

**City of Portage
Public Library Board
Portage Public Library, 253 West Edgewater Street
Sanderson Room
Tuesday, August 12, 2025
Minutes**

Members Present: President Karl Kindschi, Vice-President Judy Eulberg, Secretary Eleanor McLeish, Treasurer Brad Conrad, Dr. David Gregory, Kerry Melby, Kallie Schultz

Members Excused: Cherida VanderSchaff, Klay Vehring,

Others Present: Debbie Bird, Library Director
Autumn Baumann, Library Circulation Services Supervisor
Matt Fiene, Portage Mayor

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order by Kindschi, 12:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

3. Introduction of Guest(s)

Autumn Baumann and Matt Fiene

4. Approval of Previous Minutes

Motion by Eulberg, second by Gregory to approve July 8, 2025 regular meeting minutes as presented. Motion passed.

5. Financial Reports

a. Discussion and possible action of Municipal claims (230)

Ahern Company solving air conditioner alarms through condenser adjustments. These adjustments seem to solve the alarm issue. Some tweaking is needed to resolve some inside building temperatures. The request for a new air conditioner to be placed on the Capitol Improvement Plan remains. Motion by Gregory, second by Melby to approve July 2025 claims of \$28,492.81 as presented. Motion passed.

b. Discussion and possible action of Library restricted funds claims (231)

Office supplies purchased. Motion by Schultz, second by Eulberg to approve July 2025 claims of \$57.60 as presented. Motion passed.

c. Discussion and possible action of Memorial funds claims (232)

Large print and memorial items purchased. City account used to pay for large print books has been spent; invoices are now being paid from the Memorial Account. Motion by Gregory, second by Conrad to approve July 2025 claims of \$653.32 as presented. Motion passed.

d.YTD expenditures

58% of year elapsed with 57% paid. Four computers are scheduled to be replaced from the hardware fund account.

6. Director's Report

a.Columbia County 2026-2030, Plan for Library Services

Columbia County Library Board will approve Plan at its September meeting. Goals & objectives noted. CCLB directed Bird to request 80% reimbursement from the County, instead of the current 73.097901% for the 2026 budget.

b.Staff In-Service

The agenda for the September 26th In-Service was discussed. The speaker from Madison College will be paid \$400 from the 231 Contingency Account. Leadership staff will discuss their projects/duties/plans. Portage Police will offer role playing exercises, insights and explanations on security concerns and suggestions for dealing with difficult patron issues. Team Building exercises are arranged for staff.

7. Staff Reports

a.Autumn Baumann presentation

Baumann has been a library employee for eight years and is currently Circulation Services Supervisor. In the past year, she has hired and trained five new Circulation Clerks. Turnover is attributed primarily to seeking better paying jobs or health reasons. Library front-line staff earn less than other City employees. Sirsi-Dynix Symphony will become the new library catalog in 2026 replacing Bibliovation, the current catalog. Symphony is more user friendly, but the learning curve for staff and patrons is high and intensive. Baumann is getting all "ducks in a row" that she can, before training begins.

8. Unfinished Business

a.Trustee Training Week, August 18-21

Webinar schedule distributed.

b.Discussion and possible action on find balance

After payment of ongoing projects, \$27,797.21 will remain for expenses in the Fund Balance Account. The amount may be used to supplement the tight 2026 budget and cover unknown or unexpected expenses.

c.Discussion and possible action on 2026 library budget

Bird will reconcile the library budget with the city. Supplies and required services accounts will increase. Circulation Clerk wages are extremely low and frequent turnovers are expensive. Patrons notice and respond to the improvements made to the library.

9. New Business

None.

10. Public Comment

Mayor Fiene met with business leaders at the August Chamber luncheon. There is a lot of fiscal uncertainty for cities and the next two or three years may be difficult for Portage. Things should improve once building and growth increase, offering a "light at the end of the tunnel". Baumann and Fiene were thanked for attending the meeting and their input.

11. Next Meeting Date & Time - September 9, 2025, 12:00 p.m.

12. Adjournment: Kindschi adjourned the meeting, 1:12 p.m.

Submitted by: Eleanor McLeish/Director Bird

Date approved: