

MUSKEGON AREA DISTRICT LIBRARY

A meeting of the Muskegon Area District Library Board was held on Monday, June 16, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. at the Muskegon Area District Library Administration Building, 4845 Airline Road, Muskegon. Staff present: L. Abramson, M. Chandler-Nash, P. Crosby, J. Enders, K. Ferski, B. Hall, M. Higginbottom-Johnson, A. Susalla, S. Rinsema-Sybenga, R. Suszek, and K. Wisniewski. Also present were M. Anderson, Legal Counsel, and guest speaker, Patrick Mutchler of Brickley DeLong.

D. Hughes, Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Aerts, Arter, Vanaelst, Hughes, Hodges, Richards, Scolnik (Quorum)

Excused: None.

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Hodges, Second by Arter

That the Agenda is approved as presented.

Motion Carried

Board Development

None.

Audit Presentation by Patrick Mutchler, Brickley DeLong

P. Mutchler described the Library Management Discussion & Analysis (MD&A) and explained how it documents changes in the organization, which helps grasp an understanding of yearly fluctuations. Looking at the total net position, it has two categories: Fixed assets are items such as equity in buildings, collection of materials, and investments made in buildings. However, as these are equity, they are not available for use. The unrestricted assets are funds available for MADL expenses. He expressed no significant changes to MADL's financial statement. He also mentioned the pension plan is well-funded.

Consent Agenda

Motion by Hodges, Second by Aerts

That the MADL Board approved the Consent Agenda as presented.

Motion Carried

Vouchers for May 2025

Motion by Hodges, Second by Richards

That the MADL Board approved the Vouchers for May 2025

ROLL CALL

AYES: Hodges, Arter, Vanaelst, Hughes, Aerts, Richards, Scolnik

NAYS: None

Motion Carried

Committee Reports

None.

Reports/Questions

R. Suszek mentioned that at the upcoming Muskegon Heights City Council meeting, the council plans to appoint a representative to the MADL board. He will provide an update when he receives notification of the selected member.

R. Suszek also provided updates about the new furniture at the Norton Shores Library Branch. He said the furniture provides a much more modern and inviting look for the library. The original plan was to pay for the furniture using interest from the Eagen donation; however, another long-term donor, who has been very generous to MADL in the past, contacted MADL to inquire about any projects that needed funding. The donor, who wishes to remain anonymous, offered to donate \$36,000.00 to fund the furniture at the Norton Shores Library.

R. Suszek noted that B. Hall, Finance Director, has officially put in her retirement notice. The plan is to post the position by the end of June and evaluate the responses throughout July. Brenda is being very gracious in working with MADL to help find her replacement and is being generous with her timeline to ensure an easy transition. Lastly, he stated that this was Brenda's last audit, and she is currently working on the 2026 budget.

B. Hall reported information regarding the budget process. This year, the budget will be approved in August rather than September, which is 1 month earlier than normal. In July, B. Hall will provide a proposed/revised budget for 2025/2026, which will also include a pass and fail budget option in preparation for the results of the millage election.

J. Enders spoke to provide additional details to explain the increase in website activity. With the new website, there are more statistics from the website, the calendar, and the catalog; whereas, previously, the statistics only included activity from the website.

S. Rinsema-Sybenga spoke and introduced the new literacy coordinator, Katie Hoffman. She comes to MADL with years of library experience, loves working with kids, and has been actively involved in community relations.

Old Business

R. Suszek briefly updated the board regarding the strategic plan and provided them with a draft of the plan for review over the next month. The strategic plan includes initiatives for 2025 that will carry forward to 2026, after board review and approval in July.

Attorney M. Anderson provided a brief update regarding the acquisition of the Norton Shores Library Branch and has prepared a draft of the buy/sell agreement. He further stated that the discussion on this agenda item will take place (during a closed session) at the July meeting.

New Business

K. Wisnewski spoke about E-Rate Central, which MADL has used for the last three years to assist with filing the annual E-Rate. This also assists us with the reimbursements owed to MADL for networking hardware, internet services, and access points, etc. E-Rate Central is a specialized educational consulting firm dedicated to simplifying the annual E-Rate application and funding process. He stated that the 5-year contract with E-Rate consulting firm "E-Rate Central" offers MADL the opportunity to save money by locking into an agreement that offers a fixed price. This contract will include an

exclusion addendum if the millage does not pass, which would allow MADL to revoke a multi-year contract.

Motion by Aerts, Second by Arter

That the MADL Board approved the 5-year contract with E-Rate Consulting Service, as presented.

That MADL proceeds in entering a 5-year contract with the E-Rate consulting firm “E-Rate Central”. This contract would cost \$7,400 per year and not exceed \$37,000 over the life of the contract. E-Rate support services would be for the term of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2030. INFORMATION: E-Rate Central is a specialized educational consulting firm dedicated to simplifying the E-Rate application and funding process for state education departments, educational service agencies, school districts, libraries and library systems, individual private and public schools, and all consortia. The firm has been involved with E-Rate at the local, state, and national levels since the program’s inception. MADL has been working with E-Rate Central for E-Rate filing since 2021 and has had great success with receiving funding from E-Rate. E-Rate Central is offering a new multi-year contract that gives MADL the opportunity to save money by locking into a 5-year agreement that offers a price lock-in.

Roll Call

AYES: Richards, Arter, Vanaelst, Hughes, Scolnik, Hodges, Aerts

NAYS: None

Motion Carried

R. Suszek reported that MADL had an initial contract negotiations meeting with the union and staff representatives. He noted that M. Chandler did an exceptional job bringing added value to the table regarding things MADL hopes to see in the future. The next negotiations meeting is June 18, 2025. M. Chandler has been extremely helpful in gathering an exhaustive salary survey that compares salaries and benefits throughout the state of Michigan. R. Suszek concluded that with a successful millage campaign, MADL will be in a good position to maintain a healthy percentage of salary and benefits as compared to the other services offered to the public.

Public Comment

None.

Board Comment

K. Richards spoke to wish B. Hall congratulations on her retirement.

L. Aerts shared information about the book club meeting, and the ladies from the book club were very interested in knowing about the upcoming millage.

B. Scolnik expressed his sadness about B. Hall’s retirement and questioned if there are any cutbacks that MADL is concerned about.

Adjournment

Motion by Hodges, Second by B. Scolnik

That the MADL Board meeting adjourns at 4:43

Motion Carried

Minutes Reviewed by:
Linda M Aerts
6/26/25