



**Library Board of Trustees – Regular Meeting  
Final Draft – MINUTES  
February 12, 2026, 7 PM  
Novi Civic Center, Council Chambers**

**Final Draft**

**Call to Order by Vice President, Kat Dooley**

Novi Civic Center, Council Chambers  
Called to order by Vice President Kat Dooley at 7:00.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Roll Call by Secretary, Karla Halvangis**

**Library Board – 4 board members were recorded present**

Kat Dooley, Vice President  
Brian Bartlett, Treasurer  
Karla Halvangis, Secretary  
Lori Burke, Board Member

**Student Representatives**

Positions not filled at this time

**Library Staff**

Julie Farkas, Director

**Approval of Agenda ..... 1-3**

Director Farkas pointed out edits: Page 2 under the treasurer's report should say January 31, 2026 and not 2025 for three of those dates; page 3 it should say 2026 under future events; where it says 4/4 and 4/5 library closed, those first three days after should be a 4 for April and not a 3 for March.

**Motion:** To approve the agenda with Director Farkas's changes

Motion for Approval – 1<sup>st</sup> – Trustee Burke

2<sup>nd</sup> – Trustee Halvangis

**Motion passes – 4-0**

**Consent Agenda**

1. Approve Minutes of: January 8, 2026 –Regular Board Meeting ..... 4-10
2. Approve Minutes of Library Board Budget Session: January 17, 2026 ..... 11-15
3. Approve Minutes of Library Board Budget Session: February 5, 2026 ..... 16-20
4. Approve Claims and Warrants of:
  - A. Accounts 271 and 272 (#659)..... 21-23

Trustee Dooley pointed out that Trustee Sturing caught the errors in the February 5<sup>th</sup>

minutes on page 16. The minutes should reflect that there were only the 4 members were present instead of 5. On page 20, for adjournment, the minutes should reflect that the motion passed 4-0.

Trustee Burke asked about the charge to MCLS Library Research Center on Page 21 for \$5,859. on line 745.300.

Director Farkas believes it is for a database purchased through MCLS, a library consortium that provides discounted databases and coordinates with the state and TLN. She will confirm and get back to the Board.

**Motion:** To approve the Consent Agenda as presented with changes to minutes of Feb 5.  
Motion for Approval – 1<sup>st</sup> – Trustee Burke  
2<sup>nd</sup> – Trustee Halvangis

**Motion passes – 4-0**

**Presentations**

No presentations

**Public Comment**

*In order to hear all citizen comments at a reasonable hour, the Library Board requests that speakers respect the (3) three-minute time limit. This is not a question-answer session. However, it is an opportunity to voice your thoughts with the Library Board. Citizens must state their first, last name and address.*

*DISCLAIMER: Audiovisual presentations are welcome. To ensure adequate equipment needs, please contact Library Administration at least five (5) days in advance of the meeting. The materials cannot be changed before the meeting.*

No Public Comment

**Reports**

- 1. Teen Space Statistics ..... 24

Director Farkas attended the Mayor's Youth Forum. It was well attended. She thinks there's an opportunity for our program to have a teen rep.

- 2. President's Report (Vice President - Kat Dooley)

Trustee Dooley pointed out the MLA and TLN annual reports in the packet. She talked about a documentary on PBS called *The Librarians*. It was released in 2025 and premiered at Sundance. It has to do with what's been going on with librarians in Texas and Florida and discusses the impact of censorship on education and the implications for those communities. People can access it on their local PBS independent lens page. The website is [thelibrariansfilm.com](http://thelibrariansfilm.com) if people want to learn more about it. She emphasized that it is not to be confused with the fictional series called *The Librarians*.

Director Farkas added that there have been some local showings, including in Southfield. She will let the trustees know if there are any others.

Trustee Dooley thanked the trustees for the robust discussion during the budget

meetings and particularly the Finance Committee for all of their work. She reminded everyone that former Trustee Yu will be returning and joining us in March. Officer positions will need to be decided in March in addition to committee assignments and committee chairs.

- A. Library Board Budget Session Agenda January 17, 2026 ..... 25
- B. Library Board Budget Session Agenda February 5, 2026 ..... 26
- C. MLA: Remembering Randy Riley, State Librarian ..... 27-28
- D. Interim State Librarian, Michelle Bradley ..... 28
- E. ALA: Federal funding by Sam Helmick, President ..... 29
- F. MLA Annual Report 2025 ..... 30
- G. TLN Annual Report 2025 ..... 30
- H. 2025-2026 Board Committee Assignments ..... 31

3. Treasurer's Report (Brian Bartlett)

Trustee Bartlett attended the MLA meeting. They discussed the courts taking over the penal fines. Libraries in the state of Michigan run from 2% of their budgets to around 7.5%, depending on the size of their library. We're sitting about 2.5% -- at the low end of that spectrum. At this time, it is just a discussion with the judiciary. There are no active bills in front of either house. There is no active initiative from the governor. This is sitting in the state constitution. If it became actionable, it would probably be a 2-year process. It is unlikely to pass in a split government like we have now. They do not believe it will come up this year, so we are looking at about a 3-year procedure. No particular party is talking about it as part of their platform. They suggested that we get to know our legislators and express our support for it to stay in the constitution.

Trustee Burke asked Trustee Bartlett to clarify if the library receiving the penal fines is in the constitution.

Trustee Bartlett answered yes. He is not sure how it got there. The constitution would have to change, and they would have to get bills through the house. And without one party having all three branches, it's not likely to happen in the near future. We are not in imminent danger of losing that funding.

Continued discussion of the Governor's budget.

Director Farkas will be attending the Advocacy Day in Lansing on April 28. She will be looking to ask staff members to join her. They will have the opportunity to meet with local representatives.

Trustee Bartlett asked if City Council wants to see particular columns.

Director Farkas said that they want to see both – we will approve both.

- A. 2025-2026 Library Fund Budget 271 ..... 32-35
- B. 2025-2026 Contributed Fund Budget 272 ..... 36
- C. Financial Report January 2026 ..... 37
- D. Library Fund 271 Expenditure & Revenue Report as of January 31, 2025 ..... 38-41
- E. Library Fund 272 Contributed Fund as of January 31, 2025 ..... 42
- F. Balance Sheets for Funds 271 and 272 as of January 31, 2025 ..... 43-44
- G. 10 Year Financial Projection for Account 271 with Millage Funding ..... 45

H.	Proposed Year End Budget for 25/26 for Accounts 271 and 272.....	46-50
I.	Proposed 26/27 Budgets for Accounts 271 and 272.....	46-50
4.	Director's Report (Julie Farkas).....	51-56
A.	Door Count Usage Statistics – (Jeff Smith) .....	57-58
B.	Assistant Director of Building Operations Report (Maryann Zurmuehlen) .....	59
C.	Information Technology Report (Jeff Smith) .....	60-62
D.	Facilities Report (Keith Perfect) .....	62-63
E.	Assistant Director of Public Services Report (Lori Lowery) .....	63-64
F.	Information Services Report (Emily Brush and Rae Manela).....	65-69
G.	Marketing and Community Promotion Report (Dana VanOast) .....	70
H.	Support Services Report (Sarah Mominee) .....	71-72
I.	Library Usage Statistics .....	73-82
J.	Friends of Novi Library –February 2026 E-Newsletter .....	83
K.	City of Novi Historical Commission – .....	N/A

Director Farkas acknowledged staff anniversaries and congratulated them. TLN Downloadable Materials have seen a 13% usage increase. MyLIBRO had an app update, so people will have to log in again.

She highlighted the list staff committees with their purpose statements and goals.

She drew attention to the Community Partners event that she will be hosting in March. They used to hold it three or four times a year, inviting non-profits and organizations in the community to come together to talk about what they provide. Organizations can network together, and the event allows the Library to update the database that is on the website for the public to use to find resources they may be looking for such as clothes closets, food pantries, or employment services. It was interrupted because of COVID, but she is happy to be bringing it back.

In partnership with our school district and Oakland County Schools, the Novi Public Library will be presenting an African American Read-In on Thursday, February 26 at Novi Meadows from 6-7. The popular author, Kwame Alexander, who writes picture books and middle school and high school materials, will be Zoomed in through Oakland County.

Ladies Night Out is on hold for now as they look to make some different arrangements since the Library will no longer be hosting events on Friday evenings.

Trustee Bartlett expressed thanks to Maryann for her efforts to get the book return up and running.

**Public Comment**

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No Public Comment

**Committee Reports**

- 1. **Policy Committee:** Review current public policies for the Library  
(Chair: Burke, Bartlett and Gawalapu, Staff Liaison – Julie Farkas)
  - Meeting held: No meeting held ..... N/A
- 2. **HR Committee:** Review HR Policies for the Library, Director Review & Goals  
(Chair: Crawford, Dooley, Halvangis, Staff Liaisons – Julie Farkas and HR Specialist – Kristen Sullivan)
  - Meeting held: No meeting held; ..... N/A
  - Update from Director Farkas ..... 84

Director Farkas notified the Board that a recording secretary candidate has been selected and will be onboarded soon. The new recording secretary will be here for the March meeting.

- 3. **Building & Grounds Committee:**  
(Chair: Gawalapu, Sturing, Halvangis (Staff Liaison – Julie Farkas)
  - Meeting held: 2/3 Re: Intercom System and Updates .....84-89

Trustee Halvangis informed the Board about the selection process for the new intercom system, mentioning that Jeff did a great job collecting and compiling all the information and the references.

- 4. **Finance Committee:** Financial plan based on building assessment review, Library endowment investigation  
(Chair: Bartlett, Burke, Sturing; Staff Liaisons – Julie Farkas)
  - Meeting held: 1/12 and 1/22 ..... 100
- 5. **Events/Marketing/Fundraising Committee:** Outreach and fundraising opportunities  
(Chair: Dooley, Burke; Staff Liaisons – Julie Farkas and Dana VanOast)
  - Meeting held: No meeting held ..... N/A
  - Update from Director Farkas..... 100

- 6. **Strategic Planning Committee:**  
(Chair: Bartlett, Crawford, Staff Liaison – Julie Farkas and Dana VanOast, Info Services)
  - Meeting held: No meeting held ..... N/A

- 7. **Bylaw Committee (Ad-hoc): Review of Library Board Bylaws**  
(Chair: Bartlett, Sturing (Staff Liaison – Julie Farkas)
  - Meeting held: No meeting held ..... N/A

- 8. **DEI: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee**  
(Chair: Halvangis, Dooley, Crawford, Halvangis (Staff Liaison – Julie Farkas)
  - Meeting held: No meeting held ..... N/A

**Matters for Library Board Action**

- 1. Approve 25/26 Year-End Proposed Budgets for 271 and 272 ..... 46-50

Trustee Burke remarked that this was a tough budget session. She thanked Director Farkas and her staff for working so hard and sacrificing certain projects to reduce the budget deficit. We all love our library and strive to make it the best it can be, so it is hard to pull stuff away that we don't want to. We are all very proud of our library

and want it to continue being the community gem that it is. She thanked the Friends for their support.

Trustee Dooley agreed and thanked Trustee Burke for her comments. She thought the discussion was great. She reiterated that it was hard and that we have to balance the excitement and passion of the team, but then take on our fiscal responsibility. She is thankful for having a balanced membership on the Board of Trustees. Everyone has different expertise when it comes to this. She acknowledged that her philosophy is to do things, believing the money will come. However, she acknowledges that there are other members on the Board who are more realistic and who are able to crunch the numbers and think about those things. It was a challenging budget, but we did really well. She echoed Trustee Burke's appreciation of the staff and Director Farkas's asking them to think about needs instead of wants. She doesn't believe the public realizes how hard the staff works and how they don't want to say no. They try to please everyone, but we have to be realistic on their behalf as well. Going forward, they've got guidance from Director Farkas and from us. She just wants to appreciate them – it was hard to do.

Trustee Burke doesn't think the public understands how much the Library employees create different programs and put their blood, sweat and tears into it.

Director Farkas added time to the Trustee Burke's list. She complimented their creativity and their unique areas of expertise including hobbies that they've brought to the Library to the benefit of the community. She appreciates that both budget sessions were very productive and positive.

Trustee Bartlett noted that due to the hard work that everyone put in that our deficit number is considerably lower than the beginning of the year. It is also in part due to the assessment and the revenue from the City. He acknowledged that the City has had some challenges as far as the finance department. Also, our austerity is part of it as well. Our deficit is not as high as it was expected, but we still have a need for additional funding.

Trustee Halvangis echoed appreciation for everyone's hard work. She noted Director Farkas's efforts to give the Board the information they need and to answer questions. She expressed appreciation for the opportunity to work with fellow trustees.

**Motion:** To approve 25/26 Year-End Proposed Budgets for 271 and 272

Motion for Approval – 1<sup>st</sup> – Trustee Halvangis

2<sup>nd</sup> – Trustee Bartlett

**Motion passes – 4-0**

2. Approve 26/27 Proposed Budgets for 271 and 272..... 46-50

Trustee Bartlett noted that the second and third year probably don't look as good as some people would like. The Board made a decision not to make massive cuts or closures because those things cause morale problems. We made a conscious decision not to have people worry about their jobs. He pointed out an important part of the Library that is not obvious on the budget sheets – the amount of community support and donations from business. That is all driven by the staff. We have no 501c3 that is focused on this. The Friends do not focus on this. We have had

to pull them into discussions for legacy gifts because we have to move them through a 501c3. The Friends do a marvelous job raising \$30-\$35,000 a year. He doesn't want to pull them into that. To keep it going, we need a motivated staff; we need a happy staff; and we need a staff with time to do it. He reminded the Board that we would not have the building we have without the patrons' donations. The previous millage was voted down. There is a list of benefactors in the front of the Engage magazine. We have a \$65,000 fundraising project with \$50,000 from donations. He warned that we cannot get to a place where people think that the Library is not delivering what it used to and then choose not to donate. If you want the library that you want to be proud of, we have come up with a proposal that is still about 10% below the average library that allows us to say to the citizens that we are still going to do a good job with your money, and we are still going to do our best to deliver to you value over and above what you are spending.

Trustee Dooley thanked Trustee Bartlett for bringing up the 10%. During budgets, we brought forward that we are open way more, and that's going to change a little bit. We do so much more for less than our sister libraries. She believes the proposed budget is fair and realistic. Of course she would like more, but seeing the 10-year outlook was helpful in reassuring her that it would be sufficient.

Trustee Halvangis asked a clarifying question about approving both the proposed and the proposed with additional millage in order for the City to determine which they accept and if no further action will be necessary on our part.

Director Farkas confirmed.

**Motion:** To approve 26/27 Proposed Budgets for 271 and 272

Motion for Approval – 1<sup>st</sup> – Trustee Burke

2<sup>nd</sup> – Trustee Halvangis

**Motion passes – 4-0**

3. Approve 26/27 Proposed Budgets for 271 and 272 with additional millage funding .... 46-50

Trustee Dooley explained the difference between the two proposed budgets – one without and one with additional millage funding.

Trustee Bartlett noted for the public that our bond millage is expiring, and that the expiring bond millage is greater than what we are asking. Residents' overall millage to the library will decrease by about 10%.

Trustee Burke wanted people to understand that we now have a 20-year-old building. We will need the funding to maintain it.

Trustee Dooley added that the reserve study identified some big-ticket items that will be coming up.

**Motion:** To approve 26/27 Proposed Budgets for 271 and 272 with additional millage funding

Motion for Approval – 1<sup>st</sup> – Trustee Halvangis

2<sup>nd</sup> – Trustee Burke

**Motion passes – 4-0**

4. Recommendation from Library Board Building & Grounds Committee: Approve a contract with SSD Cabling in the amount of \$5,589.65 for a new Intercom System..... 84-99

Trustee Halvangis gave more information about the purchase. It will be for a backdoor intercom system that will replace a 15-year-old system that is out of warranty and has become unreliable. It provides significant upgrades in quality and features, including two large screens that can be viewed by different areas of the building and a system that can be accessed remotely.

Trustee Burke asked if it was coming from the 272 account and if it was part of the reserve study.

Director Farkas confirmed that it is coming from the 272 account and that it was not part of the reserve study. It was budgeted for, but anything from the reserve study will be from this time period going forward.

Trustee Burke asked how much was budgeted for it.

Director Farkas said about \$4,000.

Trustee Halvangis mentioned that Jeff had noted that he had some ideas of where in his budget the additional cost could be covered.

**Motion:** To approve the recommendation from the Library Board Building & Grounds Committee: Approve a contract with SSD Cabling in the amount of \$5,589.65 for a new Intercom System  
Motion for Approval – 1<sup>st</sup> – Trustee Bartlett  
2<sup>nd</sup> – Trustee Halvangis

**Motion passes – 4-0**

**Communications**

1. .... N/A

**Closed Session**

1. None

**Adjournment**

**Motion:** To adjourn at 7:49  
Motion for Approval – 1<sup>st</sup> – Trustee Burke  
2<sup>nd</sup> – Trustee Bartlett

**Motion passes – 4-0**

**Supplemental Information**

- Library Board Calendar 2026..... 101
- Library Closings 2026..... 102

**2025 Future Events:**

- 2/18/26: Novi Historical Commission Regular Meeting, 7pm, Novi Public Library
- **March is National Reading Month**
- 3/11/26: Friends of Novi Library Regular Meeting at 7pm, Novi Public Library

- 3/18/26: Novi Historical Commission Regular Meeting at 7pm, Novi Public Library
- 3/26/26: Library Board Regular Meeting at 7pm, City of Novi – Council Chambers (Officer Elections)
- 4/4 and 4/5: Library CLOSED
- 3/8/26: Friends of Novi Library Regular Meeting at 7pm, Novi Public Library
- 3/15/26: Novi Historical Commission Regular Meeting at 7pm, Novi Public Library
- 3/16/26: Library Board Regular Meeting at 7pm, Novi Public Library
- 4/19 – 4/25: National LIBRARY WEEK

*Karla S. Halvangis*

March 26, 2026

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Karla Halvangis, Secretary

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Date