Portage Lake District Library Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes
October 28, 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 October 28, 2026, at 7:00 PM in the Portage Lake District Library Community Room. Board members present were Sylvia Matthews, Tim Scarlett, Will Cantrell, Joanna Chopp, Lora Repp and Courtney Hohnholt. Tardy was Allison Neely.

Guests present were Grace Gardner.

Staff members present were Alyssa Cleland, Fawn Lucero, Catie Gardner, and Holly Nemiroff.

Oath of Office for New Board Member: Courtney Hohnholt took the Oath of Office given by President Sylvia Matthews. Welcome to the PLDL Board!

Opportunity for Public to Address the Board: Grace Gardner, Vice President of The PLDL Friends of the Library gave a brief update about what the Friends are up to. The Fireworks Fundraiser group met recently. The Friends are asking if board members know of anyone interested in joining the Friends to encourage them. There will be stickers for sale that will be available at the library. They are also considering another book sale (possibly at the end of the year), and possibly something on Ladies' Night in Houghton.

Motion by Scarlett, supported by Repp to approve the agenda, with changes under New Business, D. Transfer of funds from MI Class to Money Market Account and E. Incident Report – Indefinite Suspension of Access. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Scarlett, supported by Chopp, to accept the meeting minutes from September 23, 2026, board meeting, with a change under the first Opportunity for Public to Address the Board: from "Sign-up for a Library Card month" to "Library Card Sign Up Month". Repp abstained. Motion passed.

Trustee Allison Neely arrived at 7:11 PM.

Approval of Unaudited Monthly Expenditures: Discussion took place among board members about various expenses.
Motion by Cantrell, supported by Scarlett to accept the List of Expenses for September 2026. Motion passed unanimously.

Reports and Committee Business:

A. Director Report – Alyssa Cleland – A written report was included in the packet. Alyssa also gave a verbal report.
B. Business Manager Financial Report – Fawn Lucero – A written report was included in the packet. Fawn also gave a verbal report.

C. Hancock District Library Manager – Boni Ashburn is attending the state conference, so Alyssa gave an update. There were public informational meetings about the upcoming vote on the millage, and each one had members of the public attend.

D. Library Staff Department Head Reports
    a. Youth Services & Volunteer Coordinator – Catie Gardner –A verbal report was given by Catie. Catie and Holly worked on the Halloween Party and two fun Halloween themed story times. There will also be a Pokémon Go program coming up. Holly also shared that there is a PLDL book club that is being well attended. The two of them are also going to a conference in November.

E. Board Committee Updates and Discussion:
    a. Budget Committee – Tim gave an update on both the Budget and Building Committee. HVAC, roof, and settling of the foundation are the three biggest building needs. Figuring out how to fold these issues into the budget will also need to happen. Plans to discuss building needs with the City of Houghton will need to take place.
    b. Personnel Committee – Lora spoke on things that the personnel committee have been talking about, while waiting for a permanent director to come on board, and is hoping that there could be a regularly scheduled meeting with Alyssa to start going over the items that have come up over the last year or so.
    c. Policy Committee – Lora shared that it would be good to get on a regular schedule to keep things on task, whether there is only one, or many things to tackle. Fawn also shared that the auditor has requested that whatever policies change over the fiscal year, they would like that shared with them for the audit.
    d. Building Committee – Insurance appraisal tour took place. It was a very easy process and ended up taking roughly an hour, with some board members and staff participating.
    e. Fundraising Committee – No meeting has taken place. They are trying to determine a good day of the week to meet and will plan a meeting.

Old Business:

A. Carpet Installation – The work was completed.

B. L-4029 Form – Form has been submitted to all applicable clerks and the County.

C. Co-interim Director's Status – Last meeting it was decided to keep Susan and Fawn as Co-interim Directors during Alyssa's on-boarding. It was Alyssa's feeling that as the director, most if not all of the tasks that they were handling as interim directors have been taken over by Alyssa as the current director. Motion by Repp, supported by Scarlett to terminate the co-interim director status effective November 6, 2026, which is the end of the pay period. Motion passed unanimously.

New Business:

A. Temporary Employee Status – There are currently two temporary employees for the library. Alyssa would like the latitude to be able to move them from temporary status to regular employee status. The main difference would be that they could earn paid time off as regular employees.
Motion by Chopp, supported by Neely, to change the two temporary employees' statuses from temporary to regular employees. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Committee Membership – Alyssa discussed making changes from how the committees currently work. She proposed having staff who make sense (Fawn on the budget committee for example), and possibly community members that have a specialty in an area that would lend well to a particular committee, as it would help strengthen the committees, and take some of the pressure off of the board members directly. Sylvia suggested that since all the committees are planning on having meetings soon, to have this discussion among each committee and revisit this next month.
C. Joint Board Meeting with Hancock Area District Library Board – Alyssa said that in researching the contract situation between the Hancock Library and PLDL, there are questions that require a discussion and thought that both boards could potentially meet at a joint meeting in December. Information will be gathered and a date for this meeting will be discussed at the November board meeting.
D. Transfer of funds from MIClass to Money Market Account – Money will need to be moved from the MIClass account to cover the shortages in the checking account until the millage monies start arriving in December.
   Motion by Cantrell, supported by Hohnholt, to give the authority to move up to $68,000 starting October 29, 2026, through December 31, 2026, from the MIClass account. Motion passed unanimously.
E. Incident Report – Indefinite Suspension of Access – Alyssa provided a draft letter to a patron that has had more than one violation of the Patron Behavior Policy. It was provided as an informational item and will be added to the file and sent directly to the patron. It outlines ways that patrons can appeal if they so choose.

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

Adjournment: Motion by Chopp, supported by Repp to adjourn the meeting at 8:28 PM. Motion passed unanimously.

The next regular meeting will take place on Wednesday, November 18, 2026, at 7:00 PM at the Portage Lake District Library Community Room.