

PORTAGE DISTRICT LIBRARY BOARD

Regular Board Meeting
September 22, 2025

300 LIBRARY LANE, PORTAGE, MICHIGAN 49002



NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING

PORTAGE DISTRICT LIBRARY BOARD

Regular Board Meeting, Monday, September 22, 2025 | 6:00 PM

The Library Board of the Portage District Library will hold a regular meeting on Monday, September 22, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. This meeting will be held at 300 Library Lane. The purpose of this meeting is for the discussion of library business. The Library gives notice of the following:

1. Meeting Attendance

The regular meeting is being held in person.

2. Procedures

The public may participate in the meeting in person and may make public comment through spoken or written methods. Each speaker has a time limit of three minutes. Please refer to the Policy for Public Comments at Meetings in its entirety on the library's website www.portagelibrary.info.

3. Contact Information

For those people who desire to contact members of the Library Board to provide input or ask questions on any business that will come before the public body at the meeting, please contact Quyen Edwards at qedwards@portagelibrary.info prior to the start of the meeting.

4. Persons with Disabilities

Persons with disabilities may participate in the meeting through the methods set forth in paragraph 2. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services in order to attend electronically should notify Quyen Edwards at qedwards@portagelibrary.info within a reasonable time in advance of the meeting.

Dated: Sept. 18, 2025

Quyen Edwards
Library Board Secretary

Portage District Library
300 Library Lane
Portage, MI 49002

AGENDA

September 22, 2025

I. Start of Meeting

II. Roll Call

III. Comments or Requests from the Public, Board Members, or Library Staff

The Board Chair will recognize one person to speak at a time, and each speaker must provide their name and address. Each speaker is entitled to one (1) three-minute time during this Public Comment period. Please refer to the Policy for Public Comments at Meetings in its entirety at (<https://qrco.de/bdiESq>) or the printed documents at the entrance to the meeting room on the evening of the Library Board Meeting.

IV. Adoption of the Agenda for the Regular Meeting of September 22, 2025 (1 minute) (VOTE)

V. Consent Agenda (5 minutes) (VOTE)

- A. Minutes of the regular meeting held on August 25, 2025 (Info) Pg.5-7
- B. September 2025 Narrative (Info) Pg.8-10
- C. Financial Condition for August 2025 (Info) Pg. 11-12
- D. Statistical Report for August 2025 (Info) Pg. 13
- E. October 2025 Program Calendar (Info) Pg. 14
- F. Review of Materials Selection Policy (Info) Pg. 15-17
- G. Review of Capitalization Policy (Info) Pg.18-20
- H. MLA Advocacy (Info) Pg.21-22

VI. Governance (30 minutes)

- A. Initiation of Library Director's 2025 Evaluation (Info) Pg. 23

VII. Ends Development (20 minutes)

- A. Report on 2025 Summer Reading Program (Info) Pg. 24-25

VIII. Library Director's Reports (20 minutes)

- A. Final remarks by Library Director for the September 22, 2025 Library Board Meeting

IX. Process Evaluation (5 minutes total)

- A. Suggestions for Agenda Items to be included on the October 27, 2025 Board Meeting
 - 1. Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on September 22, 2025
 - 2. Review of Donations Policy.
 - 3. Review of Investment Policy.
 - 4. Review of Resident Non-Resident Policy.
 - 5. Approval of Holiday Schedule for Library Hours of Operation in 2026.
 - 6. Monitoring Report – Communication & Support to the Library Board.
 - 7. Monitoring Report – Ends Focus of Grants/Contracts.
 - 8. Update on Library Director's 2025 Evaluation Process.

AGENDA

- 9. Library Director's accomplishment of personal goals for FY 2025.
- 10. 3rd Quarter Financial Report for FY 2025.
- 11. 3rd Quarter 2025 Strategic Plan Report.

B. Miscellaneous Items

X. Adjournment

MINUTES

From the August 25, 2025
Public Hearing and Regular Board Meeting

I. Start of Meeting

Library Board Chair Tom Vance called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

II. Roll Call

Board Members Present: Ken Baker, Michele Behr, Jeanne Friedman, Cara Terry, Tom Vance, Donna VanderVries, and Linda Whitlock

Library Staff Present: Library Director Christy Klien, Rolfe Behrje, Ben Chee, Quyen Edwards, Rob Foti, Lawrence Kapture, Abby Pylar, Colin Whitehurst, Laura Wright

Library Staff Absent: Steve Rossio

III. Comments or Requests from the Public, Board Members, or Library Staff

Library Board Chair Tom Vance welcomed everyone to the August 25, 2025 Library Board Meeting. He asked if anyone present or online had any comments and there were none.

IV. Public Hearing

A. Public Hearing on the Proposed FY2026 Budget

Library Board Chair Vance asked for a motion to move into a Public Hearing

MOTION: It was moved by Trustee Terry and supported by Trustee Whitlock to move into a public hearing regarding the FY2026 Budget. Vote 7-Yes, 0-No, 0-Absent. Motion carried.

Library Board Chair Vance invited any public comments at the Public Hearing on the Proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Budget. There were no members of the public present that were interested in making comments. Library Board Chair Vance then asked for a motion to close the Public Hearing.

MOTION: It was moved by Trustee Terry and supported by Trustee Whitlock to close the public hearing regarding the FY2026 Budget. Vote 7-Yes, 0-No, 0-Absent. Motion carried.

B. Formal Resolution to Adopt the FY 2026 Budget and Set the Amount of Millage Rate to be Levied for the Library for FY 2026.

Library Board Chair Vance then asked for a motion to approve the resolution to set the millage levy for the Portage District Library and adopt the Fiscal Year 2026 Library Budget.

MOTION: It was moved by Trustee Terry and supported by Trustee Friedman to approve the Resolution to set the millage for the Portage District Library at 1.9906 mills and to approve the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget as presented. Roll Call Vote in alphabetical order: Trustee Baker - Yes. Trustee Behr – Yes. Trustee Friedman – Yes. Trustee Terry – Yes. Trustee Vance– Yes. VanderVries - Yes. Whitlock - Yes. Vote: 7-Yes, 0-No, 0-Absent. Motion carried.

V. Adoption of the Agenda for the Regular Meeting of August 25, 2025

Library Board Chair Vance asked if there were any changes to the agenda before its adoption and there were none. Vance asked for a motion to adopt the agenda.

MOTION: It was moved by Trustee VanderVries and supported by Trustee Baker that the Library Board adopt the agenda for the regular meeting of August 25, 2025. Vote 7-Yes, 0-No, 0-Absent. Motion carried.

MINUTES

VI. Consent Agenda

Library Board Chair Vance asked if there were any changes needed to the consent agenda for the August 25, 2025 board meeting before its adoption and none were requested.

- A. Minutes of the regular meeting held on July 28, 2025
- B. August 2025 Narrative
- C. Financial Condition for July 2025
- D. Statistical Report for July 2025
- E. September 2025 Program Calendar *(Info) Pg.19*
- F. MLA Advocacy August 2025 *(Info) Pg.20*

MOTION: It was moved by Trustee Friedman and supported by Trustee Terry that the Library Board approve the consent agenda for the regular meeting of August 25, 2025.
Vote 7-Yes, 0-No, 0-Absent. Motion carried.

VII. Governance

A. Friends of the Library Update

Trustee Terry said the Friends are putting together a committee to discuss making changes to their item pricing structure. They are making approximately \$1,000 with the rolling book sale shelves. Last weekend book sale was very busy with credit card and cash sales totaling \$4,600. The Friends are also working on listing some donations for eBay sales.

B. Monitoring Report for Executive Limitation on Compensation & Benefit for Library Employees

This is an annual update. Element One is still assisting the library with compensation studies to be sure salary and hourly wages are in line with current market values.

The Business Department is working on connecting staff job descriptions with performance evaluation tools. We are hoping to have that complete by the end of the year. We are reviewing the Employee Handbook with the labor attorney. We are also discussing changes that involve overtime and new sick leave policies.

Question from Trustee Behr - Have you considered non-traditional options for staff benefits? Library Director Klien said the library receives an HR magazine with options to discuss, however we are limited by what we can do because we are a public entity.

C. Monitoring Report for Executive Limitation for Treatment of Staff.

Library Director Klien said we are making sure that we are following all policies and ensuring staff work environment is comfortable. At the end of 2024, air filtering systems were installed throughout the library in both public and staff areas.

VIII. Library Director's Reports

A. Final remarks by Library Director for the August 25, 2025 Library Board Meeting .

Reminder that for Staff Development Day Friday, September 19th the building is closed.
Parking lot resurfacing and striping will be completed within the next week.

MINUTES

Recently had lunch with directors of KPL and Willard. KPL would love to host for your Board Retreat. Suggested a Special Meeting to follow Open Meetings procedure. Will work on dates. Considering an early November week night.

Library Director Klien and Business Manager Foti met with the executor of an estate who left a legacy gift to the Portage District Library in the amount of \$100,000. While the donation is unrestricted, we are discussion about this person's interests and the best use of this gift.

Looking at starting a notary service via Adult Staff. We have a draft policy from the attorney which should be coming to the board in December. Free for community members and \$10 non-residents.

IX. Process Evaluation

A. Suggestions for Agenda Items to be included on the September 22, 2025 Board

1. Meeting Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on August 25, 2025
2. Review of Capitalization Policy
3. Review of Materials Selection Policy
4. Report on 2025 Summer Reading Program
5. Initiation of Library Director's 2025 Evaluation Process

B. Miscellaneous Items

Directors Report - Board Chair Vance gave kudos to adult and youth outreach.

Trustee Behr will share information about the webinar she recently attended titled: Librarians, Legislation, and Media Training: Successfully advocate for libraries in legislature and your local community.

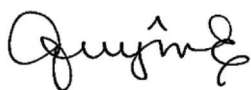
Thanks for the work on the Budget - to Business Manager Rob Foti, Business Assistant Kathy Morris and library staff.

X. Adjournment

Library Board Chair Vance said if there was no further business to be considered, that he would adjourn the regular board meeting of August 25, 2025.

DISPOSITION: The regular board meeting of August 25, 2025 was adjourned at 6:32 PM.

Recorded and Transcribed by,



Quyen Edwards

Library Board Secretary

Director's Report

September 2025

Adult Services

On August 9th, Outreach Librarian [Sara Weyenberg](#) hosted a Harmony of Chinese Tradition Workshop in partnership with the Chinese-American Association of Greater Kalamazoo. Approximately 45 individuals signed up to participate in two workshops where they could experience Tai Chi with a Tai Chi Master and be guided through traditional tea brewing techniques by a certified tea master. The program was met with an overwhelmingly positive response and requests for programs in the future where more time could be dedicated to each subject.

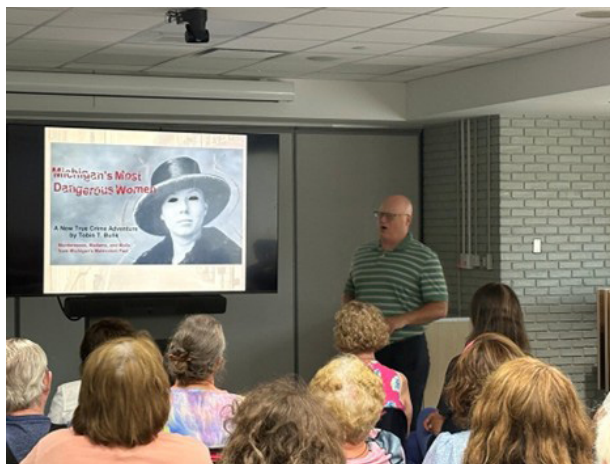
On August 13th, local attorney William Wierenga presented introductory information on estate planning. This program was well attended with thirty-five participants. This is the second year that Mr. Wierenga has come to the library to present this topic. In addition to the talk, he stayed around to answer individual questions.

August marked the second and last month with our inaugural Maker-in-Residence, Amber Adams-Fall. During the month of August, Amber continued doing her Drop-in Hours, working with residents to help them create quilt pieces that she will then turn into a Community Quilt that we can display for patrons to see. Now that she is finished, she is currently working on putting that quilt together.

She also ran a second program for registered patrons on Saturday, August 16 entitled Recycled Plush Owl Workshop. Patrons made small owls from recycled fabric. This was an all-ages program, so we had adults and families come to participate. We used the sewing machines from the Makerspace. A total of 27 patrons participated. Everyone was very happy with their finished product!



On August 19th, Adult Services Librarian [Rachael Wiegmann](#), hosted Tobin Buhk. Mr. Buhk is the author of twenty books and is a crime historian. The topic of this program was based on his book, Michigan's Most Dangerous Women. Mr. Buhk included his research in the presentation, census records, photographs, and certificates. He is always an engaging speaker and brought in fifty patrons!



Youth Services

On Tuesday, August 5th Youth Staff Members [Kristin McNeal](#) and [Andrea Smalley](#) attended the annual Portage Department of Public Safety's "Pig Out with Public Safety" Event. The "Pig Out" is a back to school event for the community where students and families can get free backpacks, meet their School Resource Officers, and enjoy many other activities. Several hundred Portage families attended, and Kristin and Andrea made buttons with most of them.

Youth Staff visited the YMCA Summer Camp at Moorsbridge Elementary to celebrate their last week of camp. 160 students were each able to make their own button and complete a hot air balloon craft.

Youth Staff [Olivia Pennebaker](#) hosted the Teen Summer Reading Pizza Party, where teens who had recorded 45 days of reading during Summer Reading got to eat pizza, play games, and sing karaoke in a VIP lounge (aka the Austin, Sugarloaf, & West Lake rooms).

Outreach Collection Highlight

At the end of 2024, three of the elementary School Media Specialists learned that their library collections would be boxed up for the last two months of school in preparation for building moves over the summer. The Media Specialist's approached the PDL Youth Department hoping for a collaboration that would enable students at those three schools to have access to books while their libraries were boxed up. Youth Staff proposed an Outreach Collection that would initially be deployed to Woodland, Haverhill, and Central Elementaries so that those school libraries could continue providing books to students during their school day. Funding was approved at the end of February 2025 using generous donations from the community during PDL's annual appeal, and at the end of the month Youth Librarians were able to order nearly 1700 high-interest books for Kindergarten through 5th grade readers. As the books began to arrive in March, Technical Services Supervisor Abby Pylar managed to catalog, process, and label all 1700 books (about an 80% increase from the monthly average of number of acquisitions) in three weeks while continuing to process regular acquisitions and saying farewell to long-time Technical Services Assistant Fran Cooper. Due to her efforts, the books were ready for delivery when students returned from Spring Break, and students and school staff expressed immense gratitude.

When the school year ended, Youth Staff retrieved the books from the schools and were once again assisted by Head of Technical Services [Abby Pylar](#) in converting the majority of the Outreach Collection to a "Beloved Books" Collection, similar to the "Hot Picks" section in the Adult Department.

Heritage Room

No report this month.

Circulation & Technical Services

During the month of August, we had 786 students utilize their PASS cards. We sent 3,451 text messages regarding bills, overdue materials, holds, and user notifications. Using the CoverOne machine, we saved 107 books from getting replaced at a total of \$1,645.96 in savings.

Personnel

The Business Manager and Library Director met with ElementOne Consulting and the Administrative Team to discuss updated employee evaluation process for year-end. To accomplish this, the Business Manager and Library Director will continue to work with ElementOne Consulting to get all job descriptions updated, a review form in place and all salary ranges updated to include new information. The Business Department has been assisting the Circulation Dept. and Youth Service Dept. with filling open positions.

Information Technology

No report this month.

Maintenance & Building Services

This month, several key maintenance projects and inspections were successfully completed. The parking lot sealcoating and striping have been finalized, and I'd like to extend my appreciation to the staff for their cooperation in parking offsite, which helped the project proceed smoothly. HVAC work included the installation of a new boiler pump, a warranty repair on an outdoor condensing unit, and the completion of our quarterly HVAC inspection and maintenance. With these updates, we are well-prepared for the upcoming winter season. Additionally, the annual roof inspection has been conducted with no issues noted. Pest control services were completed this month, and I'm pleased to report that no new problems were found. A surprise fire marshal inspection also took place, and the library passed without issue. Finally, the quarterly elevator inspection has been completed. Overall, it has been a productive month with all scheduled tasks completed successfully and on time.

Financial Condition Report

August 2025

Executive Limitation Policy on Financial Condition and Activities: With respect to the actual, ongoing financial condition and activities, the Director shall not cause or allow the development of fiscal jeopardy or a material deviation of actual expenditure for board priorities established in Ends Policies. Accordingly, he or she may not:

Policy: 1. Expend more funds than have been received in the fiscal year to date unless the debt guideline (below) is met.

Director's Response: Revenue \$9,034,416
Expenditures \$ 4,536,623

Fund	7/31/2025	Changes	8/31/2025
General Reserve (13%)	\$ 857,293	-	\$ 857,293
Building Reserve	50,000	-	50,000
Benefits Reserve	29,741	-	29,741
Technology Reserve	111,305	-	111,305
Patio Feasibility Reserve	4,700	-	4,700
Bldg. Improvement Reserve	731,419	-	731,419
Personal Property Tax Reserve	805,946	-	805,946
Library Endowments	95,766	-	95,766
Unassigned Fund Balance	7,473,504	-	7,473,504

Policy: 2. Indebt the organization money in an amount greater than can be repaid by certain, otherwise unencumbered revenues within 60 days.

Director's Response: No new money has been borrowed that cannot be repaid within 60 days.

Policy: 3. Use any long-term reserves.

Director's Response: No reserves have been used.

Policy: 4. Conduct inter-category shifting in amounts greater than can be restored to a condition of discrete fund balances by certain, otherwise unencumbered revenues within 30 days.

Director's Response: No Inter-category shifting has taken place.

Policy: 5. Fail to settle payroll and debts in a timely manner.

Director's Response: Payroll is processed by Paylocity. (Payroll service) bi-weekly. Payables are also Processed monthly or "as needed".

Policy: 6. Allow tax payments or other government-ordered payments for filings to be overdue or inaccurately filed.

Director's Response: All reports and tax payments are filed according to policy.

Policy: 7. Make a single purchase or commitment of greater than \$10,000 not already found in the budget. Splitting orders to avoid this limit is not acceptable.

Director's Response: No unbudgeted purchase that exceeds \$10,000 has been made.

Policy: 8. Acquire, encumber or dispose of real property.

Director's Response: No real property has been acquired, encumbered, or disposed.

Policy: 9. Fail to aggressively pursue receivables after a reasonable grace period.

Director's Response: All receivables are being pursued according to policy.

Policy: 10. Fail to provide the Library Board with a one page monthly financial indicator monitoring report and a quarterly background financial monitoring report.

Director's Response: A financial indicator monitoring report is provided each month and a quarterly background financial monitoring report is provided each quarter.

Policy: 11. Fail to arrange for an external financial audit of the library services.

Director's Response: An external audit of the library is conducted each year and results presented to the library board.

Policy: 12. Fail to have appropriate authorized signatures on bank documents: Library Director, Library Business Manager and Library Board Chair.

Director's Response: Appropriate authorized signatures are on all bank documents.

Policy: 12-A. Fail to have a 2nd signature on all checks issued by the Portage District Library in an amount of \$20,000 or more by one of the three designated individuals on the library's bank signature card, which would be one of the following: (1) the Library Board Chair, or (2) the Head of Adult Services, or (3) the Head of Youth Services.

Director's Response: All checks received the appropriate amount of signatures.

Policy: 13. Fail to consider approved budget when entering into financial agreements or collaborations with other entities.

Director's Response: Approved budgets are considered when entering into financial agreements or collaborations with other entities.

Policy: 14. Fail to keep the Library Board informed of any grant applications, and obtain board chair signature when required by granting agency.

Director's Response: The Library Board is informed of all grant applications and the board chair's signature is obtained when required.

Policy: 15. Fail to provide the Board Chair a list of all cash disbursements from the time of the prior Board meeting to the current Board meeting.

Director's Response: A list of all cash disbursements has been provided to the Board Chair for review.

Statistical Report

The August and September Statistical Reports will be provided at the October 2025 Library Board Meeting.

Baby/Toddler Storytime

Wednesday, October 1
9:30am & 10:30am

Immaculate Snacks & Gaming

Wednesday, October 1
3:30pm - 4:30pm

Mindful Meditation

with Nicole Najar!

Wednesday, October 1
6:00pm - 7:00pm

Muffins and the Market

An investment discussion group.
Thursday, October 2
9:00am - 10:00am

Sense-sational Kids

Hands-On Fun for K-3rd Grade
Thursday, October 2
4:30pm - 5:30pm

Eating the Mediterranean Way

Happy (Healthy) Holidays!
Thursday, October 2
6:00pm - 7:00pm

Bedtime Storytime

Thursday, October 2
6:30pm - 7:00pm

Friends of the Library Members Only

Book Sale
Friday, October 3
4:00pm - 5:30pm

Community Gallery Show - Artist Trading Cards Reception

with collage artist Laura Weiler
& other community members
Friday, October 3
5:00pm - 7:00pm

Kalamazoo Area Newcomers Club Open House

Women Meeting New Friends
Saturday, October 4
9:00am - 3:00pm

Friends of the Library

Book Sale
Saturday, October 4
9:00am - 3:00pm

Baby/Toddler Storytime

Monday, October 6
9:30am & 10:30am

Kalamazoo County Historical Society

Monday, October 6
7:00pm - 8:30pm

Family Storytime

Tuesday, October 7
9:30am & 10:30am

Yoga with Apral

A gentle approach
Tuesday, October 7
4:00pm - 5:00pm

Teen LGBTQ+ Meet-Up

Tuesday, October 7
6:30pm - 8:00pm

Holiday Cards

Made with Acrylic and Watercolor
Tuesday, October 7
6:30pm - 8:00pm

Baby/Toddler Storytime

Wednesday, October 8
9:30am & 10:30am

All Things Gross

For Kids and Their Favorite Adult
Wednesday, October 8
6:00pm - 7:00pm

Bedtime Storytime

Thursday, October 9
6:30pm - 7:00pm

Documentary and Donuts

20 Days in Mariupol
Friday, October 10
10:00am - 1:00pm

Geek Fest 2025

Entertaining the geek in you!
Saturday, October 11
11:00am - 3:00pm

Littlest Lullabies

A class for infants and their caregivers.
Saturday, October 11
12:00pm - 12:30pm

Daughters of the American Revolution

Lucinda Hinsdale Stone Chapter
Saturday, October 11
1:00pm - 2:00pm

Baby/Toddler Storytime

Monday, October 13
9:30am & 10:30am

Elementary Maker Minute

Drop in for a quick, fun, hands-on
activity
Monday, October 13
4:00pm - 5:00pm

Move & Groove Storytime

Tuesday, October 14
9:30am & 10:30am

Tinker and Think

Can You Make a Cardboard
Connector?
Tuesday, October 14
4:30pm - 5:30pm

Kindergarten and First Grade Book Club

Tuesday, October 14
4:30pm - 5:30pm

Minimalism: How Less Can be More

with Local Organizer, Tina Fagerman
Tuesday, October 14
6:00pm - 7:00pm

Toddler Playtime

Wednesday, October 15
9:30am & 10:30am



Materials Selection Policy

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Portage District Library Materials Selection Policy is to set broad guidelines in order to assemble, preserve, organize, administer and promote the use of a wide range of communication media and to inform the public about the principles upon which selections are made. These functions are undertaken to further the objectives and mission of the Portage District Library.

II. DEFINITIONS

The term “library materials” means books, magazines, DVDs, CDs, or other synonyms as they may occur in the policy and has the widest possible meaning. For the library’s digital collections, selection of content can vary among third party vendors. In situations where the Portage District Library staff are not able to select individual titles, the selection of a third party service will be evaluated on the company’s reputation and overall content offerings. It is implicit in this statement of policy, therefore, that every form of permanent record is to be included regardless of format. However, this policy and the term “library materials” do not apply to Internet sites available through the Library’s computers or Internet collection. The Library has no control over the content of the Internet. Please see the Internet Policy for any issues related to computer or Internet use. The term “selection” refers to the decision to add, retain or withdraw material in the collection. It does not refer to reader’s advisory. This statement of policy applies to all library materials curated by the Portage District Library staff for adult, teen, juvenile, and preschool collections.

III. GOALS OF MATERIAL SELECTION

- A. To meet the individual’s need for information through maintenance of a well-balanced and broad collection of materials for information, reference, and research.
- B. To help the individual attain maximum self-development through life-long intellectual and cultural growth.
- C. To support the democratic process by providing materials for the education and enlightenment of the community.
- D. To assist individuals in their pursuit of activities related to their occupation and practical affairs.
- E. To provide diverse recreational experiences for individuals and groups.
- F. To assist institutions of formal education with services which will support individual study.

IV. RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION

The responsibility for selection lays with the Director or his/her designee pursuant to the Collection Development Plan. Both the general public and staff members may recommend materials for consideration. The ultimate responsibility for book selection, however, rests with the Library Director who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Library Board of Trustees. The Director shall be responsible for ensuring that the funds budgeted for collection development are allocated appropriately depending upon the needs of the Library and the fulfillment of the above Goals of Material Selection.

V. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- A. Selection of materials is based on the relationship of such work to the needs, interests, and demands of the Portage community. Basic to this policy is the [Library Bill of Rights](#) and the [Freedom to Read Statement](#) of the American Library Association to which this Library subscribes. Selection is not made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of a work, without regard to the race, nationality, political, or religious view of the writer. Whenever censorship is threatened, from whatever sources, no library materials shall be removed from the Library until all steps in the Library's procedure for handling complaints about library material have been completed, or by order of a court or competent jurisdiction.
- B. Responsibility for the reading matter of children rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection shall not be inhibited solely by the possibility that books may inadvertently come into the possession of children. The Library respects each individual parent's right to supervise his/her children's choice of reading materials. However, the Library does not have the right to act in loco parentis (in place of the parent). Therefore, a parent who chooses to restrict the materials his/her children select must accompany those children when they use the collection in order to impose those restrictions.
- C. Library materials will not be marked or identified to indicate approval or disapproval of contents by the Library, and no catalogued book or other item will be sequestered, except for the express purpose of protecting it from injury or theft. The use of rare and scholarly items of great value may be controlled to the extent required to preserve them from harm, but no further.
- D. It is the responsibility of the Library to provide circulating, reference, and research materials for the general public and the student based on the services it is expected to perform. Special "in depth" collections shall also be maintained when indicated by community interest.

VI. SPECIFIC PRINCIPLES FOR SELECTION

The following principles, individually or collectively, will prevail in the selection of all library materials. The total collection will attempt to represent the variety of points of view.

- A. Present and potential relevance to community needs;
- B. Suitability of subject, style, and reading level for the intended audience;
- C. Importance as a document of the times;
- D. Appropriateness and effectiveness of medium to content;
- E. Reputation and/or significance of author, publisher, or producer;
- F. Positive review in one or more appropriate professional journals;
- G. Positive critics' and staff members' reviews;
- H. Relationships to existing materials in the collection;
- I. Within limits of budgets for materials;
- J. Not available, or with limited accessibility, from other lending sources;
- K. Insufficient materials available on the same subject;
- L. Author or illustrator is local;
- M. Format is appropriate to Library use and is not easily damaged;
- N. Enhances a specific collection within the Library;
- O. Author or producer is already represented in the collection;
- P. Literary and artistic merit;
- Q. Accuracy of content;
- R. Popularity with library patrons;
- S. Preserves local community information and history;
- T. Available shelf or storage space.

VII. GIFTS

Acceptance of gifts of materials shall be governed by the same principles and criteria applied to the selection of items for purchase. Gifts of books or other materials which do not align with the Library's objectives and policies will be refused. No conditions may be imposed relating to any item either prior to or after its acceptance by the Library. All gifts and donated materials (including works of local authors) become the property of the Library. Any item, which is not added, may be donated to another institution where it might be used, or it may be sold in a Friends of the Library Book Sale. Monies from such sales are used to benefit Portage District Library services and programs.

VIII. MAINTENANCE OF THE COLLECTION

As materials become worn, dated, damaged or lost, replacement will be determined by the appropriate staff member, who will determine whether or not:

- A. The item is still available and can be replaced;
- B. Another item or format might better serve the same purpose;
- C. There remains sufficient need to replace that item;
- D. Updated, newer or revised materials better replace a given item;
- E. The item has historical value;
- F. Another networking agency could better provide that or a comparable item.

IX. REQUESTS FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS PROCEDURE

The Portage District Library Board, administration, and staff support intellectual freedom and subscribe to the principles of the American Library Association's [Library Bill of Rights](#) and its statements on [Freedom to Read](#) and [Freedom to View](#). The Library staff applies the selection criteria described in this Materials Selection Policy and thus endeavors to provide books and other materials that reflect the diversity of viewpoints within the community.

When a request for reconsideration is made by a patron, the procedure listed below is followed:

- A. A member of the library staff explains the selection policy to the patron. If the patron wishes, they may then submit a written Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form to the Library Director.
- B. Once a completed, signed copy of the Request for Reconsideration is received, the Library Director shall decide the Request for Reconsideration, taking into consideration the Library's Materials Selection Policy and any other relevant information to reach a decision. The Director may consult with any other staff or consultants when making this decision.
- C. The Library Director shall send the decision in writing to the complainant within seventy-five (75) days of the receipt of the completed Request for Reconsideration form. If the decision is that the questioned material should be removed from the collection, the Requester will be notified in writing by the Library Director and all copies of the item will be withdrawn. If the decision is that the questioned material is to be retained, the Requester will be notified in writing by the Library Director that the material will be retained.
- D. A written appeal of the Library Director's decision may be made by the Requester to the Chair of the Library Board within ten (10) business days after the written decision is made by the Library Director. The Library Board will review any documentation it deems necessary to decide within sixty (60) days of receipt of the appeal.
- E. The Library Board serves as the final authority in cases involving retention or withdrawal of Library Materials.



Capitalization Policy

I. STATEMENT of PURPOSE:

It is the purpose of this policy to illustrate the procedures that will be used at the Portage District Library to classify fixed assets as capital assets.

II. SCOPE of POLICY:

This capitalization policy applies to all assets of the Portage District Library.

III. CAPITALIZATION OBJECTIVES:

All purchases under \$3,000 will be expensed. Any expenditure over \$3,000 will be capitalized if the item purchased has a life in excess of one year or if a repair extends the useful life of the asset beyond its normal life. If the expenditure does not meet either one of these criteria, then it will be expensed. Expenditures include: acquisition, freight and setup costs. Setup costs include those costs that are necessary for the testing, installation, or preparation for operation or use.

IV. ENHANCEMENTS:

An enhancement is an internal and/or external addition to capital assets (equipment) that extend life or increase productivity and has a cost of \$3,000 or more. Enhancements will be coded as "capital" on purchase orders in the same manner as capital assets.

V. REPLACEMENT:

A replacement is the substitution of an asset with a similar asset which does not increase the service potential of the asset. When an item over \$3,000 is slated for replacement, it will be scrapped and removed from inventory completely, and the replacement for the item will be entered as a new capitalized item. An existing item will be "written off" when it is replaced.

VI. INVENTORY:

An annual audit of capital assets will be conducted. This will entail a review of the assets listed in the asset accounting system to determine that all listed assets are still in the possession of the Library and in use. All assets deemed no longer in use or in the Library possession will be disposed of in the asset accounting system. All items less than \$3,000 that are deemed to be missing should be reported to the Business Manager so that an investigation can be conducted to determine their location.

Asset Lives

Asset Type	Useful Life (years)
Furniture	5
Office Equipment	5
Computer Hardware	5
Library Material	5
Telephone Equipment	10
Buildings	40
HVAC Systems	20
Roofing	20
Carpet Replacement	7
Electrical/ Plumbing	30
Kitchen Equipment	12
Artwork	5-10
Land Improvements – Structure	20

VII. EQUIPMENT AND FURNITURE:

This is all movable equipment and furniture costing \$3,000 or more and having a useful life of one or more years or if a repair extends the useful life of the asset beyond its normal life. If the expenditure does not meet either of these criteria, it should be expensed. Equipment and furniture will be capitalized in the year of acquisition. Costs include: acquisition, freight, and setup costs. Setup includes those costs necessary for the testing, installation, or preparation for operation or use. Equipment and furniture will be tagged as soon as possible after receipt from the vendor by Business Services.

VIII. COMPUTER EQUIPMENT/ SOFTWARE:

If personal computer software costs are inclusive with the hardware, the software cost will be included as equipment. The criteria in the preceding Equipment and Furniture procedure will be followed for computer equipment. Purchases of major software systems costing \$10,000 or more will be capitalized in total provided the software license does not specify that the software be returned or destroyed at the end of the contract. Otherwise, computer software will not be capitalized.

IX. DONATED EQUIPMENT:

All equipment acquired through donation will be capitalized at fair market value on the date of the transaction. If the equipment is new and an invoice can be furnished by the donor, the cost assigned to it will be the fair market value. If the equipment is used, or if no information is available about the cost of the equipment on date of acquisition, then an appraisal will be done to establish the amount to capitalize. Upon establishment of fair market value, the equipment will be tagged and entered by Business Services to the Equipment Inventory Master File.

X. LAND:

Land will be capitalized at cost. These include assessments, fees, and commissions to obtain the land. In addition, conveyances, notary fees, costs of demolishing old buildings, grading or otherwise clearing the land will be included.

XI. BUILDINGS:

Buildings will be capitalized at cost. This will include all payments to contractors, taxes and building permits, architect fees, and interest expense net of investment income on borrowed funds during construction. Also included will be all permanent fixtures and appliances installed as part of the building.

XII. IMPROVEMENTS TO BUILDING: (Including modular furniture)

- Expenditures that increase the capacity or operating efficiency of an asset will be capitalized. These can be major improvements that add substantially to the value of a building or extend its useful life.
- Improvements to buildings, defined above, costing \$10,000 or more will be added to the carrying amount of the building on the inventory records.
- In relation to building improvements (which are items removed during remodeling, renovation and rehabilitation) the old cost will be removed from the asset records if the original cost can be specifically identified.
- Repairs will be expensed.

XIII. WORK IN PROGRESS:

All construction projects not complete at the end of the fiscal year will be capitalized as "Work in Progress." At the end of the fiscal year of completion, the amount for that work in progress project will be moved to the appropriate building asset.

XIV. LEASEHOLD IMPROVEMENTS:

Improvements to leased property which substantially add to its value or extend its useful life may be capitalized. A determination will be made at the beginning of the project if the improvements should be capitalized or not.

XV. CAPITAL LEASES:

Property acquired through a capital lease will be capitalized at the time of the inception of the lease.

XVI. LIBRARY BOOKS AND MATERIALS:

All physical Library books and materials will be capitalized using a 5-year life. Material purchases will be totaled for the year and entered in the asset records as one lump sum asset. It will then be disposed of as a lump sum asset at the end of the 5-year period.

XVII. DISPOSAL OF EQUIPMENT:

When a piece of equipment is no longer usable or needed by Portage District Library, it will be disposed of appropriately. Disposal of equipment includes: sale or donation as surplus property, return to a vendor, cannibalization, trade-in, theft or transfer.

MLA ADVOCACY NEWS

August 2025

October is Library Appreciation Month!

Libraries are where curiosity meets opportunity, where questions turn into discoveries, and where every Michigander can explore, learn, and connect with their community. This October, during Michigan Library Appreciation Month and MI Right to Read Week (October 5–11), we are excited to honor Michigan libraries and library staff with the 2025 theme: “Find Out.”

“In the spring months of 1953, bills for censorship and ‘control’ of books were introduced into most of the 46 legislatures meeting at that time, and public libraries...found themselves on the defensive in seeking to maintain their trusteeship of the public’s ‘right to find out’...”

— Paul Bixler, Proceedings of the Second Conference on Intellectual Freedom, Whittier, California, June 20–21, 1953

In the early 1950s, libraries were under attack for carrying so-called “dangerous” materials. During a period of U.S. history marked by intense fear of communism, libraries became flashpoints because they provide access to books, ideas, and perspectives—even those deemed controversial or politically dangerous. Censorship and self-censorship were widespread. People feared losing jobs or reputations for possessing or circulating materials considered “subversive.” At the same moment in time, the paperback revolution was transforming American reading, with cheap, portable books bringing bold voices and new ideas into everyday life. For some, this democratization of books was liberating; for others, it was threatening.

In 1953, librarians and publishers responded with the Freedom to Read Statement, a bold declaration that access to ideas is essential to democracy. In an era of fear, suspicion, and political division, the library profession took a stand and rejected censorship, labeling, and loyalty oaths. With the Freedom to Read Statement, librarians affirmed some of the profession’s highest ideals: intellectual freedom, the freedom of inquiry, the free exchange of ideas, and the right to read.

Nearly 75 years later, library professionals remain on the frontlines of the same struggle—defending intellectual freedom, resisting censorship, and ensuring that everyone has the chance to find out for themselves. This October, during Michigan Library Appreciation Month and MI Right to Read Week, we invite all Michiganders: if you’re curious, concerned, or seeking, come to your library and Find Out.

Together, let’s honor our legacy and celebrate the vital contributions of Michigan libraries, librarians, and library workers. This October—Find Out at your library!

Libraries, staff, and patrons are invited to get involved throughout the month. We encourage libraries to submit the Michigan Library Appreciation Month proclamation to your local elected officials to secure their support. Issuing a proclamation can take some time, so start early by identifying a council member, mayor, or supervisor to sponsor it. Contact information can be found on your local city, county, or township website. Download the proclamation.

Stay tuned for social media ideas, newsletter copy, graphics, and more resources to help you participate in the celebration.

MLA ADVOCACY NEWS

September 2025

Call Your Legislators and Urge Them to Support Library Funding in the Michigan FY2026 Budget!

Last week, the Michigan House of Representatives approved an omnibus budget bill, HB 4706, for fiscal year 2026. Now with less than a month before a signed state budget is due, the budget process is entering its final, most critical phase: reconciling major differences in Michigan's budget across Chambers and the Governor's office.

In June, the House's spending plan for the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), which includes funding for the Library of Michigan, HB 4576, passed without a line item for the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). LSTA funds are federal dollars provided annually to the Library of Michigan by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

If the final version of the state budget does not include an LSTA line item, the Library of Michigan cannot spend federal funds already awarded and earmarked for critical statewide programs like the Michigan eLibrary (MeL) and the Michigan eLibrary Catalog (MeLCat).

Despite MLA's advocacy to House Appropriation Chairs over the summer urging them to include the LSTA line item, the MDE budget has been stalled in negotiations as part of the broader state budget impasse.

Michigan's legislature returned to work today and will spend the next several weeks in intense negotiations. Now is the time to contact your Senators and Representatives and urge them to add the LSTA line item back into the MDE budget!

Memo

Initiation of Library Director's 2025 Evaluation Process

To: Portage District Library Board
From: Tom Vance, Library Board Chair
Date: September 18, 2025

BACKGROUND:

The Personnel Committee, composed of Trustees Michele Behr, Linda Whitlock, and myself, will be responsible for leading the annual evaluation process of the Library Director this year. Individual board members will be asked to complete an evaluation form based on their own assessments of the Library Director's accomplishments and performance in relation to the End Statements. These individual evaluations will be compiled and summarized and then a meeting will be held with the Library Director to go over the performance evaluation.

The Board Personnel Committee will then meet to develop a recommendation to the Library Board for the Library Director's compensation in 2026, renewal of her 5-year contract, and present a recommendation to the whole board at the December 15, 2025 board meeting, at which time a vote will be taken.

The Library Board Personnel Committee reminds all trustees that we must conduct this evaluation process in compliance with the Open Meetings Act and in accordance with Carver Policy Governance guidelines as indicated below.

The Library Director's performance evaluation entails the following assessments:

1. Has there been progress on achieving Board endorsed Ends Statements in 2025?
2. Has there been progress on accomplishing Board endorsed personal goals in 2025?
3. Has the Library Director been in compliance with the Board's Executive Limitation in 2025?
4. Consider that the success of the library is the evaluation of the Library Director.

Portage District Library

2025 Summer Reading Report

September 22nd, 2025

Youth Summer Reading Program	2022	2023	2024	2025
Number of people registered	1060	1380	1163	1272
Number of people who participated	897	1097	981	1021
Number of people who completed 45 days	201	408	396	532
Number of days read (total)	23519	31924	31438	34865
Teen Summer Reading Program	2022	2023	2024	2025
Number of people registered	283	390	370	364
Number of people who participated	235	299	292	270
Number of people who completed	56	129	144	166
Number of days read (total)	6410	9531	10220	10189
Adult Summer Reading Program	2022	2023	2024	2025
Number of people registered	442	600	585	662
Number of people who participated	301	399	412	467
Number of people who completed	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of books read (total)	3085	5117	4698	5629

Program Summary

Summer Reading Programs ran from June 2nd – August 1st this year. For the second summer in a row, we noticed increased foot traffic due to hot and humid days.

Youth Summer Reading Program

This year, we eliminated weekly prize drawings completely. Last year we switched to drawings for small prizes instead of gift cards, thinking this might be a better motivator. It did not seem to encourage consistent participation, so we opted to add an additional book prize for completion of the final 45 days in 2025. Feedback was very positive, and participation rose. In addition, any participant who met their weekly reading goal could select a sticker. We did keep the final drawing as well.

Youth Quest Program

Staff hosted a Quest program again this year as well, to provide children and families with a list of activities and the opportunity to journal and illustrate their experiences. About 300 children participated this year. Staff found it challenging to promote this program due to foot traffic. This program requires some level of hand-selling, so this is a topic of discussion for next year.

Teen Summer Reading Program

Staff added the 45-day book prize for teens as well. It positively affected their completion numbers, so we plan to continue this next year, budget permitting. Teens could also enter a grand prize drawing. 170 teens entered the final drawing.

Adult Summer Reading Program

Adult Summer Reading achieved its fourth year of growth. Adults love to receive weekly prizes and enjoy being able to choose which weeks they want their tickets to go to based on the prizes offered. Out of the 467 participants, 130 earned a prize over the summer. In addition, 4,161 badges were achieved, with 5,594 books logged. That is almost 1,000 more books than in 2024. The library purchased fifteen prizes for each of the eight weeks of summer reading. We also purchased ten \$50.00 awards for a final prize blitz. The library focused on local businesses or locally owned franchises for our gift card prizes. This year, the businesses used were Erbelli's Pizza, Kazoo Books, ChocolaTea, this is a book store/Bookbug, Coldstone Creamery, Ritters Frozen Custard, Meijer, and Jac's Pizza.