

Bridgman Public Library Regular Board Meeting Minutes February 24, 2026 - 9:00 A.M.

Meeting Called to Order:

9:00 A.M. by Fuller

Roll Call:

Present: Fuller (President), Kole (VP), Collins (Secretary), Shaver (Treasurer), Janoskey, Noll, Wilk, Worcester

Absent: Etter, Valauskas

Staff: Hebert, Abele

Approval of Agenda:

Kole motioned to add: "*Action Item: Approval of December 2025 Bills*" to the agenda.

Motion seconded by Noll. Motion passed.

Guests:

Julie Bernstein, Friends of the Library, President

Cindy Persic, Library Staff Member & Community Garden Coordinator

Angie Mantei, Library Staff Member

Public Comments (maximum 3 minutes per person):

One member of the public was present. No comments.

Friends of the Library Representative:

Bernstein reported that the recent book sale earned \$928.25, a \$258 increase over the Winter 2025 Book Sale. The Friends of the Library approved funding for the Little Explorers program supplies (\$300), art installation supplies (\$150), and the purchase of three new chair racks for the Community Room. New flags have also been ordered for outside the Library and three new planters will be installed at the Library entrance to enhance curb appeal. The Library and the Friends group are collaborating with Jake Zapor of Bridgman Public Schools on a student art contest. Winning entries will be converted into canvas wall art for permanent display in the children's section, with awards presented to the selected student artists. The Friends will provide funds for the awards.

Committee Reports:

Personnel and Policy Committee:

- Collins mentioned that she is continuing to recognize staff work anniversaries.

Facilities Committee:

- Nothing new to report.

Finance Committee:

- Reviewed reports.

Director's Report:

- Hebert reported on recent community connections.
 - Hebert stated that she has been attending monthly meetings for the City of Bridgman, Lake Township, and Chikaming Township. She has requested that a Library Report be added as a recurring item on the City of Bridgman and Chikaming Township agenda, much like Lake Township does for us.
 - Additionally, she has met with the Bridgman Middle School Principal and initiated outreach with other local educational, youth, and senior facilities—including Bridgman High School, Boys and Girls Club, West Woods, River Valley Senior Center, and Warren Dunes Village—to evaluate the feasibility of expanding off-site Library Services into these locations.
- Hebert mentioned several upcoming events, including:
 - An author visit with Zoe Persico. Zoe is a Michigan Notable Author and will visit us in July to talk about her children's book, "*How to Talk to a Succulent.*"
 - A screening of the PBS documentary "*The Librarians*" is happening in April. The event includes a facilitated post-film discussion with four guest panelists to engage the community on themes of intellectual freedom and library advocacy.
 - Sharron Ott of Blue Dart Art Group will coordinate a rotating art display at the Library with pieces from various local artists in March/April and July/August.
 - The Library will host the "Lest We Forget" exhibit during the month of April.
- Hebert will serve as the Secretary of the Southwest Michigan Library Cooperative until 2028.

Approval of Board Meeting Minutes:

- Motion made by Collins to approve the December 16, 2025 Regular Board Meeting Minutes as written. Motion seconded by Wilk. Motion passed.
- No January 2026 Board Meeting Minutes to approve as the meeting was canceled due to inclement winter weather.

Discussion Items:

- **Community Garden - Cindy Persic**

Persic noted that the 2025 Community Garden Season showed significant operational improvements and fiscal efficiency over 2024.

Key Highlights:

- **Operational Efficiency:** Staff oversight decreased from 103 hours in 2024 to just 6 hours in 2025.
- **Gardener Autonomy:** Responsibility has successfully shifted back to participants, reducing administrative burden.
- **Participation:** 46 of 48 plots were reserved, including 4 new gardeners.
- **Mowing:** Garden mowing was outsourced for \$360 in 2025. While the previous mower will not be returning in 2026, two Bridgman Middle School students have expressed interest in the position.
- **Budget Impact:** Repairing the water leak significantly lowered utility costs, keeping the Library under budget. Last season, the water bill decreased to \$149, a significant improvement over \$500+ in previous years.
- **Plot Fees:** Persic suggests raising the cost for new garden plot rental from \$15 to \$20 each. This nominal increase would help cover mowing charges. Returning gardeners would be able to reserve their same plots at a rate of \$15 each.

Would the Library Board like to continue offering the garden as a service to the community?

- **60th Anniversary - Amy Abele**

Abele reported that the Anniversary Committee is currently organizing a series of programs and events to commemorate the Library's 60th year of service in 2026.

The celebration will feature three primary events:

- **Youth History Presentation:** Hannah Anderson will lead a Bridgman history presentation tailored to middle-school children on June 17, 2026.
- **Adult Evening Presentation:** Board President Rick Fuller will host "60 Years of BPL," on June 30, 2026. He will take a look at our Library's origins and the journey that turned it into the

beautiful place it is today. A social reception with dessert and refreshments will begin at 5:30pm and the presentation will start at 6:00pm.

- **Family Fun Carnival:** A community-wide event held at Toth Street Park on August 1st that will feature carnival games and food trucks. Open to the public.

The Anniversary Committee requests Board approval for a budget of up to \$1,500 to cover costs associated with these events. The Board stated that the Anniversary Committee should submit a proposal to the Finance Committee for review and approval of the budget requested. The Board will vote only on supporting the planning and organization of these events.

- **Director Welcome Reception:** The Board discussed hosting a reception for new Library Director Terri Hebert, to allow the community the chance to welcome her.
- **Bylaws Financial Supplement:** The Finance Committee presented a BPL Board Finance Oversight and Accounting Systems Access Policy to ensure proper financial oversight, transparency, and accountability while still maintaining appropriate separation between governance and management functions. This policy authorizes limited, read-only access to the Library's accounting systems (e.g. QuickBooks and OnTheClock) for designated trustees to fulfill all of the Board members' fiduciary responsibilities. The Board is asked to review the draft and provide feedback at next month's meeting.
- **Bylaws Update:** The Personnel and Policy Committee will review prior amendments to the bylaws and finalize the document. Upon completion, staff will publish the updated version to the library website.
- **Vacation/Sick Days Policies:** Library Staff requested that vacation hours roll over into the new year so that they do not lose any accrued paid time off. It was decided that this needs to be reviewed by the Personnel and Policy Committee and then brought to the Board for approval.
- **Standing Committee Assignments (all Standing Committees include the President of the Board):**
 - Finance Committee: Shaver/Kole/Worcester/Fuller
 - Personnel & Policy: Etter/Janoskey/Kole/Fuller
 - Planning & Facilities: Valauskas/Noll/Wilk/Fuller
- **Proposed Ad Hoc Committee Assignments:**
 - Special Programs Committee: Worcester/Wilk/Hebert (& staff)
 - For brainstorming ideas only. Implementation is staff responsibility.
 - Communications Committee: Collins/Hebert (& staff)
 - For better communication between the staff and the Board.
 - BPL Bylaws Update: Personnel & Policy Committee

- Director Reception: Fuller/Collins
- **Other Items:**
 - A Spring Work Day has been scheduled for April 30th. The Library will be closed so that staff can clean and organize areas of the library.
 - The Library would like to purchase one single-faced children's picture bookshelf and two single-faced wood shelving units for a total of \$3,956.45. Kole asked to table this until the new fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026.

Action Items:

- **Community Garden:** Motion made by Janoskey to continue offering the Community Garden as a service to the community. Motion seconded by Collins. Motion passed.
- **60th Anniversary:** Motion made by Worcester to support the planning and organization of events to celebrate the library's 60th anniversary. Motion seconded by Kole. Motion passed.
- **Director Reception:** Motion made by Kole to plan a welcome reception for new Library Director, Terri Hebert. Motion seconded by Wilk. Motion passed.
- **Bylaws Financial Supplement:** Motion made by Noll for the Board Members, in collaboration with the Library Director and Library Staff, to review and refine the By Law Financial Supplement draft and present recommendations to the Finance Committee at next month's board meeting. Motion seconded by Worcester. Motion passed.
- **Bylaws Update:** Motion made by Janoskey for the Personnel and Policy Committee to review prior amendments made to the bylaws and to finalize the document. The document will then be published to the website by Library Staff. Motion seconded by Collins. Motion passed.
- **Standing Committee Assignments:** Motion made by Worcester to accept the Standing Committee Assignments as stated in the *Discussion Items*. Motion seconded by Wilk. Motion passed.
- **Ad Hoc Committee Assignments:** Motion made by Worcester to accept Ad Hoc Committee Assignments as stated in *Discussion Items*. Motion seconded by Wilk. Motion passed.
- **Financial Updates - Angie Mantei**
 - Budget vs Actual Report: Reviewed report
 - Check Detail Report: Reviewed report
 - Motion made by Shaver to approve paying bills for December 2026 (\$61,293.91) and bills for January 2026 (\$23,293.02) = \$84,908.93. Motion seconded by Kole. Motion passed.

Second Public Comment (maximum 3 minutes per person):

No comments.

Communication and Correspondence:

- Fuller gave kudos to Hebert for all of her efforts so far as the Library Director.

Meeting Adjourned:

Motion made by Janoskey to adjourn the meeting at 11:24 A.M. Motion seconded by Worcester. Motion passed.


Next Meeting:

March 24, 2026 - 9:00 A.M. at the library.

Respectfully submitted by:

Amy Abele

Approved by the Secretary:



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Calder", is written over a horizontal line.

Date:

March 24, 2026
