



**Library Board of Trustees – Regular Meeting  
Final Draft – MINUTES  
May 14, 2026, 7 PM  
Novi Civic Center, Council Chambers**

**Final Draft**

**Call to Order by President, Mark Sturing**

Novi Civic Center, Council Chambers  
Called to order by **President Mark Sturing at 7:01 PM.**

**Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Roll Call by Secretary, Karla Halvangis**

**Library Board – 5 board members were recorded present**

Brian Bartlett, Treasurer  
Kat Dooley, Vice President  
Mark Sturing, President  
Karla Halvangis, Secretary  
Lori Burke, Board Member  
Torey Yu, Board Member

**Student Representatives**

Positions not filled at this time

**Library Staff**

Julie Farkas, Director  
Kirstin Kaufhold, Recording Secretary

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

**Motion:** To approve the agenda  
Motion for Approval – 1<sup>st</sup> – Trustee Burke  
2<sup>nd</sup> – Trustee Dooley

**Motion passes – 6-0**

**Consent Agenda**

1. Approve Minutes of: April 23, 2026 –Regular Board Meeting..... 4-12
2. Approve Claims and Warrants of:
  - A. Accounts 271 and 272 (#662)..... 13-15

**Motion:** To approve the Consent Agenda  
Motion for Approval – 1<sup>st</sup> – Trustee Dooley  
2<sup>nd</sup> – Trustee Yu

**Motion passes – 6-0**

Trustee Burke questioned why the payments for the Dodworth Saxhorn Band, referenced on pages 14–15, were made from two different accounts and asked which account is typically used for programming expenses.

Director Farkas explained that the expense was intended to be covered through sponsorship funds. The split between accounts was likely due to the need to pay the deposit before the sponsorship funds were received. If payment is required prior to receipt of sponsorship funds, the expense may be paid from account 272. Director Farkas stated that she will research the matter further and confirm the details.

**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.*

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Mary Angela Winters attended the meeting representing the Friends of the Library Board and stated that it was nice that Trustee Burke was able to attend the Friends of the Library Board Meeting that occurred the day prior. She expressed hope that more trustees would attend Friends of the Library Board meetings in the future.

Trustee Sturing commented that attending and supporting one another's meetings is a great idea.

**Reports**

- 1. Teen Space Statistics ..... 16

Nothing to report

- 2. President's Report (President Mark Sturing)
  - A. Closed Session requested by Director Farkas for Annual Review on June 11, 2026 (HR Committee will be sending out information shortly)
  - B. Board Invitation for: Read Japan Project ..... 17
  - C. Michigan Library Advocacy Day 2026 ..... 18
  - D. 2026-2027 Draft Board Committee Assignments.....22
  - E. Schedule for Trustees to attend the Friends monthly meetings by Secretary
  - F. Reflections from Board Members

Trustee Sturing announced that a closed session will be scheduled to review Director Farkas' annual evaluation. Human Resources will distribute the necessary review materials to board members.

Regarding page 17, Trustee Sturing noted the upcoming Read Japan Project event on May 26 at 7:00 p.m., which has generated significant excitement. Director Farkas encouraged board members to RSVP if they plan to attend so an accurate food count can be provided.

Discussion followed regarding a proposal to redirect funding currently allocated to libraries to the trial court system. The funding has supported libraries since 1977. While the proposal is under consideration, there is uncertainty whether it will move forward. Board members noted that losing this funding would have a significant impact on libraries. It was also noted that the State of Michigan has been supportive in helping offset losses related to reduced federal funding.

Although Director Farkas was unable to attend the related meeting, she shared the information with state representatives and is exploring opportunities to invite them to the library.

Trustee Sturing added that, in addition to the state of Michigan providing support for Michigan eLibrary services, there is also a request for an additional \$500,000 in library funding. He expressed his belief that the state may continue providing this support in place of the federal government.

Regarding page 22, discussion continued about the current vacancy on the Library Board and whether any committees are being impacted by the missing member. Trustee Dooley is currently serving in the HR Chair role due to being the most senior member of the committee, though she has not officially been appointed chair. Director Farkas stated that she has met individually with three interested candidates for approximately one hour each. Because the May 18<sup>th</sup> Council meeting was canceled, the appointment process has been delayed, though there is hope the vacancy will be filled soon. Interested candidates were encouraged to contact board members for additional information.

Trustee Halvangis created a schedule for Library Board members to attend Friends of the Library Board meetings.

Trustee Burke reported attending the Friends of the Library board meeting, where the organization received a generous donation from a board member who is affiliated with the sorority, Alpha Kappa Alpha (AKA). Fifty-five new books were donated to the Book Nook, with an estimated retail value of \$900. Trustee Burke also commented on the many donations received in recognition of the library's 65th anniversary. Director Farkas stated that thank-you notes will be sent to all individuals who donated directly to the library. She added that fundraising efforts are close to reaching the goal, with approximately \$1,300 remaining. Director Farkas also noted it was encouraging to see the Friends identify priorities that are meaningful to them in supporting the library.

Trustee Bartlett shared that he attended the Hidden Rivers presentation, where the speaker discussed rivers flowing beneath the City of Detroit. Audience members from Northville also discussed efforts to uncover and restore a river that has been hidden beneath the sewage system for approximately 40 years. Bartlett also reminded board members that registration for the Meijer Gardens trip opens next Monday and noted that registration fills within less than 24 hours.

Trustee Sturing and Trustee Bartlett attended the City Council meeting where the library budget was formally adopted. All seven council members voted in favor of the library budget. Trustee Sturing commented that the unanimous support reflects many years of goodwill built within the community. He credited the library's strategic planning, financial forecasting, and staff contributions for maintaining strong community relationships and continued public support.

3. Treasurer's Report (Trustee Brian Barlett)

- A. 10 Year Financial Projection General Fund .....23
- B. 2025-2026 Library Fund Budget 271 .....24-27
- C. 2025-2026 Contributed Fund Budget 272.....28
- D. Financial Report April 2026.....29
- E. Library Fund 271 Expenditure & Revenue Report as of April 30, 2026.....30-32
- F. Library Fund 272 Contributed Fund as of April 30,20226.....33-34
- G. Balance Sheets for Funds 271 and 272 as of April 30, 2026,.....35-36

Currently, there is no year-end financial projection available. The delay is due in part to the City currently operating with part-time and temporary accounting staff, as positions vacated since last May have not yet been permanently filled. It is hoped that updated projections will be available soon, and expectations are that the library will remain in a favorable financial position.

Trustee Bartlett noted that the library currently has several staff vacancies, including two full-time librarians, one part-time librarian, and one part-time facilities staff member. As a result, payroll figures may appear artificially low due to understaffing. Despite the vacancies, the library is expected to come in under budget.

Trustee Bartlett also shared that a proposal regarding the library's financial policy and fund balance will be discussed in the future. The City is currently reviewing and revising its own fund balance policy as well. The proposed policy would establish both minimum and maximum fund balance thresholds to ensure funds are managed responsibly and not unnecessarily accumulated, recognizing that the money belongs to taxpayers and should be used according to a defined plan.

Trustee Burke questioned the budget line on page 31 related to severance pay. The budget reflected \$12,000 allocated for severance, while an additional \$12,000 appeared under wages and stipend expenses. Director Farkas explained that the expense had originally been budgeted under severance, but the City of Novi categorized the payment under severance/incentive pay. She stated that the budget will be updated during the next quarter to reflect the expense more accurately. Moving forward, the payment will be classified as a stipend rather than severance pay.

- 4. Director's Report (Julie Farkas) .....34-47
  - A. Door Count Usage Statistics – (Jeff Smith) ..... 43-44
  - B. Assistant Director of Building Operations Report (Maryann Zurmuehlen) ..... 45
  - C. Information Technology Report (Jeff Smith) ..... 46-49
  - D. Facilities Report (Keith Perfect) ..... 49
  - E. Assistant Director of Public Services Report (Lori Lowery) .....50-51
  - F. Information Services Report (Emily Brush and Rae Manela) .....51-57

G. Marketing and Community Promotion Report (Dana VanOast) .....	58
H. Support Services Report (Sarah Mominee) .....	59-63
I. Library Usage Statistics .....	64-73
J. Friends of Novi Library – April 2026 E-news; Agenda: 4/8/26; Minutes: 1/14/26.....	N/A
K. City of Novi Historical Commission – Minutes: 2/18/26 .....	N/A

Director Farkas recognized and celebrated library employees for their recent birthdays and work anniversaries.

Director Farkas reported that the copier previously located on the first floor has been moved to the second floor due to low usage downstairs and increased demand upstairs. Staff will continue monitoring usage to determine whether two printers are still necessary, as the current contract expires in May.

Construction related to the library's main entrance doors was discussed. A new front door system is planned, replacing the current automatic sliding doors with manual doors that will include automatic push-button accessibility features. The project has been rescheduled to September 2026 due to equipment lead times and insufficient bid information from the awarded contractor, which could have impacted library programming and operations.

Director Farkas shared that the library's Read Boxes were installed on May 6 and invited board members to visit and view them.

The patio area remains closed until further notice to allow for repairs to gates and raised pavement caused by winter weather damage.

The Novi Community Festival will take place on June 4, and the library will host two tables at the event. One table will provide general library information outdoors alongside local businesses, while another inside the venue will promote the Summer Reading Program and feature a raffle basket with a Summer Reading shirt prize. Director Farkas noted that the event is typically very well attended.

Director Farkas also reported that approximately 60 people attended the recent Tigers baseball program. Another Tigers event is scheduled for June 22.

The Summer Songfest event will take place on Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. at Paradise Park starting on June 25<sup>th</sup>. Community members are encouraged to attend for refreshments and an evening of entertainment.

Regarding page 61 and the catalog inventory project, Director Farkas explained that the library maintains more than 100,000 items within the building. Staff conducted a physical verification of every circulatable item in the library to locate materials, ensure they are shelved correctly, and update catalog records as needed.

Trustee Halvangis requested additional information regarding the CARL releases and Holly migration project referenced on page 60. Director Farkas stated that she would gather and provide more information.

Trustee Dooley asked for an update on staff planning efforts related to the library's strategic plan. Director Farkas explained that Lori is currently working on the project and

will be meeting with Brian to continue development. A year-end review will be prepared and presented for discussion. Director Farkas also noted that the library received more than 400 public responses, which will be included in the final report.

**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.*

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No Public Comment

**Committee Reports**

1. **Policy Committee:** Review current public policies for the Library  
(Chair: Burke, Bartlett and Yu, Staff Liaison – Julie Farkas)
  - Meeting held: no meeting held; additional Sunday closure data and usage..75-78
  
2. **HR Committee:** Review HR Policies for the Library, Director Review & Goals  
(Chair: OPEN, Dooley, Halvangis, Staff Liaisons – Julie Farkas and HR Specialist – Kristen Sullivan)
  - Meeting held: April 29, 2026 by Zoom Re: Staff Shortage..... 78-80
  - Meeting held: May 12, 2026 Re: Staff Shortage

Trustee Dooley reported that the HR Committee recently met to review the job postings for two full-time and two part-time open positions. Human Resources noted difficulty attracting qualified candidates due to competition with nearby libraries. Human Resources is currently reviewing pay ranges for these positions, and discussion of step adjustments has been tabled. It was noted that if the library is not competitive in compensation, it will be difficult to fill these vacancies.

It was further shared that the staffing shortage has already resulted in service impacts, including the cancellation of summer story time programming and the elimination of a Teen Space day. These changes have generated disappointment from parents and caregivers and are affecting service delivery going forward.

Director Farkas noted that during April and May alone, there were approximately 12 librarian openings in the area for similar roles, increasing competition for qualified staff. She added that some current staff members who received tuition assistance are still in school and have not yet completed their degrees. Despite challenges, a small number of new applications have been received, and interviews are beginning to be scheduled. She emphasized that recruitment will take time due to strong competition from other libraries seeking full-time employees.

Page 80 of the packet provides comparative library compensation data, which shows the library currently in the low-average range. This data was compiled in December. Human Resources is tracking new job postings to evaluate recent changes in pay and

benefits, noting that some libraries have adjusted compensation in response to minimum wage increases to \$15 and differences in fiscal year timing.

Trustee Dooley commented that the library may not be effectively promoting non-salary benefits and other factors that differentiate it as an employer of choice. She suggested highlighting organizational culture and employee testimonials, particularly from long-term staff, as a recruitment strategy—an approach that has not been emphasized recently.

Trustee Sturing agreed that while salary is a significant factor in recruitment, it is not the only consideration. He noted that other benefits and workplace factors can be equally meaningful to employees, though compensation remains a primary concern for most job seekers.

3. **Building & Grounds Committee:** Review Building, Grounds and IT infrastructure needs  
(Chair: Sturing, Halvangis, Yu (Staff Liaison – Julie Farkas, Maryann Zurmehlen and Jeff Smith)
  - Meeting held: May 2, 2026 by Zoom Re: Main Door Entry Project ..... 81

The Board previously approved the front door project and awarded the contract; however, it was later determined that the selected vendor submitted an incomplete bid. The original goal was to have the new doors installed by June 30 in time for the Reading Program, but due to the issue, the project has now been rescheduled to September.

Director Farkas explained that the Request for Proposals (RFP) will need to be reissued due to the incomplete bid. The City, which posts the RFPs, will not be available until next week. She noted that there are no anticipated issues with the timeline for ordering the door system itself, but a complete parts list and scope will be required for a new bid. The plan is to schedule the installation during the month of September, with the East entrance serving as the primary access point during construction.

Trustee Halvangis inquired if we need to postpone the project due to cost considerations. It was noted that project expenses will need to be reallocated to the fourth quarter. Director Farkas stated even with the updated bid, this contractor still came in lower than the other contractor.

Trustee Burke stated that the vendor did not fully account for the scope of work included in the project plans. She added that updated cost information will be needed and confirmed that a new bid process is required. Regardless of vendor selection, the project timeline will need to be adjusted.

Trustee Sturing expressed disappointment that the vendor did not recognize the full scope of the project during bidding.

Trustee Dooley asked how long construction is expected to take. Director Farkas responded that installation could take a couple of weeks, which is why the library is reserving the entire month of September to accommodate the work.

4. **Finance Committee:** Financial assessment, review and planning for the Library  
(Chair: Bartlett, Burke, Sturing; Staff Liaisons – Julie Farkas)
  - Meeting held: May 7, 2026..... 81-82

5. **Events/Marketing/Fundraising Committee:** Outreach and fundraising opportunities  
 (Chair: Dooley, Burke, Yu; Staff Liaisons – Julie Farkas and Dana VanOast)
  - Meeting held: April 22, 2026 by Zoom Re: Marketing Plan Review ..... 83-92

Trustee Dooley is working with Dana on the marketing plan. The group will reconvene in July and August, and Trustee Yu will be kept informed to help manage expectations regarding the timing of the next meeting.

6. **Strategic Planning Committee:**  
 (Chair: Bartlett, OPEN, 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, OPEN (Staff Liaison – Julie Farkas)
  - Meeting held: No meeting held ..... N/A

**Matters for Library Board Action**

1. From HR Committee: based on the current staff shortage at NPL and Sunday hour data from other libraries a consideration for reduced hours ..... 78-80

**Motion:** To approve closing the library Sundays from Memorial Day to Labor Day

**Motion for Approval – 1<sup>st</sup> – Trustee Dooley  
 2<sup>nd</sup> – Trustee Halvangis**

Trustee Burke expressed opposition to closing the library on Sundays, noting that this would result in an additional 13 closed days beyond the existing 26. She stated that reducing service in this way is a disservice to the community and questioned whether other options, such as extending Saturday hours, had been considered. She added that closing due to staffing shortages places the library in a difficult position.

Trustee Dooley responded that the library currently does not have sufficient staff to safely operate on Sundays. She cited concerns regarding employee burnout, turnover, and reduced service quality. Dooley noted that only a limited number of employees are available to work Sundays, including librarians assigned to service desks.

Trustee Sturing distinguished between programming and maintaining building operations, noting that with approximately 60 staff members and only a small number unavailable, closing entirely felt like a step backward. He emphasized that Sunday users represent a distinct group of patrons compared to weekday users and expressed support for reducing programming rather than closing the building. He added that Sunday attendance typically ranges from 600–800 visitors, making it a high-use day.

Trustee Halvangis noted that librarian certification requirements differ from other staff roles and stated that while the situation is not ideal, staff capacity cannot be overstretched.

Director Farkas explained that an email had been sent to staff requesting availability to meet scheduling needs. She reported that the library is currently approximately 107 staff hours short, and reallocating staff during the week would create additional shortages elsewhere. She noted that only one other library in the area (West Bloomfield) remains open on Sundays with similarly limited staffing.

Farkas referenced page 78, noting that circulation data shows approximately 19% of Sunday usage is attributable to patrons from other communities. She added that many neighboring libraries are also closed on Sundays.

She further explained that hiring efforts are ongoing, with hopes of filling positions by June, though training new staff—particularly those coming directly out of school—will take time. While some applicants are out of state, new hires will require onboarding before independently staffing service desks. She noted that Sunday programming is fully scheduled for the summer and that cancellations may be required depending on staffing levels. Sundays are busier during the school year than in summer months.

Director Farkas also stated that when staff call in on Sundays, only one librarian may be available on the floor, and in such cases, service desks may be closed, leaving only shelving support available without reference assistance. She added that efforts are being made to recruit school librarians who may have summer availability. The issue is staffing-related rather than budget-driven. Staff vacations were also pre-approved earlier in the year. The board would be notified in the event of morning call-offs resulting in service reductions or closure of service desks.

She added that ICube is heavily used on Sundays. One potential option discussed was closing only during May and June and reassessing staffing levels afterward. Extending Saturday hours would likely require overtime costs, which the library has not previously incurred.

Trustee Yu asked whether reduced hours had been considered and requested Sunday usage data for further review.

Farkas responded that it takes approximately six weeks to hire new staff, and additional uncertainty exists regarding notice periods from candidates. She noted that new hires often require significant training before independently staffing public service areas. Reduced hours will not solve the short staffing challenge as call-offs could occur and will leave unsafe staffing ratios.

Trustee Dooley asked how long it takes to open and close the building and whether reduced Sunday hours could be considered.

Director Farkas responded that opening and closing procedures are not lengthy; however, reducing hours would not resolve the underlying staffing shortages.

Trustee Bartlett asked whether reduced hours would impact staff willingness to work, particularly for those with longer commutes.

Trustee Bartlett requested additional staffing data, noting that only two Sundays remain before the next meeting. He moved to table the discussion until June 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Motion:** To approve the friendly motion to table this discussion until June 11th  
Motion for Approval – 1<sup>st</sup> – Trustee Bartlett  
2<sup>nd</sup> – Trustee Burke

**Motion passes – 6-0**

2. From Finance Committee: 1st draft review of the Financial Policy.....(to be sent in email)

Trustee Sturing noted on page 2 that "Excess Fund Balance" should be capitalized.

Trustee Burke noted on page 1 that the first bullet point should read "replacement of carpet" for clarity.

Director Farkas concluded that these proposed edits and clarifications will be reviewed at the next meeting.

3. From Finance Committee: a consideration for an increase in public printing costs from \$.20 to \$.25 for black and white copies effective July 1, 2026 due to service fee increases and rising supply costs (paper and toner.)

**Motion:** To approve an increase in public printing costs from \$.20 to \$.25 for black and white copies effective July 1, 2026 due to service fee increases and rising supply costs (paper and toner).

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

**Motion passes – 6-0**

Trustee Bartlett reported that credit card processing is currently handled through three separate systems. Program registrations are processed through Square, which is the lowest-cost option at approximately a 3% fee. He noted that debit card transactions still incur credit card processing fees that cannot be passed on to the customer.

He added that the library had previously considered increasing meeting room rental fees to help offset processing costs. While credit card payments are preferred due to reduced staff handling of cash, the current system at the circulation desk—processed through Fifth Third Bank—is the most expensive, with fees reaching approximately 9.52%. Staff are exploring the possibility of transitioning this system to Square to reduce costs.

It was also noted that print release transactions currently incur a 7.19% processing cost. One proposed option to help offset these expenses is increasing copier charges from \$0.20 to \$0.25 per copy. The goal is to avoid creating additional surcharges for credit card use and to maintain a consistent pricing structure regardless of payment method. Staff also expressed a preference not to implement separate pricing systems for debit versus credit card transactions.

Trustee Dooley asked whether the proposed increases would bring prices in line with other libraries. Director Farkas responded that the rates are consistent with peer institutions.

Trustee Sturing agreed that the proposed adjustments are reasonable and primarily aimed at covering operational costs. He noted that adjusting prices is simpler than implementing differentiated pricing or additional payment processing rules for different transaction types.

Director Farkas added that the last fee increase occurred approximately two years ago.

Trustee Yu asked about copier usage levels. Director Farkas responded that the copiers are heavily used throughout the day, with some users making as few as a single copy per transaction, including credit card payments.

**Communications**

- 1. 4/27/26: Email from Crystal Cannon Re: Library programming .....94

**Closed Session**

- 1. None

**New Business**

**Adjournment**

**Motion:** To adjourn at 8:44  
Motion for Approval – 1<sup>st</sup> – Trustee Burke  
2<sup>nd</sup> – Trustee Yu

**Motion passes – 6-0**

**Supplemental Information**

- Library Board Calendar 2026..... 95
- Library Closings 2026..... 96

**2026 Future Events:**

- 4/19-4/25: National Library Week – Find Your Joy!
- 5/14/26: Library Board of Trustees Meeting at 7pm, City of Novi
- 5/20/26: City of Novi Historical Commission Meeting at 7pm, Novi Public Library
- **5/23 – 5/25: LIBRARY CLOSED – MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND**
- 6/1 – 8/8: Library Summer Reading: Unearth a Story
- 6/10/26: Friends of Novi Library Meeting at 7pm, Novi Public Library
- 6/11/26: Library Board of Trustees Meeting at 7pm, City of Novi – Director Annual Review
- 6/17/26: City of Novi Historical Commission Meeting at 7pm, Novi Public Library
- **6/19/26: LIBRARY CLOSED – JUNETEENTH**
- **6/21/26: LIBRARY CLOSED – FATHER’S DAY**

*Karla S. Halvangis*

June 11, 2026

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Karla Halvangis, Secretary

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Date