



Carnegie Public Library of Steuben County
Board of Trustees
Minutes of the March 9, 2026, Meeting

President Gentry called meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. Board members in attendance were Haley Billow, Jenn Craig, Laurie Gentry, Gay Kirkton, Jeanine Samuelson, Bert Schulz, and Emily Yoder. Also attending was Director Sonya Dorris.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

Jeanine Samuelson offered, Haley Billow seconded, a motion to approve the minutes from the February meeting. The motion carried.

Appropriations and Financial Reports

Sonya Dorris presented the February appropriation and financial reports (copies attached).

Budget Status: Monthly spending was \$77,504.49. Following a discussion, Gay Kirkton moved to accept the reports, with Haley Billow seconding the motion, which was approved.

Old Business

- A. Dilling Group will be providing a proposal for replacing the leaking HVAC pumps, along with the proposal from Havel. Item tabled to next board meeting.
- B. Sonya Dorris presented a spreadsheet with potential staff pay increases for 2026. After a discussion of recent staffing changes and the effects of recent legislative changes to the library budget, Gay Kirkton made a motion for an across-the-board increase of \$0.50 per hour as well as some individual changes based on changes in responsibilities. Bert Schulz seconded the motion, and it was approved. The changes will be retrospective to Jan. 1, 2026.

New Business

- A. Sonya Dorris presented a proposal from Energy Harness to upgrade the remaining lighting to LED. The total cost will be \$34,578 with up to \$1,805 in contingency costs. Savings in electricity costs will be about \$1,000 a month at current rates. There is an interest-free financing option. Bert Schulz moved to accept the proposal, Jeanine Samuelson seconded the motion. After some discussion, the motion was approved.

Public Comments: None

Director's Report

Jessica Boyd has resigned to take another position. Tabby and Sarah would both like more hours, but we will still need to hire another part-time person.

Aiyanna Skees has resigned from the children's department. Olivia Dirig will be home from college for the summer and will be our temporary staff person. The children's department has several regular volunteers who will be helping as well.

Language from Senate Bill 8 was put into HB 1406 during conference committee. The final bill allows libraries to increase their budgets by only half of the MLGQ without sending out budget to binding review at the County Council. There are no guardrails about how much the Council could reduce the budget, theoretically to zero. (Every other local government

entity will continue to be able to increase budgets by the full MLGQ.) Language making this effective for the 2029 budget was stripped in committee. This goes into effect for this year's budget process for 2027.

This was a rough legislative session for libraries. Some of the comments heard from legislators include:

- Mission creep (Narcan dispensers, menstrual products in men's rooms)
- Libraries are issuing bond debt despite high savings
- Libraries holding over 150% of Operating budget in reserve with no plan for use

None of these apply to CPLSC, but it is deeply entrenched among the legislators.

Sherrie Ambrose from the Fremont PL and I are going to present financial overviews to the County Council at their April meeting. This was planned in anticipation of the change in LIT coming in 2028. The County Council will be able to set (or not) a LIT rate for libraries starting for the 2028 budget.

Gay Kirkton moved to accept the report. Jeanine Samuelson offered a second, and the motion passed. Jeanine Samuelson moved to adjourn the meeting with Haley Billow offering a second, the motion carried.