



MANISTEE COUNTY LIBRARY
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Manistee County Library Board of Trustees - Meeting Minutes
Manistee County Library, 95 Maple Street - February 24, 2026

Board Present: Ralph Mortensen, Raini Gilmore, Mark Fedder, Pam Evans.

Board Absent: Lynn Williams was absent with prior notice.

Others Present: County Commissioner Richard Schmidt, Executive Director Julie Herringa, Assistant Director Christina Streeter, Business Manager Rebecca Barker, and Dave Richards of Richards & McDougall CPA.

Call to Order : Meeting was called to order at 9:45 am.

Pledge of Allegiance

Consent Agenda - Agenda and Minutes

Motion: Pam moved to approve the consent agenda and minutes as presented.

Support: Supported by Mark.

Result: Approved.

Public Comment: None.

Meet the Staff: Next month.

Correspondence: Angie received a complimentary email from a patron after the Free Book Fair. Julie received mail from the Leadership Lab workshop that she is helping to plan. The library also made it to the 2nd round of the Community Foundation grant for our elevator modernization project.

Financial Report: Dave Richards presented the January financial report. One payable is not recorded due to the county sending their invoice late. Some receivables were not recorded due to the eRate, but have since come in. Penal fines and property taxes were low due to the checks being issued late from the County.

Penal fines are ahead of where they were last year. Property tax collections are higher this year as well. Richards reported nothing alarming based on the current operations; increases and decreases are in line

with prior years. Final numbers for 2026 tax assessments have not come in yet, so it is unclear whether revenue will decrease or stay where it is at present. Richards stated that the library's capital improvement account will have 2 interest payments in February, with one being recorded on February 2nd.

Richards also went over the yearly audit, which was submitted by UHY at the beginning of February. The only adjustment was the e-rate monies, which came in late. Unfunded pension cost has increased over the past year; Richards will meet with Herringa and Barker to discuss.

Director's Report: Director Herringa submitted State Aid, met with the Friends of the Library and with Sarah Howard of the Wagoner Center. She assisted with the book sale for the Friends, which raised \$1300, and along with Barker, submitted for several grants for the upcoming elevator modernization project. She and the library attorney, Nate Wolff, discussed patron policy, escalating behaviors, and immigration policy. Director Herringa also oversaw the purchase of e-books for the library's co-op. Manistee County Library was also selected to be on the Michigan Notable Books Tour and will be hosting Tim Mulherin at an author event this summer regarding his book, *The Magnetic North*.

Committee Reports

- **Facilities Committee:** Schedule as needed.
- **Finance Committee:** Schedule as needed.
- **Personnel Committee:** Met Friday 2/20 regarding strengthening the hiring process for the library.
- **Policy Committee:** Met Friday 2/20 regarding immigration policy and ICE. The library attorney drafted an immigration and ICE policy, which is now under review by the county's attorney.
- **Technology Committee:** Schedule as needed.

Old Business

Board Emails: The library's IT professional Nick Wallett created dedicated library emails for each board member to use, to make information easier to retrieve against any future FOIA requests. Wallett also created a dedicated email for library grants.

Audit:

Motion: Pam moved to approve the audit as presented.

Support: Supported by Gilmore.

Result: All yes- Approved.

State Aid: Director Herringa submitted the report after answering questions regarding the library's increased spending on books. This was due to a massive weeding project.

New Business

April 21st meeting location moved to Onekama.

The roof in Bear Lake needs a replacement as it is near the end of its life. Director Herringa suggested addressing the interior damage only for the time being as the library does not own the building. The roof is not currently leaking at this time.

Audit recommendations:

Motion: Mortensen moved to approve the suggested changes by the auditor, including increasing the capitalization policy to from \$500 to \$5000 and increasing the useful life of items from two (2) years to seven (7) years.

Support: Supported by Evans.

Result: All yes- Approved.

Staff development day:

Motion: Fedder moved to approve the closure of the library on Friday, May 1, 2026 so that the staff may undergo de-escalation training from Gentle Response in the amount of \$3000.

Support: Supported by Gilmore .

Roll Call Vote: Mortensen- Yes, Fedder- Yes, Gilmore-Yes, Evans- Yes

Result: Approved.

Public Comment: Richard Schmidt reported a positive experience with Jessica at the Kaleva branch when he went in for technical help.

Trustee Comment: Evans attended a webinar regarding censorship of libraries and the implications of book removal.

Board Training: None.

Future Agenda Items: Intellectual Freedom, RFP for strategic plan.

Adjournment

Motion: Fedder motioned to adjourn the meeting at 11:10 a.m.

Support: Supported by Evans.

Result: Approved.



Recording Secretary: Rebecca Barker, Business Manager

Approved on: March 24, 2026