

“Membership Recruiting Ad Hoc Committee: Will meet in January” *Indication of meeting occurring without proper posting of agenda online, per OMA.

9/14/2023 Membership Recruiting Committee Agenda

Note: The agenda linked above are in reference to meetings - and not minutes. Others are meeting minutes in reference to committee meetings without noting who attended. Therefore, they do not show who attended the meetings. However, to meet Illinois Open Meetings Act quorum rules at least 2 of the 3 committee members must attend a meeting to establish quorum. There may have been other staff members who attended.

Each meeting of a public committee with the purpose of supporting a “vote yes” referendum campaign would be a violation of state law and local ordinance.

Ethics Complaint #35

Person(s) Accused of Ethics Violations: Board President Sarah Deen, Vice President Jessica Ingold, Secretary Elaine Honomichl-Lewis, Treasurer Diana Fairchild, Trustee Kimberly Kurtenbach, Trustee Erich Schroeder, Trustee Robert Tepatti, Former Vice President Jim Sichlau, Director Janet McAllister

Ethics Ordinance Violated: Section 430/5-15 (a). Prohibited political activities.

Violation: Board members held at least 11 meetings where potential electioneering activities took place, violating state law and local ordinances.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor. A fine of up to \$5,000 per violation. Discipline or discharge. Referral to the State’s Attorney for Prosecution.

The Rochester Library Board had at least 11 meetings where potential electioneering activity appears to have taken place. Each meeting would be a separate violation.

6/8/2023 Board of Trustees Meeting

Trustees present: President Sarah Deen, Treasurer Diana Fairchild, Vice President Jessica Ingold, Trustee Erich Schroeder, Secretary Elaine Honomichl Lewis, Trustee absent: Trustee Kimberly Kurtenbach, Library Staff: Director Janet McAllister

“New business agenda items: Ad hoc Committee Financial Communications; Recruiting Members for Vote Yes committee tabled until July meeting”

7/13/2023 Board of Trustees Meeting

Trustees present: President Sarah Deen (remote), Treasurer Diana Fairchild, Vice President Jessica Ingold, Trustee Kimberly Kurtenbach, Trustee Erich Schroeder, Trustee Elect Bob Tepatii (will be sworn in at meeting tonight), Secretary Elaine Honomichl Lewis

Library Staff: Director Janet McAllister

“Ad hoc Committee-Financial Communications—it was discussed and agreed this committee is needed. A motion by Deen with a second by Kurtenbach and passed with acclamation.”

“Ad hoc Committee–Recruiting Members for Vote Yes Committee; it was discussed and agreed this committee is needed. A motion by Deen and a second by Tepatti and passed with acclamation.”

6/13/2024 Board of Trustees Meeting

Trustees present: President Sarah Deen, Treasurer Diana Fairchild, Trustee Erich Schroeder, Trustee Bob Tepatti, Secretary Elaine Honomichl Lewis, Trustee Kimberly Kurtenbach, Vice President Jessica Ingold, Library Staff: Director Janet McAllister, Visitors: Krista Jiroutek, Vote Yes for Rochester Library Committee Chair

“Membership Recruiting Committee–board to provide names; committee completed and will Disband.”

5/9/2024 Board of Trustees Meeting

Trustees present: President Sarah Deen, Treasurer Diana Fairchild, Secretary Elaine Honomichl Lewis, Trustee Erich Schroeder, Trustee Kimberly Kurtenbach, Trustees absent: Vice President Jessica Ingold, Trustee Bob Tepatti, Staff: Director McAllister did not attend

“Finance Communication Ad Hoc Committee: Met on 5/1 to review current communications; once budget numbers/formula and information available, additional communication to be created.”

“Membership Recruiting Ad Hoc Committee: Talking to, and organizing list of volunteers”

4/11/2024 Board of Trustees Meeting

Trustees present: President Sarah Deen, Treasurer Diana Fairchild, Trustee Erich Schroeder, Trustee Bob Tepatti, Secretary Elaine Honomichl Lewis, Trustee Kimberly Kurtenbach, Vice President Jessica Ingold, Library Staff: Director Janet McAllister

“Finance Communication Ad Hoc Committee: Will meet 5/1/24”

“Membership Recruiting Ad Hoc Committee: Talking to, and organizing list of volunteers”

2/8/2024 Board of Trustees Meeting

Trustees present: President Sarah Deen, Treasurer Diana Fairchild, Trustee Erich Schroeder, Trustee Bob Tepatti, Secretary Elaine Honomichl Lewis, Trustee Kimberly Kurtenbach, Trustee absent: Vice President Jessica Ingold, Library Staff: Director Janet McAllister

“Finance Communication Ad Hoc Committee: Will meet 2/12/24”

“Membership Recruiting Ad Hoc Committee: Review document and next steps”

1/11/2024 Board of Trustees Meeting

Trustees present: President Sarah Deen (attending virtually), Treasurer Diana Fairchild, Vice President Jessica Ingold, Trustee Erich Schroeder, Trustee Bob Tepatti, Secretary Elaine Honomichl Lewis, Trustee absent: Trustee Kimberly Kurtenbach, Library Staff: Director Janet McAllister

“Finance Communication Ad Hoc Committee: Will meet on 1/25”

“Membership Recruiting Ad Hoc Committee: The board discussed how to structure the Vote Yes honorary chairs and others who can serve on the committee. Deen has drafted a campaign plan and will share. The Board and committee will continue to discuss at the next meeting.”

11/9/2023 Board of Trustees Meeting

Trustees present: President Sarah Deen, Treasurer Diana Fairchild, Vice President Jessica Ingold, Trustee Erich Schroeder, Trustee Bob Tepatti, Secretary Elaine Honomichl Lewis Trustee absent: Trustee Kimberly Kurtenbach, Library Staff: Director Janet McAllister

“Finance Communication Ad Hoc Committee: Shared suggestions from EveryLibrary Zoom Call from 10/27. A timeline, outlining activities for the referendum was outlined and shared. Next steps: 1) have community conversations with Rochester Community 2) share the positive results from the survey through social media and traditional media outlets 3) educate the Rochester community regarding library operating budget not increased in 25 years as well as cuts to come if referendum is not passed 4) January/February was suggested as a time to begin the campaign for the referendum.”

“Membership Recruiting Ad Hoc Committee: Will meet in January”

“Referendum Discussion: The board discussed and agreed upon the need for the referendum to occur Nov. 2024. Next steps to include: 1) Community conversations by board members with Rochester community to understand questions, concerns, and needs regarding a referendum 2) Identification of honorary co-chairs and supporters in January as well as Vote Yes members and funding sources 3) Continued relationship building with advocates and supporters 4) Continued discussion at the Dec. board meeting 5) Confirm tax formula; how to best communicate.”

9/21/2023 Board of Trustees Meeting

Trustees present: President Sarah Deen, Treasurer Diana Fairchild, Trustee Erich Schroeder, Trustee Bob Tepatti, Secretary Elaine Honomichl Lewis, Trustees absent: Trustee Kimberly Kurtenbach, Vice President Jessica Ingold Library, Staff: Director Janet McAllister

“Finance Communication Ad Hoc Committee: Met on 8/24 and 9/11. Goals for the committee are to communicate: 1) what happens and impact to the community if the referendum is not passed; 2) what the library does well and how; 3) how the referendum works and benefits the community. The committee will work on a short-term communication plan and a longer-term plan; target audiences were identified as well and identification of how to currently communicate to these target audiences”

“Membership Recruiting Ad Hoc Committee: Met on 9/14; goals of the committee: 1) identify who could serve on “Vote Yes” committee; 2) define scope and responsibilities of chair/co-chair 3) recruit, train, and support 4) define/create a process for “Vote Yes” committee.”

8/10/2023 Board of Trustees Meeting

Trustees present: Treasurer Diana Fairchild, Vice President Jessica Ingold, Trustee Kimberly Kurtenbach, Trustee Erich Schroeder, Trustee Bob Tepatti, Secretary Elaine Honomichl Lewis, Trustee absent: President Sarah Deen, Library Staff: Director Janet McAllister

“Building Committee: Creative Entourage provided a summary of survey A. Library is positively viewed and is an asset to the community B. Majority is supportive of a referendum. C. Need to work on a goal/direction of referendum at the next board meeting. D. Work on a campaign strategy with Rob Wright”

“Finance Communication Ad Hoc Committee: To meet-Aug. 24 @ 10:00”

“Membership Recruiting Ad Hoc Committee: To meet- September 14 @ 5:30”

5/12/2022 Board of Trustees Meeting

Trustees present: President Jessica Ingold, Trustee Diana Fairchild, Treasurer Sarah Deen, Trustee, Kimberly Kurtenbach, Vice President Jim Sichlau, Trustee Krista Jiroutek, Secretary Elaine Honomichl-Lewis, Library Staff: Director Janet McAllister

“Survey Proposals: On May 11, met with Rod Wright at a special meeting to discuss the need for a survey for referendum. RFP proposal dates need to be adjusted and will be reissued for a call for bids by June 9.”

“EveryLibrary Referendum–will go back to John with plan and feedback.”

Summary:

The above information clearly shows the Rochester Public Library District, it's Executive Director

Board and its ad hoc committees, as well as other public discussion and actions that expressly support the passage of the referendum raise concerns under Illinois law, which prohibits the use of public funds and official time and/or resources for ballot measure advocacy or any other state election activity.

Despite guidelines allowing the board to only provide factual information to the public regarding the referendum, documentation from board meetings, as well as the library's own website and section on the Referendum, clearly advocate for the passage of the referendum. By engaging in actions beyond neutral, informational outreach, the board has crossed the line between permitted public education and prohibited political promotion. Taxpayer resources should never be used to advocate for or against any matter before those taxpayers and to do so erodes public trust.

We ask the State Board of Elections to investigate the use of public funds and resources by the Rochester Public Library Board to support and advocate for the passage of the Referendum between 2022 and November 2024 for violations of Illinois law.

Sincerely,

Brian Costin, Deputy State Director
Americans for Prosperity – Illinois
1834 Hicks Road, Suite B
Rolling Meadows, IL 60008
bcostin@afphq.org
847-513-4326