

**Cass District Library
Regular Board of Trustees Meeting
April 15, 2026
Minutes**

President Eileen Toney called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: President Eileen Toney, Vice President Rebecca Crocker, Trustees Sandra Asmus, Joe Gross, Ron McAdam, Laura Hughes, and Tabitha Schafer. Director Christopher Korenowsky, Recorder Stephanie Knepple, Guests Holly Nelson, Rhonda Belcher, Jon Wuepper, Kendra Truesdale.

Absent: Treasurer Andrew Churchill.

Agenda: Laura Hughes moved to approve the agenda, supported by Tabitha Schafer. Motion carried.

Minutes: Rebecca Crocker moved to approve the March 2026 Minutes, supported by Joe Gross. Motion carried.

Public Comment: None to report.

Treasurer's Report:

- Total assets \$4,331,124.66, Total Administration Expenses \$1,727.83, Total/Books/Periodicals/Videos/Audio \$9,118.08, Total Contracts/Professional Fees \$8,433.91, Total Equipment -\$608.35, Total Payroll Expenses \$77,635.40, Total Programs and Promotions \$2,936.37, Total Repairs & Maintenance \$5,837.74, Total Telephone/Utilities \$10,969.37, Total Expenses \$138,343.51, Net Income \$863,173.86.
- Edwardsburg Capital Fund: Total Assets: \$379,859.40, Total Accounts Payable \$381,543.54, Total Other Current Liabilities \$212,858.00, Total Liabilities \$594,401.54, Total Equity -\$214,542.14, Total Liabilities and Equity \$379,859.40.

Rebecca Crocker moved to approve the expenditures, supported by Ron McAdam.

Roll Call:

Sandra Asmus	Yes	Ron McAdam	Yes
Joe Gross	Yes	Laura Hughes	Yes
Andrew Churchill	Absent	Rebecca Crocker	Yes
Eileen Toney	Yes	Tabitha Schafer	Yes

Motion carried.

Director's Report

April 2026

The following was completed during the month of March:

Stephanie Knepple and I met with Region 8 Family Engagement and Literacy Hub Coordinator Kristen Chism on a variety of partnership issues. There is potential connection in working with Ms. Chism to aid in potentially starting Teen Advisory Boards, as well as potential staff training opportunities on family engagement workshop content.

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Regular Board of Trustees Meeting
April 15, 2026
Minutes

Signed and mailed Church Street termination lease to the Village of Edwardsburg. I confirmed this was received by Edwardsburg Village President Dennis Peak. CDL will vacate the Church Street property no later than June 2, 2026 at 11:59 p.m.

Participated in an afterschool meeting with the Middle School Principal from Edwardsburg Public Schools (Joshua Borne), as well as several guidance counselors. We addressed a teenage attendee group of approximately 40+ students. Expectations were laid about teen behavior in the new branch.

Met with Board President Eileen Toney to review the status of all contracts, financials, and payment status' as they related to The Barton Group (TBG) and Cornerstone Construction. CDL has officially ended its financial payment obligation to TBG. Facilitated a location tour of the new Edwardsburg Branch with supporters Ed and Patty Patzer.

Engaged the marketing and program manager team to visit every branch location this spring to discuss public programming, marketing, and summer reading club initiatives. Connected with *Growing Libraries* for an introductory meeting to discuss how public libraries can raise awareness within their communities and grow their cardholder numbers.

Received communication from Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Libraries inquiring about our Woodland Style mural in the new branch. Connections were made between the tribal libraries and muralist Justin Johnson.

Asked to join the Quality Services Audit Checklist (QSAC) revision committee along with 8-10 of my director colleagues around the state of Michigan by the Library of Michigan.

Asked to join the Michigan Library Association's Ambassador Program by Executive Director Dillon Geshel. Ambassador work can include work on the advocacy and legislative committees, as well as the leadership development committee.

Worked to organize content and document design for all of the 14 different job descriptions for the soon to be published annual job performance assessments.

Set up the excise plan for materials left at the Church Street location. This included detailing the entire inventory of what items are left in the branch (with measurements), managing the silent bid process onsite, informing the Village of Edwardsburg of this plan, and ensuring marketing reaches interested parties.

Partnered with our friends at the Dowagiac District Library on a special staff development training connected to the Michigan Department of Civil Rights (MDCR). MDCR has created and provides voluntary service animal identification to qualifying applicants with disabilities and their trained service animals. We are investigating as co-library systems, what this might mean for our respective systems, as well as how we might collaboratively be a public service resource for this initiative. Several CDL supervisors and managers will attend this event.

Cass District Library
Regular Board of Trustees Meeting
April 15, 2026
Minutes

Interviewed by Kay McAdam for *The Marcellus News* which was published on April 2, 2026.

Signed up to attend the Rural Futures Summit to be held at the Michigan Library and Historical Center on April 20. Attendees will hear directly from rural communities and organizations about what is working, what is challenging and what is needed to build long-term capacity and resilience. The event PR notes that these stories and insights will be paired with updates from state and federal partners, helping translate local realities into a clearer understanding of available resources, emerging opportunities and policy direction.

Partnered with Manny DeLaRosa, Cass County Emergency Manager, on a special relief aid event featuring organizations on site at the Edwardsburg Branch Community Room. Held on March 19, the event hosted 20+ statewide and local vendors who provide essential aid, information, and resources to help community members recover and rebuild on various issues. Over 100+ attendees came through the event. This event also received positive regional media coverage including WSBT 22.

Holly Nelson Mason/Union Townships Branch Manager Presentation: Ms. Nelson gave a delightful and engaging performance of a storytime for the Library Board members. The presentation was described as "cute" and was well-received by the Board, offering a brief, charming glimpse into the kind of programming the library offers to its younger patrons. Her rendition showcased her storytelling skills and provided the Board with a concrete example of the value and enjoyment the community derives from the children's services department.

Rural Futures Summit: Director Christopher Korenowsky shared that he will be attending the Rural Futures Summit, an annual event focused on innovative strategies and collaborative solutions for strengthening rural communities. He expressed that he is looking forward to gaining new insights, networking with other library directors and community leaders from across the state, and identifying actionable ideas that can be implemented to enhance the library's services, outreach, and overall impact within Cass County. His attendance aligns with the library's strategic goal of continuous improvement and proactive community engagement.

Quality Services Audit Checklist (QSAC): Cass District Library received a significant distinction by being selected as one of only ten libraries statewide invited to serve on the prestigious rating committee. This invitation is particularly noteworthy because, out of the hundreds of public libraries across Michigan, a mere nineteen currently meet the stringent criteria necessary to even qualify for consideration to participate in this influential body. The Cass District Library's selection highlights its recognized standing and high performance within the Michigan library community.

Cass District Library
Regular Board of Trustees Meeting
April 15, 2026
Minutes

Committee Reports:

- Facilities: Ms. Schafer provided an update on several ongoing facilities and construction projects, noting that the previous meeting had a very full agenda.

Maintenance and Repair Updates:

- Howard Branch Windows: It was reported that the windows at the Howard Branch are experiencing leaks. The library is actively working on obtaining quotes for the necessary repair or replacement work to address this issue promptly.
- Local History Branch Air Conditioning: A quote is being secured for a new air split system upstairs at the Local History Branch to ensure proper climate control for the historical documents and materials housed there.

Edwardsburg New Build/Renovation Project Status:

- Warranty Information: The Edwardsburg new build comes with a one-year warranty, which the board and administration will track closely.
 - Exterior Punch List: The administration is currently working through the exterior punch list items to finalize the building's exterior.
 - Exterior Doors: There has been a delay concerning the exterior doors. The large glass door was unfortunately delivered in the incorrect color, and the library is currently awaiting the delivery of the new, correctly colored door. This installation is a priority and is scheduled to take place on a weekend while the library is closed to minimize disruption to patrons and services.
- Finance: Mr. Korenowsky provided an update on the library's financial status, focusing specifically on the funding for upcoming projects. He announced that the recent \$10,000 Carnegie Grant award had been strategically allocated to cover two significant expenses. Specifically, the grant funds will be used to purchase and install the new air split system required for the Local History Branch, addressing a long-standing maintenance need. Furthermore, a portion of the grant will be dedicated to covering the salary for the summer employee intern position, ensuring the library has the necessary seasonal staffing to support its programs and services during the busy summer months without straining the general operating budget. This strategic use of the restricted grant funds ensures that essential improvements and staffing needs are met efficiently.
 - Personnel:
 - Mr. Gross reported that the drafts for performance assessments for each position are complete. Mr. Korenowsky will present these to the staff for review and any necessary updates.
 - A draft of the progressive discipline policy was completed and is scheduled for a vote later in the meeting.

Correspondence: Mr. Korenowsky presented letters received from the following individuals, expressing their gratitude for the invitation to the Edwardsburg Branch Opening Ceremony and offering positive remarks on its execution.

- Kent District Library: Lance Werner, Executive Director and Brian Mortimore, Director of Human Resources
- Library of Michigan: Michelle Bradley, Interim State Librarian
- Michigan Gateway Community Foundation: Michael Rowland, President and Chief Executive Officer
- Michigan Library Association: Dillon Geshel, Executive Director
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**Cass District Library
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- Michigan Gateway Community Foundation: Karin Falkenstein, MGCF Board of Trustees Chairperson

Unfinished Business:

- Lindsay Dangl Board Governance Training
May 12, 2026, Main Branch, Flagg Room
Lite Dinner at 5 p.m. followed by a 5:30 p.m. start time
- Mr. Korenowsky provided an update on the Church Street Silent Auction Inventory, stating the building will be accessible to community members for bidding on Thursday, May 7, and Friday, May 8. Ms. Kayla Bambrick was acknowledged for compiling a comprehensive 60-page document detailing all available auction items. The official date for vacating the building is June 2nd by 11:59 p.m.

New Business:

- Progressive Discipline Policy
 - Joe Gross moved to adopt the Progressive Discipline Policy, supported by Rebecca Crocker.
Roll Call:

Sandra Asmus	Yes	Ron McAdam	Yes
Joe Gross	Yes	Laura Hughes	Yes
Andrew Churchill	Absent	Rebecca Crocker	Yes
Eileen Toney	Yes	Tabitha Schafer	Yes

Motion carried.
- Air Split Mechanical Quotations for Local History
 - Tabitha Schafer moved to accept Belaire's Air Split quote for the amount of \$7,559.00, supported by Sandra Asmus.
Roll Call:

Sandra Asmus	Yes	Ron McAdam	Yes
Joe Gross	Yes	Laura Hughes	Yes
Andrew Churchill	Absent	Rebecca Crocker	Yes
Eileen Toney	Yes	Tabitha Schafer	Yes

Motion carried.
- MI Public Library Trustee Manual, 2022 edition: Hard copy will be filed within minutes.

Adjournment:

7:29 p.m.

Ron McAdam, moved.

Laura Hughes, supported.

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Knepple