

MONROE COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

1. At a Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Monroe County Library System held on December 10, 2025 at the Mary K. Library Service Center, the meeting was called to order by Chair Peven at 4:32 p.m. Vice-Chair LaPensee called roll.

Present: Rob Peven, Chair; Beth LaPensee, Vice-Chair; Catharine Calder, Trustee; and Nancy Bellaire, Director

Excused: Rita Gordon, Secretary

Staff: Lou Komorowski; Barbra Krueger; Sandy Calkins; Joey Becker; Rob Strimbel

A quorum being present, the Board proceeded to transact business.

2. Motion by Ms. Calder, supported by Mr. Grodi, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.
3. Motion by Mike Grodi, supported by Beth LaPensee, to approve the minutes of the November 12, 2025 board meeting. Motion carried.
4. There was no public comment.
5. Consent Agenda – Motion by Cathe Calder, supported by Mike Grodi, to accept the items on the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried.

6. Committee Reports

Finance Committee – Mr. Peven reported that the Finance Committee did not meet, but that the 2025 budget adjustment form is on the agenda for approval. The November financial statement shows that we have received almost 95% of our expected revenues and expended about 85% of our planned expenditures. The December penal fine reports arrived this afternoon. Penal fine revenue was \$68,884. Our annual penal fine total was \$779,283, up about \$131,000 from 2024.

Facilities Committee – Nancy Bellaire shared photos of the Navarre branch construction and said that proposals to replace the Ellis Roof and 3 Roof Top HVAC units appear later on the agenda.

Policy and Personnel Committee – No meeting.

Technology Committee – No meeting.

Woodlands Update – The last Woodlands Governing Board meeting was cancelled. Woodlands once again coordinated a group buying discount for Swank Movie Licensing, which allows several branches to show movies as part of their program offerings.

Legislative Update – Nancy shared information from MLA about IMLS, Mel, and MelCat

funding.

7. Unfinished Business – AI policy committee will meet after the New Year. The 2026 meeting schedule will be reviewed by branches and confirmed in January.
8. New Business
Motion by Beth LaPensee, supported by Cathe Calder, to approve bills for the month ending November 30, 2025, in the amount of \$331,838.12. Motion carried.
Motion by Cathe Calder, supported by Beth LaPensee, to approve the quote for Ellis Roof Top HVAC units for the amount of \$63,005. Motion carried.
Motion by Mike Grodi, supported by Beth LaPensee, to approve the proposal for a new roof for Ellis for \$160,000.
Motion by Mike Grodi, supported by Cathe Calder, to adopt the resolution concerning 2025 year-end budget adjustments. Motion carried.
Motion by Cathe Calder, supported by Beth LaPensee, to appoint Bill Sisk to the Retiree Health Care Trust Board. Motion carried.
9. Staff Report--Barbra Krueger thanked the board for their work on the budget and for the salary increases this year.
10. Mrs. Bellaire said that Foster Swift has been working with us to update our copyright and digital release forms and that Paul Robinson plans to work with the board at the January meeting to set up Multi-Factor-Authentication in accordance with our Cyber Insurance requirements. She shared statistics on Hoopla users, a small food closet recently started at Dorsch, and also shared that Eastern Michigan University will be providing us with another Social Work intern, working mostly out of the Navarre Branch. We learned today that our new MCLS Board Trustee will be Betzi Lievens.
11. Motion by Cathe Calder, supported by Mike Grodi, to open the public Hearing on the Proposed 2026 Budget at 5:00 p.m. Motion carried by roll call vote. The budget has been available at all branch libraries and a notice of tonight's hearing was published in the Monroe News. There was no public comment. Motion by Mike Grodi, supported by Beth LaPensee to close the public hearing at 5:05 p.m. Motion carried.
12. Motion by Mike Grodi, supported by Beth LaPensee, to adopt the Resolution of Proposed Budget for 2026. Motion carried.
13. Comments
The board exchanged best wishes for the holidays and thanked Cathe Calder for her years of service and dedication as a board member, providing leadership through good times and challenging times, always fostering innovation and services for all. Ms. Calder said that she would continue to advocate for the Library, especially increased hours for Navarre. She said that it has been one of the greatest joys of her life to serve on the board and that she has learned a lot. Beth LaPensee thanked the staff for a great year. Rob Peven said that he is looking forward to a great 2026 and said that he admired how Cathe Calder always served as a champion for underserved populations. Mike Grodi said, "Ditto", to all of the previous

comments and said that the staff carries the heavy lifting for all. He also shared a concern that Nancy Bellaire “capped out” at the maximum pension benefit-year formula several years ago due to her long tenure with MCLS. He said that as the Retirement Board Chair, he would be working with Pension Fund Attorney to see what can be done to provide some solutions for this situation.

14. Announcements

Date of Next Board Meeting – Wednesday, January 14, 2026 @ 5 p.m. at the Ellis Library & Reference Center, Monroe, Michigan

15. Adjournment

Motion by Mike Grodi, supported by Beth LaPensee, to adjourn the meeting at 5:17 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth LaPensee, Vice-Chair

Rob Peven, Chair