

MAHOMET PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING MARCH 9, 2026 5:30PM AT THE LIBRARY

Members Present: Susie Baker, Scott Schaumann, Kate Smith, Stevi Stutzman (arrived at 5:35pm), Melissa Daley, Sarah Miller (via Zoom; left the meeting early)

Members Absent: Mike Cunningham

Also present: John Howard, Tammy Caputo, Kim Ozier

Susie Baker opened the meeting by reading the library's mission statement: "Together we create a welcoming community that empowers everyone to learn, connect, create, and grow."

Review of the Minutes from February 9, 2026

Scott Schaumann moved to approve the minutes from February 9, 2026. Melissa Daley seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

A. Approval of Financial Reports

Kate Smith moved to approve the financial reports for February 2026. Melissa Daley seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Scott Schaumann asked why we are 100% or more over budget on some expenses. John Howard explained why for each of the following expenses:

- Salaries Bonuses – The Board voted to give more in bonuses than expected.
- Magazines – John Howard started a new subscription to Publisher Weekly. John took advantage of a 2-year renewal rate for Booklist and the Library Journals. It was a better rate.
- L&P: Payroll/Benefits Process – John Howard will look into this and report back at next month's meeting.
- L&P: Consultant Fees – James Rachlin of Meristem Advisors provided financial analysis for the expansion campaign.

John Howard stated Interest Income was accidentally entered as Miscellaneous Income. The entry has been corrected.

John Howard stated the credit of \$1,696 under Digital M Online Subscriptions is because the expense was entered under the wrong line item. The expense should have been entered under Digital M Electronic Databases.

John Howard noted the negative amount in the % of Budget Used for Utilities Telephone. There are two reasons:

- Switching from a landline to voice-over-internet telephone service saved money.
- T-Mobile, our landline provider, gave the library a refund after the switch-over.

B. Approval of the Check Register for February 2026

Kate Smith moved to approve the check register for February 2026. Melissa Daley seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

John Howard stated the check to Premier Print Group is for printing of the library's BookLet. The amount is higher than usual because the publication contained 20 pages instead of the usual 16 pages.

Scott Schaumann asked what the check to Main Street Fencing was for. John Howard said snow removal.

Director's Report for February 2026

John Howard stated we are still seeing strong circulation numbers. Compared to this time last year, total circulation is up 5% and door counts are up 15%.

Scott Schaumann asked why program attendance was down. John Howard said program attendance numbers vary depending upon what program is offered and when it is offered. For example, the Minecraft Party was held March 7 and over 200 people attended.

Scott Schaumann asked what the difference is between reciprocal lending and ILL (interlibrary loan). John Howard stated 'Reciprocal Lending' represents the number of Mahomet Library's items checked out to non-SHARE patrons, such as patrons from the Champaign and Urbana libraries. 'ILL to others' represents the number of Mahomet Library's items checked out by SHARE patrons. 'ILL from others' represents the number of SHARE libraries' items checked out by Mahomet patrons.

John Howard noted the high number of website visits during the month of February and said about 40% of the visits are from bots out of China. Kate Smith asked if they could be blocked. Scott Schaumann stated they could, but you would have to be careful not to block patrons who are visiting China.

Kate Smith said it may be helpful to staff to know the top 20 pages visited on our website each month. John Howard said he will look into it and report his findings to the Board.

John Howard stated he will be taking time off March 19-29. Also, he will be attending the Public Library Association Conference March 31-April 3 in Minneapolis.

Kate Smith said she was sorry to hear our Everything Mahomet coordinator resigned. John Howard said he has received several applications for the position and hopes to hire someone soon. Scott Schaumann asked what impact the resignation has had. John Howard stated that until a replacement is hired, he is writing the articles for the website and keeping the event calendar up to date.

Scott Schaumann referenced the Library IQ chart and asked what the difference is between easy reader and easy books. John Howard stated easy reader books are leveled readers. Easy books are picture books and board books. John Howard went on to explain that the chart shows the % of total circulation by collection. Based on the numbers shown, some of our collections are overstocked, meaning there is not enough shelf space to meet the demand. Scott Schaumann asked if John would provide overstocked statistics by collection. John said he would.

Scott Schaumann stated he was glad to see the library is rebidding services. John Howard said he is in the process of receiving quotes from a different printer/copier company. We may see as much as a 50% reduction in our cost per page.

Stevi Stutzman stated the report is full of good information and she appreciates John Howard taking the time to put it together.

Melissa Daley asked if there is a replacement for the Friends of the Mahomet Library president position. John Howard said no.

John Howard stated some people expressed on social media their unhappiness with the topic of the Braver Angels program. John reported the program was well attended. It went smoothly, feedback was positive, and the information was helpful to those attending.

Scott Schaumann asked if we learned anything from the negative feedback on the Braver Angels program. John Howard stated mistakes were made. One mistake was on the library's social media post. The context of the program was omitted, making it look like the library was advocating for one side of the topic. The other mistake was referring to the program as a debate instead of a community discussion.

Melissa Daley stated the Braver Angels program was bad timing with the referendum coming up. Sarah Miller agreed. Susie Baker also agreed.

Scott Schaumann asked John Howard to describe the library trustee forum webinars. John Howard stated the webinars help trustees be more comfortable with various library related topics. John stated Board members can attend the live sessions or review the recordings. Let him know if you are interested.

Melissa Daley asked how many books have been challenged over the last year at the library. John Howard said there has not been a book challenged since he has been here. Melissa asked if Champaign or Urbana libraries have had books challenged. John Howard said he did not know.

Audience Comments

Kim Ozier, a member of the Friends of the Mahomet Public Library (FMPL), said she would like to improve communication between FMPL and the Board. Scott Schaumann asked if there was something the FMPL needed. Kim stated, according to their bylaws, a member of the Board is an ex officio member of FMPL. John Howard stated this will be addressed.

John Howard thanked FMPL for the 'We Love Our Library' signs.

Committee Reports

There were no committee reports.

Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

New Business

A. Discussion of Referendum and Expansion Project

John Howard said the current focus has been to remind people to vote.

Scott Schaumann asked if the shortage of election judges will impact voting at the library. John Howard stated he has not received any information from the County Clerk's office indicating there are not enough election judges available to work on election day at the library.

B. Update on completion of Statement of Economic Interests forms for 2026

John Howard stated paper forms will have to be completed. He will send instructions to all Board members.

Strategic Plan Update

There was nothing to report.

Board Advocacy

Scott Schaumann asked how much has been donated towards the library expansion. John Howard stated approximately \$110,000.

Trustee Comments

Stevi Stutzman thanked Susie Baker, Melissa Daley, and Kate Smith for their help with the Murder Mystery Dinner event. She was ill and could not attend. She also thanked Nick from AJ Liquors for allowing unopened liquor to be returned. She said he was so nice to work with. Stevi asked if we should continue to offer alcohol at the event. It was a consensus of the group that we should because the signature drink was a hit.

Melissa Daley said the Murder Mystery Dinner event was great. She stated it went longer than she expected and wondered why. John Howard said the caterers took about 20 minutes longer than expected. Melissa Daley said she is excited about the upcoming election.

Adjournment

Scott Schaumann moved to adjourn the meeting. Melissa Daley seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:35pm.

Respectfully Submitted by Tammy Caputo, Assistant Director