Portage Lake District Library Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes
August 26, 2026 – 7:00 PM

The regular meeting of the Portage Lake District Library Board of Trustees was called to order by President Sylvia Matthews on August 26, 2026, at 7:00 PM in the Portage Lake District Library Community Room. Board members present were Sylvia Matthews, Jennifer Donovan, Lora Repp, Joanna Chopp, Will Cantrell, Tim Scarlett, and Allison Neely.

Guests present were Britta Benedict. Media present were Chelsie Bossert.

Staff members present were Susan Autio, Fawn Lucero, and Catie Gardner.

The Board recognized Jennifer for her years of service to PLDL. Sylvia presented her with tokens of our appreciation. This was Jennifer's final meeting as a member of the PLDL Board.

Opportunity for Public to Address the Board: Britta Benedict, President of Friends of the Library spoke about some activities the Friends are planning for "National Library Sign Up Month" which is in September. Britta requested information regarding what the Friends can do to support the Hancock Millage. Tim responded that Friends could provide information and advocate. Sylvia said she would investigate it and referred Britta to our PLDL policies as well as Michigan Library association Website.

No official motion was made to approve the agenda. Meeting continued with no changes to the agenda as presented.

Motion by Repp, supported by Donovan, to accept the meeting minutes from June 24, 2026, board meeting, with corrections to Guests Present (Britta Benedict was not present) and under Reports and Committee Business, D. Staff Input – remove "only a cost-of-living increase". Motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Repp, supported by Cantrell, to accept the meeting minutes from June 11, 2026, Special Meeting. Donovan abstained. Motion passed.

Motion by Scarlett, supported by Chopp, to accept the meeting minutes from July 16, 2026, Special Meeting, with corrections to the location, Young Adults Section, and changing guests present from none present to Colon Jackson and Chelsie Bossert in attendance. Donovan abstained. Motion passed.

Motion by Repp, supported by Cantrell, to accept the meeting minutes from July 20, 2026, Special Meeting. Donovan abstained. Motion passed.

Motion by Repp, supported by Chopp, to accept the meeting minutes from July 24, 2026, Special Meeting. Donovan, Scarlett, and Cantrell abstained. Motion passed.

Reports and Committee Business:

A. Co-Interim Director Report – Susan Autio – A written report was included in the packet. Susan also gave a verbal report.
B. Financial Report – Business Manager/Co-Interim Director - Fawn Lucero – A written report was included in the packet. Fawn also gave a verbal report. Fawn praised staff for the cuts made within their department budgets.
C. Library Staff Department Reports
    a. Youth Services Coordinator – Catie Gardner –A verbal report was given by Catie about the summer reading program. She also mentioned that a new volunteer would be starting in September.
D. Staff Input – No additional staff input was received.
E. Board Committee Updates and Discussion:
    a. Budget Committee – Meeting scheduled for September 28, 2026.
    b. Personnel Committee – Sylvia reported that she and Lora revised the contract for the Library Director using a template provided by the library's attorney.
    c. Policy Committee – The committee will meet soon to remove incorrect information in the policies pertaining to the start of insurance coverage, as requested by Fawn.
    d. Building Committee – Meeting scheduled for September 21, 2026.
    e. Fundraising Committee – No report.

Old Business:

A. Mural installed on building - Susan reported that the floral mural was installed during the Digital Bloom event on the outside of the library.
B. Hancock Library - The Hancock Library has now changed status from a School Public Library to a District Library. There is a five-person board in place. A millage to fund the library will be on the November ballot.

New Business:

A. New Director Contract – Motion by Scarlett, supported by Donovan to approve the contract for the new Library Director. Motion passed unanimously.
B. Michigan Municipal League – Appraiser visit to conduct building insurance valuations (September 24, 2026 at 8:00 AM) - Susan and Fawn received notice that CBIZ Valuation Group on behalf of Michigan Municipal League will conduct an insurance appraisal on September 24, 2026. The board discussed that the City of Houghton should be involved in this process since PLDL does not own the building. Tim will inform the city manager's office of the upcoming appraisal.
C. New Board Member - Sylvia made the City of Houghton aware of the vacancy on the PLDL Board created by Jennifer's resignation. She was informed that there is currently one applicant at this time.
D. New Vice President - With Jennifer's retirement from the Board, the office of Vice President is vacant. After a discussion about who is available to fill that position, Will volunteered to take on the responsibilities of Treasurer allowing Tim to move into the vice president position.
E. Motion by Repp, supported by Cantrell to appoint Tim Scarlett to the Vice President position, and Will Cantrell to the Treasurer position. Motion passed unanimously.

Opportunity for the Public to Address the Board: No public comment was presented.

Adjournment: Motion by Donovan to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

The next regular meeting will take place on Wednesday, September 23, 2026, at 7:00 PM at the Portage Lake District Library Community Room.