

North Valley Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting at 208 Main Street, Stevensville, MT 59870 on Wed., April 15,2026 at 3pm

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

PUBLIC COMMENT

GUESTS

- North Valley Public Library Foundation news, feedback, and comments.

ONGOING & UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- New building plans, discussion & decisions: Regarding purchasing land, Dianne received a call in early 2025 from County Attorney Bill Fulbright. He reviewed MCA 22-1-707 and said the Library Trustees have complete authority to buy land and do not need County approval. He said the library must have a public meeting before doing so. Does the Board require further information?
- Cara from the State Library provided some laws regarding land purchase for county governments and advises that the Board ask the County if they apply to the library.
- Board Bylaws Update. Changes to consider: Add section on closed meetings; update procedure for preliminary budget for review; add section on draft minutes. Attorney/librarian Kris Goss said, "Draft minutes are public documents and may be distributed. These drafts should be marked "Unapproved Draft Minutes - Subject to Revision Prior to Final Approval." This allows the draft to be reviewed by the public with the understanding - based on the disclaimer - that the final version will be available when approved."

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Board minutes from 3/18/2026.

FINANCES

- Statement of Revenue
- Statement of Expenditure. Grant line added.
- Cash Report
- Chair compares the monthly bank statement to reconciliation report.
- New Annual Financial Report and NVPL's need for a government CPA.
- Montana Public Employee Retirement Administration (MPERA) Audit.

NEW BUSINESS

- Personnel Policy update. Board to review statement about staff AI usage and vote on adding to the personnel policy.
- AED, Narcan & Stop the Bleed.
- Library Computer Software.
- Review Pocket Emergency guide for accuracy.

BOARD/DIRECTORS ANNOUNCEMENTS & COMMENTS

- Tamarack 2026 April 24 & 25, 2026 – Kate Kowal and Denise attending.
- Denise visiting Dad in Illinois May 23-30.
- Cara Orban from the State Library coming to July 15 board meeting for in-person training. Please see the draft training outline and provide input.

ADJOURNMENT

MINUTES April 15, 2026

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 3:00pm

Board Present: Caitlin Dunn, Margy Gilbertson, Dianne Snedigar, Victoria Howell

Board Partially Present: Kate Kowal arrived at 3:52.

Board Absent: None

Staff Present: Denise Ard, Library Director

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public was present so there was no public comment.

GUESTS

No guest was present. However, Carla Sanders, President of the NVPL Foundation, asked Denise to convey to the board that the Foundation has sold over 100 tickets for their April fundraiser so far and the Foundation has a new board member, Wendy Moore.

ONGOING & UNFINISHED BUSINESS

New building plans, discussion & decisions.

Regarding purchasing land, Dianne received a call in early 2025 from County Attorney Bill Fulbright. He reviewed MCA 22-1-707 and said the Library Trustees have complete authority to buy land and do not need County approval. He said the library must have a public meeting before doing so. The board discussed this and said they were content with the information on purchasing land and did not have further questions now.

Denise asked Cara Orban, consultant at the State Library if buying land requires going to bid. She answered that it depends if the land is going to be purchased using public funds. The rules are more stringent if purchased with public funds. If funded through privately raised funds, such as a fundraising campaign rules are less stringent. The board can accept purchased land as a gift from the Foundation or whomever would make that purchase.

Cara read the Ravalli County procurement manual to see if there was anything specific about sole source land acquisition that should be noted and did not notice any guidelines that would answer the question.

MCA 7-8-2520 advises county governments: Appraisal required for certain purchases of real property or conservation easements. (1) Unless otherwise provided by law, a county may not purchase real property in an amount in excess of \$20,000 or a conservation easement using public funds in an amount in excess of \$80,000 unless the value of the property or conservation easement has been previously estimated by:

(a) a disinterested certified general real estate appraiser selected by the county commission, county attorney, and landowner; or

(b) three disinterested citizens of the county appointed by the district judge.

(2) A county may not pay more than the appraised value for the real property or conservation easement.

She added 22-1-707 grants district boards the authority to purchase, accept, maintain, etc., real property, but the law is a bit unclear on how that should be carried out. Cara advises the library board to confirm with the county whether they should use 7-8-2520 as their guide for purchasing a specific piece of land.

The board said they wanted a disinterested appraiser to value the land even if it was not required because that is only common sense.

Board Bylaws Update.

Caitlin made a motion to update the board bylaws and Margy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Bylaw changes included adding a section on closed meetings, updating procedure for preliminary budget, and adding a section that stated draft minutes are public documents and may be distributed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Caitlin made a motion to approve the 3/18/2026 minutes with typo and spelling corrections. Victoria seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCES

Financial Reports

Victoria made a motion to approve the financial reports. Caitlin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair compares monthly bank statement to reconciliation report.

Dianne reviewed and signed off on the reconciliation report.

New Annual Financial Report and NVPL's need for a government CPA.

There is a new annual financial report that will be required by the Department of Administration. Denise has questions on how to fill out that report and as well as other accounting questions. Denise thinks she needs a CPA familiar with government accounting to help. Victoria said they also need to know Black Mountain accounting software. The board asked Denise to exhaust free accounting help and check with the County CFO before hiring a CPA.

Montana Public Employee Retirement Administration (MPERA) Audit.

Denise told the board that the library's previous year was audited by MPERA. They found a typo of an employee's surname (one letter missing), and a data entry error when .75 (which stands for 45 minutes) was erroneously entered as .45 in their system. Denise said she corrected the typing error and is waiting for the payroll specialist to correct the other error. Other than that, everything looked good.

NEW BUSINESS

Personnel Policy update

The board discussed updating the Personnel Policy to include information on approved and nonapproved AI usage by staff. Caitlin wanted it to be clear that the board is not encouraging the use of AI. Denise said the current staff do not like AI. She said it was preventive, that AI is not going away, and it was good to have in case of a new hire. The wording included, "AI is used for assistance, not replacement. Staff must review, verify, and validate all AI-generated results for accuracy, as AI can produce incorrect information (hallucinations). Staff should check for content biases when using AI under this policy. Public library staff shall never input patron data into AI platforms or staff data." Kate made a motion to approve adding AI usage to the Personnel Policy. Margy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

AED, Narcan & Stop the Bleed

Trust for Montana Libraries is providing AEDs for 28 libraries that did not have them including NVPL. They would also like the libraries to have Narcan and Stop the Bleed Kits. The board is in support and would be interested

in attending classes. Victoria made a motion to accept the Narcan & Stop the Bleed in addition to the AED. Caitlin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Library Computer Software

Denise told the board that the library's software that manages public printing and PC public reservations is called EnvisionWare, and they are increasing their licensing fee to almost double starting July, so she is investigating another software product that can do those tasks.

Review Pocket Emergency Guide

The board reviewed their contact information.

BOARD/DIRECTORS ANNOUNCEMENTS & COMMENTS

- Denise announced that Caryn Carpenter is resigning in June as an employee with any regular hours and will stay on the books as a sub. Nancy Morrison will take her hours. That brings Nancy's hours to a benefit position and is in keeping with the NVPL's strategic plan objective to work towards a more stable staffing situation, making shifts more attractive to a wider pool of candidates by offering more hours and benefits rather than just a few hours a week. This also aligns with the State public library's excellent standards.
- Tamarack 2026 is April 24 & 25, 2026 – Kate Kowal will attend with Denise.
- Denise is going to visit her Dad May 23-30.
- Cara Orban from the State Library is coming in July 15 to present training. The board would like more information on foundation, board, and staff roles in a capital campaign.
- Special meeting to hear Campaign Counsel's report will be April 22, 2026, at 8:45am.

ADJOURNMENT

Caitlin made a motion to adjourn at 4:39 Margy seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes written by Caitlin Dunn and Denise Ard