



**Library Board of Trustees – Regular Meeting
Final Draft – MINUTES
April 23, 2026, 7 PM
Location: Novi Public Library**

Final Draft

Call to Order by Vice President, Kat Dooley

Novi Public Library

Called to order by **President Mark Sturing at 7:00 PM.**

Acknowledgement of Trustee Kathy Crawford resignation from the Novi Public Library Board.

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

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 – 1st – Trustee Burke
- 2nd – Trustee Dooley

Motion passes – 5-0

Consent Agenda

1. Approve Minutes of: March 26, 2026 –Regular Board Meeting 4-12
2. Approve Claims and Warrants of:
 - A. Accounts 271 and 272 (#661) 13-14

Motion: To approve the Consent Agenda

- Motion for Approval – 1st – Trustee Dooley
- 2nd – Trustee Burke

Motion passes – 5-0

Trustee Burke complimented Director Farkas's transparency on the agenda, specifically with the context she provides.

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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No Public Comment

Reports

- 1. Teen Space Statistics 16

Teen Space recorded 549 visits in March, with an average daily attendance of approximately 37 students. With two months remaining in the school year, participation continues to stay strong.

- 2. President's Report (President – Mark Sturing)
 - A. 4/11/26: Memo to City Council Re: Budget Questions for 26/27 17
 - B. 2026-2027 Draft Board Committee Assignments 18
 - C. Consideration of a rotating schedule for Trustees to attend the Friends of the Novi Library monthly meetings
 - D. Reflections from Board Members

The Board inquired about the fund balance policy for the Library Fund and was provided with a copy of the current financial policy. It was noted that the Board became familiar with the policy approximately one month prior to recent changes made by the City.

Under the existing policy, a fund balance below 28% triggers a cautionary review and prompts consideration of corrective actions. Unlike the City's revised policy, which includes both minimum and maximum thresholds, the Library currently does not have an upper limit for its fund balance.

In practice, the Board reviews the fund balance annually and evaluates both current and historical levels. Four primary action items were identified for consideration when fund balances exceed operational needs:

- 1. Restoration of programs
- 2. Pay down of long-term debt
- 3. Transfer of funds to contribution/designated funds
- 4. Maintenance of reserves

The Board made a verbal commitment to review and update the policy, including consideration of an upper fund balance threshold and guidance for escrow levels. The City has requested that a formal written policy be developed and presented to the full Board.

Director Farkas expressed appreciation to the Board and the Finance Committee for their thoughtful discussions regarding reserves and the budget noting a positive outlook moving forward. The matter was previously presented to City Council, where it received approval with a 7-0 vote. Continued support from the City was acknowledged.

Trustee Dooley also thanked the Finance Committee for their work and strategic planning efforts.

Regarding Board committee assignments, adjustments were required following Trustee Crawford's resignation. Trustee Yu was appointed as a replacement. An additional member is needed for the Strategic Planning Committee in advance of a meeting scheduled for late May.

Director Farkas reported meeting with two residents as part of the strategic planning process. A community survey is currently underway, and results are expected to inform upcoming planning discussions.

Trustee Halvangis suggested considering a senior Board member for the Strategic Planning Committee. Trustee Burke recommended Trustee Dooley; however, Trustee Dooley has previously served in that capacity.

The Board discussed the importance of trustee representation at the Friends of the Library monthly meetings, held on the second Wednesday of each month (April through November). Trustee Halvangis will coordinate a sign-up schedule to ensure consistent Board presence.

Director Farkas noted the value of maintaining a strong relationship with the Friends of the Library, highlighting their contributions through fundraising and support of the Library's mission. Trustees were encouraged to verify their membership status with the Friends organization.

Trustees shared updates on recent community events:

- Trustee Sturing reported that the Volunteer Breakfast was successful and expressed appreciation for volunteer contributions. The Michigan-themed program hosted by the Historical Society was well attended, with strong community engagement and full attendance at events.
- Trustee Burke attended the State of the City event, describing it as informative and a valuable opportunity to connect with City Council members and express appreciation for their support.
- Trustee Bartlett noted that the Library was positively highlighted during the State of the City address, including mention of the upcoming millage.
- Trustee Halvangis participated in a jigsaw puzzle competition, where her team placed second. She also noted her cross stitch was displayed in the down stairs display case. She attended the Library Coalition Library training that occurred on March 12th. She also saw the movie *The Librarian* which is shown on PBS, it was not an uplifting movie but was very interesting.

3. Treasurer's Report (Trustee Brian Bartlett)

A. 10 Year Financial Projection.....19
B. 2025-2026 Library Fund Budget 271.....20-23
C. 2025-2026 Contributed Fund Budget 272.....24
D. Financial Report February 2026.....25
E. Library Fund 271 Expenditure & Revenue Report as of February 28, 2026 26-29
F. Library Fund 272 Contributed Fund as of February 28, 2026 30-31
G. Balance Sheets for Funds 271 and 272 as of February 28, 2026,.....32-33

The Library was positively highlighted during the State of the City address. It was noted that the City is unlikely to approve a three-year budget at this time and is instead targeting adoption of a one-year budget on May 4, due to ongoing challenges in balancing the budget.

The Board expressed confidence in the Library's ability to develop and submit a balanced budget for the upcoming fiscal year. It was also noted that the Library is not operating with an excessive fund balance and that current financial planning is sustainable over the long term, potentially extending up to ten years. Overall, there is confidence that the Library's budget will be approved and that financial operations will remain stable.

Director Farkas reported that the Library has received a \$10,000 contribution from MSU Federal Credit Union. Additional details will be provided as they become available.

4. Director's Report (Julie Farkas)..... 34-47
A. Door Count Usage Statistics – (Jeff Smith) 48-49
B. Assistant Director of Building Operations Report (Maryann Zurmuehlen) 50
C. Information Technology Report (Jeff Smith) 51-55
D. Facilities Report (Keith Perfect) 56
E. Assistant Director of Public Services Report (Lori Lowery) 56-57
F. Information Services Report (Emily Brush and Rae Manela)..... 57-63
G. Marketing and Community Promotion Report (Dana VanOast) 64
H. Support Services Report (Sarah Mominee) 65-66
I. Library Usage Statistics 67-76
J. Friends of Novi Library – April 2026 E-news; Agenda: 4/8/26; Minutes: 1/14/26..... 77-79
K. City of Novi Historical Commission – Minutes: 2/18/26 80

Director Farkas recognized staff celebrating work anniversaries and expressed appreciation for their service.

In response to an inquiry from Trustee Burke at the last board meeting, Director Farkas reported that the average postage cost for the NPL @ Your Door program is \$13.44 per bag, which includes delivery to and return from patrons. Each bag typically holds 5–7 items.

Director Farkas extended thanks to Dick's Sporting Goods (Novi location) for hosting a book drive, noting a particular need for children's materials. Trustee Burke asked if we are not taking donations then why are we participating in drives? Director Farkas stated that we

temporarily stopped donations as the library due to floor clearing but are always in the need of youth materials.

The Library will participate in Community Impact Day on May 13th, hosted by the Novi Chamber of Commerce, with volunteers assisting in book plating activities.

Director Farkas shared her perspective regarding the recent removal of the DEI statement from the Library Board agenda, noting she felt caught off guard and wished to provide input. Trustee Halvangis stated she had no concerns with its inclusion, viewing it as a statement rather than policy. Trustee Burke explained her initial question stemmed from whether the statement needed to appear on the agenda, and suggested greater visibility on the Library's website, such as placement on the homepage. Trustee Dooley supported revisiting placement to ensure visibility while maintaining alignment between the Board and Director, suggesting it could also reside within DEI committee on the agenda if space is a concern. Trustees discussed alternative placements, including at the beginning or end of the agenda. It was agreed that the DEI statement will be placed at the end of the Agenda.

Director Farkas reported that the Public Library Association (PLA) conference was wonderful. Two key focus areas she will be working on for 2026-2027:

1. Strengthening the Information Services team, including staffing, patron engagement, and return on investment for programs and services
2. Developing a progress report framework for staff development

Director Farkas noted the current staff development tool is cumbersome and carries a negative perception. She expressed interest in revising the performance review process to be more constructive and meaningful, with input from the HR Committee. Trustee Dooley offered to provide insights based on prior experience. Director Farkas emphasized the goal of ensuring employees feel valued through the process, noting that compensation is not directly tied to reviews unless expectations are not met.

Director Farkas acknowledged National Library Week and invited trustees to volunteer at the upcoming Novi Community Fest.

An update on the community survey indicated over 425 responses to date, supported by an email outreach campaign. In response to Trustee Dooley, Director Farkas confirmed that patron usage has not yet returned to pre-COVID levels. While door counts remain the most reliable metric, drive-up usage is less precise. Changes in digital programming and recent staffing shortages have contributed to reduced engagement. Two youth librarians have recently departed, and recruitment is underway, with anticipated hires around July 1. This staffing gap is expected to impact summer programming. Director Farkas noted that volunteers are not used for story time, as these programs rely on trained librarians to build engagement with children.

Trustee Burke requested that staff reports include full names. Director Farkas agreed to review this with staff and will provide an organizational chart.

Trustee Halvangis complimented creative programming ideas highlighted in the report, including themed displays such as "Blind Date with a Book." (Page 51)

Trustee Burke inquired about the Library's 3D printer; Director Farkas confirmed a new 3D printer is operational and the older unit will be removed due to disrepair. (Page 54)

Trustee Dooley noted a 35% email open rate as a strong performance metric and commended staff efforts in patron communications. (Page 64)

In response to a question from Trustee Burke, Director Farkas explained that staff recently completed training on homelessness de-escalation. The training covered interactions with patrons experiencing housing instability and included components related to mental health awareness. Director Farkas noted this is an increasingly relevant topic, as the Library continues to provide a safe, welcoming environment with access to essential resources.

Director Farkas will follow up with staff regarding preferences for inclusion of full names in reports.

Public Comment

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No Public Comment

Committee Reports

Need to add Torry to the committees and remove Halvangis from DEI committee as she is listed twice.

1. **Policy Committee:** Review current public policies for the Library
(Chair: Burke, Bartlett and Gawalapu, Staff Liaison – Julie Farkas)
 - Meeting held: Meeting scheduled for April 14th
 - 2nd Reading of Public Policies81-95

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

3. **Building & Grounds Committee:**
(Chair: Gawalapu, Sturing, Halvangis (Staff Liaison – Julie Farkas)
 - Meeting held: Meeting held 3/19/26 96

4. **Finance Committee:** Financial plan based on building assessment review, Library endowment investigation
(Chair: Bartlett, Burke, Sturing; Staff Liaisons – Julie Farkas)
 - Meeting held: No meeting held N/A

5. **Events/Marketing/Fundraising Committee:** Outreach and fundraising opportunities
 (Chair: Dooley, Burke; Staff Liaisons – Julie Farkas and Dana VanOast)
 - Meeting held: Meeting held 3/24/26..... 96-97

Trustee Dooley reported that the Marketing Committee reviewed the finalization of the three-year marketing plan, which is aligned with the Library's strategic plan. She noted that Director Farkas and staff, particularly Dana, invested significant effort in its development. The plan will be included in the May Board packet. The Committee also discussed upcoming fundraising opportunities.

Trustee Burke inquired about the response rate from businesses regarding contributions toward the \$65,000 fundraising goal. Director Farkas reported that out of approximately 100 businesses contacted, three responses were received, totaling approximately \$1,000 in donations.

Trustee Dooley noted that response rates may be influenced by differing business fiscal year timelines. Director Farkas added that a final fundraising outreach effort is planned for September. She also noted that certain businesses were not contacted as they are already current supporters. Additionally, staff plan to promote donations at Fall Fest through informational takeaways to encourage community contributions.

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 revisions to: Accommodations & Accessibility Policy (2nd Reading).....81-94

Motion: To approve the second reading of the Accommodations & Accessibility Policy, the Circulation Policy, and the Closure Policy, incorporating Trustee Halvangis's friendly amendments, including the addition of "service animal" language on page 84 and the corresponding friendly amendment to the Circulation Policy on page 86.

Motion for Approval – 1st – Trustee Burke
 2nd – Trustee Dooley

Motion passes – 5-0

Trustee Sturing inquired about the 14-day advance notice requirement for reasonable accommodation requests on page 84, noting that a 14-day timeframe may be reasonable in some cases but not others, and asked about the necessity of requiring advance forms.

Trustee Halvangis asked whether such requests occur frequently. Director Farkas responded that they do not occur often and are typically accommodated. She

explained that the advance notice helps ensure appropriate arrangements can be made, such as securing an ASL interpreter. In cases of program attendance requests, staff may need to coordinate with external partners, including schools, to align schedules.

Trustee Bartlett noted that the policy includes flexibility if immediate accommodation cannot be provided.

Trustee Dooley asked whether live closed captioning technology is available. Director Farkas responded that while such technology does exist, it is not currently available at the Library.

Regarding the Closure Policy, Trustee Sturing commented on the Exhibit on page 95, noting that the comparator libraries listed were not consistent with the Library's typical peer group, as they appeared to be smaller institutions rather than Class 6 libraries. Director Farkas responded that comparator libraries were selected based on those most likely to be directly impacted by a closure, including nearby NLA neighborhood libraries. She noted that paid holidays were not broadly analyzed, and only City of Novi and Library closures were included. She added that Saturday closures are rare and have only occurred for special circumstances, such as parking lot reconstruction, with most closures limited to Sundays and Mondays.

Trustee Halvangis requested a correction on page 84 regarding the placement of "service animals," noting it should be referenced above. Director Farkas confirmed the edit to read "see service animals above."

Trustee Halvangis also noted that a bullet point on page 86 read awkwardly and suggested revising it to "denied for violations or failure to adhere."

2. Approve the recommendation from the Building & Grounds Committee for the Main Entrance Door project (Bids will be opened and reviewed on Monday, April 20, 2026 and sent to the Board by Wednesday, April 22, 2026 to review)

Motion: To approve the recommendation from the Building & Grounds Committee for the Main Entrance Door project not to exceed \$103,771 to be awarded to C.E. Door & Hardware.

Motion for Approval – 1st – Trustee Halvangis
2nd – Trustee Bartlett

Motion passes – 5-0

Only two contractors submitted bids, and the evaluations were completed by the City of Novi. The primary difference between the bids was that CE Door & Hardware submitted the lower-cost proposal. Based on the review, CE Door & Hardware was recommended for the project. The Grounds Committee agreed with the recommendation to award the contract to CE Door & Hardware, with a bid not to exceed \$103,771.

3. Approval to close at 5pm to the public on Thursday, October 29, 2026 for the Novi Public Library to host a private reception for the Michigan Library Association Conference reviewed at the next meeting.

Motion: To approve the closing at 5pm to the public on Thursday, October 29, 2026 for the Novi Public Library to host a private reception for the Michigan Library Association Conference.

Motion for Approval – 1st – Trustee Burke
2nd – Trustee Halvangis

Motion passes – 5-0

Trustee Dooley asked whether there would be an opportunity to raffle another library t-shirt quilt.

Director Farkas responded that while a quilt could be assembled, there are currently no remaining library t-shirts available. She noted that the Friends of the Library may be able to help extend outreach to the broader community, beyond MLA, with a general “love of libraries and Michigan” theme, rather than specifically referencing the Novi Library.

Trustee Bartlett shared that there was a recent passing in his family and noted the availability of a wheelchair with brakes and a seat. He asked whether the item could be brought to the DEI Committee for consideration as a potential donation.

Communications

1. None

Closed Session

1. None

New Business

Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn at 8:32
Motion for Approval – 1st – Trustee Halvangis
2nd – Trustee Dooley

Motion passes – 5-0

Supplemental Information

- Library Board Calendar 2026..... 106
- Library Closings 2026..... 107

2026 Future Events:

- 4/19-4/25: National Library Week – Find Your Joy!
- 4/23/26: Library Board of Trustees Meeting at 7pm, Novi Public Library (Rescheduled from 4/16/26)
- 5/10/26: LIBRARY CLOSED – MOTHER'S DAY
- 5/13/26: Friends of Novi Library Meeting at 7pm, Novi Public Library

- 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
- 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

May 14, 2026

Karla Halvangis, Secretary

Date