



**HARPER WOODS PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, April 16, 2026 at 7:00 PM**

PRESENT:

President	Makenna Champney
Vice-President	MaryBeth Kane
Treasurer	Bobby D. Lewis
Trustee	Andrew Cyburt
Library Director	Kelly Guyman

ABSENT:

Trustee	Eric Walton
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I. CALL TO ORDER

President Champney called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Vice-President Kane made a motion to adopt the agenda, seconded by Trustee Cyburt.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice-President Kane made a motion to amend March's minutes, noting that they stated that no audience was in attendance, when they should state that no comments were made. President Champney called for a voice of votes in favor of the revision, no objections made.

IV. INFORMATION REPORTS

A. President's Report - No activity planned for the evening, encouraged trustees to reflect on strategic plan and consider core values, as well as specific accomplishments.

B. Treasurer's Report - Treasurer Lewis noted that on a projected annual basis, we are projected to be within our annual budget for the year. Stated that the three months were off to a good start. Vice-President Kane requested that the budget include both the expense and revenue.

C. Adult Services Report - Guyman noted that the department had added a few new classes. The Birdwatching event was sadly not well attended. The largest undertaking of the Adult Department at the moment was moving thousands of DVDs into their cases as opposed to housing them behind the circulation desk.

D. Youth Services Report - Guyman reported that the Youth Department continues to do outstanding work. Monthly storytime attendance is at a consistent high, the Irish Dance program had great attendance and passive programming is also performing at a notably high rate. One program, Read to a Dog, was cancelled due to a power outage. Nicole and I met with an Outreach

Specialist from the Detroit Lions, the Library is to receive pregame tickets as incentive for the summer reading program.

E. Circulation Report - Generally good, reference questions are up, while patron counts are down, computer use is up.

F. Director's Report

1. Staff Report - Ronna Gillis's last day was at the end of March, Karen Kemp has taken over a portion of her responsibilities and Guyman has taken over the remainder, the position will remain a part-time position. With this move we have a deficit of staff available for the Circulation Desk so we are hiring for a Circulation Clerk. We did hire a Library Page and she will be training on the Circulation Desk as well as she has shown incredible initiative and reliability.
2. Program Planning - Guyman has several speakers scheduled for the summer, including on Michigan Labor History, another on the History of Black Bottom and Paradise Valley and a biweekly Gentle Yoga class. We have also announced a fundraiser which will be run through the Friends of the Library. The initiative of this project will be to improve the exterior by introducing a sitting area, walking path, bike rack, and garbage can. Questions were asked if there was an electronic method for processing payments. Guyman stated that the Friends do not currently have a way to process payment electronically and that a new Treasurer was just appointed to the non-profit group, so the likelihood of that happening in the next few months is slim. President Champney inquired into whether the fundraiser would feature a raffle
3. Fine Free Update - Guyman broached the policy of revoking all monetary punishments for the library, with the exception of the Library of Things. Citing Grosse Pointe and Detroit Library policy. All prior fines would be forgiven across the board. The punishment for not returning materials would simply be not being able to access library services, including access to computers, printing, checking out materials. Library services are frozen unless overdue books are returned or books are damaged to the point they cannot be repaired. Treasurer Lewis inquired into the potential loss of revenue, Guyman stated that recouped cost is minimal in conjunction with the payments made to Collections Agency to process fees and fines. Guyman also emphasized that for libraries that did implement fine-free policies there was no statistical difference in rates of return, though libraries did experience an increase in usage. Increased usage can lead to increased funding from the State Aid process. President Champney voiced that in her visits to other libraries within the co-op, that library employees were enthusiastic about having shifted to a fine-free model. Vice-President Kane inquired into the process of accessing the library with a late book, presenting a scenario where a patron is attempting to check out a book but cannot as they have a book that is late, asking that instead of paying the fine, would the patron just have to return the book? Guyman responded, yes, if the book is lost and a month past its return date, the patron would either have to return the book or pay for the replacement cost of the book, once the book is paid for the patron owns the book and it cannot be returned if found. Guyman suggested that if we go fine-free we introduce a limit to check out, nothing too cumbersome, just not exponential checkouts as we have run into scenarios where a patron has checked out multiple hundreds of books. Cyburt inquired into who our vendor was for books, if we were using the same provider. Guyman responded that we attempted to use Baker and Taylor but they shuttered, we pivoted to Ingram but they were inundated with customers because of Baker and Taylor's closure, so we have returned to Brodart who has been better about shipping times. Vice-President Kane inquired into the ordering process, Guyman stated that books are largely pre-ordered as they have not been released yet. Kane asked if the

library had prior knowledge as to what book would be announced by largely followed book clubs, Guyman stated that generally no, that once we were aware we would make efforts to order the items but that the library has no prior knowledge of the titles to be announced. Guyman shared that two grants were applied for in response to concerns about revenue loss, one serving as a stipend for the ALA conference and the other was for drawing tablets through the Library of Michigan.

4. Incidents at Library Vice-President Kane followed up on the child who was unattended at the Library reported on in the prior meeting and requested an update. Guyman responded that the incident was likely a blip, that staff had spoken to the parent and the child had not been in the library during school hours since the one incident. Kane stated that allowing the child there is not consistent with our policy, Guyman stated that we have the latitude to create exemptions to the policy based on the situation. That the only instructions currently in place in the policy are to document dates and times which staff is doing. Guyman stated that there is nothing that staff can do to legally intervene if a child leaves the building and walks alone as only children 6 and under can be considered legally abandoned. Vice-President Kane asked, if the child returns during school hours what will be done. Guyman responded that we will do nothing, we are not legally obligated to report truancy, we don't know if students are pulled from school for a doctor's appointment, if the child is suspended, if school was cancelled or they had a half day, we have home school children who frequent the library- there is no way for us to enforce a truancy policy, that is the responsibility of the school. Cyburt stated that situations should be assessed and addressed, if there are no signs of abuse or neglect then escalation is not called for, though if use increases or the situation deteriorates then intervention is necessary. Lewis stated that he appreciated how the situation was handled. Cyburt stated that the best thing we can do is provide a safe space.

V. ONGOING BUSINESS

- A. Building Maintenance - Johnson Controls has fixed the lighting panel, the exterior lights are now functional. They are programmed now to turn 30 minutes before sunset and turn off 30 minutes after sunrise. The light switches are all functional, the lighting panel is working and the whole building can be controlled remotely.

DPW assisted the library in replacing the exterior spigot and visited the library to help with a plumbing situation.

The carpeting for the stairs has hit a snag, though the company had communicated an order was placed for carpeting which would match the base of the stairs, we were recently informed that because it only comes in squares and not a roll, that they would not be able to install the carpet. Therefore a different color would have to be chosen and a different quote would need to be provided to proceed with installation.

Guyman stated that the primary concern regarding building maintenance is the AC units. Of the 8 units, only one is currently functional. Patchwork repairs were done over the last few years though the units are reaching the end of their lifespan as they are over 20 years old. Kane voiced concern about the furnaces, Guyman stated that they worked fine over the winter and no repairs were needed. The issue with the AC units was discovered last Tuesday, since then McCarver, Apollo had visited and Airworks Heating and Cooling is scheduled to come out. Guyman stated that we could proceed with patchwork repairs, though the diagnostic themselves is on average \$200 per unit and the repairs could be thousands per unit, considering that with the prior work done to maintain the units, it would be ideal to fully replace, though we are unsure if we are in the financial position to do so. Treasurer Lewis asked if a budget amendment were possible, Guyman stated that it would be up to City Council to process the amended budget. Kane clarified that the proposals would first go to the board.

Last item on the building maintenance docket is patron counters, Guyman presented options for patron sensors spanning from \$500 - \$2,600. The board approved a cost of up to \$800 for the sensor implementation.

- B. Strategic Plan - President Champney shared that there will be a strategic plan activity next month. Encouraged other board members to review the Library of Michigan's strategic plan, specifically the SMART goals. Champney pointed out that our last strategic plan was centered around remote services given it was written during the pandemic. Is aiming to articulate 5 goals for the strategic plan.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Wayne County History Project - the coordinator of the project received a handful of artifacts from the Heritage Room and Harper Woods, alongside the Grosse Pointes will be featured in an exhibit at the Guardian Building on June 6, 2026 from 10 AM - 2 PM.

Treasurer Lewis inquired into whether or not Malika Williams reached out as she had some programming ideas. Lewis suggested she reach out to the President to ensure proper protocol. Guyman clarified that if it is program related, she can reach out to coordinate.

VII. CALL TO AUDIENCE

Laura McCourt commented that while she's been diligent about returning books, when she has rarely returned books late the fine feels shameful. Commenting that since the policy has changed at Grosse Pointe a more understanding, community oriented atmosphere is fostered.

VIII. CALL TO BOARD

President Champney noted that she is excited that we have the Night at the Library, she intends to encourage her friends and family to attend. Also, noted that the Friends book sale is coming up. Champney wished Lewis and Kane a happy birthday.

Trustee Cyburt stated regarding the fine-free proposal, that we should build systems that are rooted in reality and community as opposed to paranoia. Don't anticipate problems that don't exist.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Lewis made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Cyburt seconded.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:15 PM

Submitted by Library Director, Kelly Guyman