

**Midwest Collaborative for Library Services  
Board Meeting Minutes (draft)  
Online - Zoom  
February 9, 2026 (9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.)**

**I. Call to Order**

A. Roll Call and Accountability of Meeting Preparation

Board President Mike Hawthorne called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

Present: Boruff-Jones, Bradley, Garrison, Ingmire, Hawthorne, Ketcham, Lake, LaPrise, McNeil, Patton, Petrusa, R. Smith, T. Smith, Speer, Tuite, Waskin

Guests: Megan Dudek, Kalyn Huson, Kyle Schafer, Pam Seabolt

B. Agenda Approval

**Motion: approve agenda. *Moved and seconded. Motion passed.***

C. President's Comments

President Hawthorne set context for the meeting and reminded the Board of meeting goals. He welcomed Michelle Bradley, Interim State Librarian of Michigan, to the meeting. He also invited Kyle Schafer (Maner Costerisan) to explain how the program-to-services ratio is calculated, and offer information about recent accounts payable accrual work at MCLS that will lead to derecognized accounts payable activity.

**II. Required Approvals and Consent Agendas**

A. Required Approval – Minutes for November 14, 2025 meeting

**Motion: approve November 14 minutes. *Moved and seconded. Motion passed.***

B. Required Acceptances – Executive Director Monitoring Reports (*Internal*)

1. Monitoring Report for Policy 2.10 – Facilities (*Internal*)

**Motion: accept Policy 2.10 monitoring report. *Moved and seconded. Motion passed.***

2. Monitoring Report for Policy 2.6 – Asset Protection (*Internal*)

**Motion: accept Policy 2.6 monitoring report. *Moved and seconded. Motion passed.***

C. Board Self-Assessment Against Means Policies (according to monitoring schedule)

1. Review of Policy 3.2 – Board Job Description (*Direct Inspection*)

2. Review of Policy 3.6 – Officers Roles (*Direct Inspection*)

**Motion: readopt Policy 3.2 and Policy 3.6. *Moved and seconded. Motion passed.***

### III. Board Operation

- A. Monitoring Report for Policy 2.5 – Financial Condition and Activities (November) *(Internal)*

Garrison explained a fall 2025 delay in paying a specific invoice.

**Motion: accept Policy 2.5 monitoring report. *Moved and seconded. Motion passed.***

- B. Review of Policy 3.4 – Agenda Planning *(Direct Inspection)*

**Motion: readopt Policy 3.2 and Policy 3.6. *Moved and seconded. Motion passed.***

- C. Review of Policy 4.5 – Executive Director Compensation and Benefits *(Direct Inspection)*

Following discussion of policy language compared to current practice, Petrusa and R. Smith committed to working on revised Policy 4.5 language for a vote at the May Board meeting.

**Motion: readopt Policy 4.5 and revise at May Board meeting. *Moved and seconded. Motion passed.***

- D. Next Monitoring Assignment

The next Board Policy monitoring report will be for Policy 2.5 in February.

### IV. Executive Director Update

Garrison detailed elements from his Executive Director Report and other work.

### V. Board Development

- A. 2026 Board Calendar

1. Meeting schedule (see below)
2. Milestones (see Board Policy 3.4)

Hawthorne reminded the Board of its many tasks for 2026 and asked members to consider how to be intentional in that work.

3. Nominating process for 2027 election
4. FY2026 audit timing

Garrison stated his goal to have the FY2026 audit complete by October 9.

5. In-person MCLS Annual Meeting

MCLS Annual Meeting planning committee member McNeil updated the Board on current planning work including desired location and timing.

- B. MCLS Member Bylaws Vote Results and Next Steps

Garrison noted that the vote passed by a vote of 162 (yea) to 3 (nay).

#### 1. Board composition approach and 2026 Board election for 2027 term

Lake explained Board term and representation dynamics using a detailed spreadsheet, and suggested the Board consider representation both from a system view and a human view. Following a discussion of Board learning curve and the need to balance continuity with the flexibility the revised Bylaws allow, the Board determined that its Nominating Committee will speak with Board members whose terms end soonest and propose a plan to the full Board in May. Hawthorne volunteered to help the committee.

#### 2. Michigan State Librarian position

Bradley explained that she is serving in the Interim State Librarian role until July 4 (and will also continue in her current role as Library Development Manager unless/until the state identifies an interim person for that role). David Votta will become Interim State Librarian July 5. The Library of Michigan (LM) expects the State Librarian position to be advertised in spring and filled by the end of 2026. Bradley will represent LM at the February and May MCLS Board meetings, and Votta at the August and October meetings.

### C. Committee Updates

#### 1. Audit Committee

Patton reminded the Board of the successful FY2025 audit.

#### 2. Nominating Committee (see V. B.1. above)

#### 3. Ownership Linkage Committee

Petrusa reminded the Board of recent history (fall survey and current work on new Ends, and connected Ownership Linkage to the 2026 MCLS Annual Meeting.

#### 4. Dashboard Committee

The Board discussed the current draft dashboard (linked from the Board SharePoint site) and elements it could include such as “last updated” dates. Garrison suggested that he and the Board work together to determine how best to use the dashboard.

#### 5. Officers

Hawthorne noted that he and Lake (Vice President) meet with Garrison monthly and with the officers monthly. McNeil asked whether there is a greater role for the Secretary. Patton hopes to offer shorter Treasurer reports citing no concerns.

### D. Ends Development and Implementation

The Board discussed several questions that Garrison and his management team raised about a draft set of Ends from the November Board retreat. Following consideration of measurability, value of MCLS membership, keeping the Ends future-focused and also providing what MCLS Owners are asking for, and implementation timing, the Board agreed to have the new set of Ends finished in time for Garrison and the staff to begin operationalizing them starting July 1.

#### E. Board Education – Priorities for 2026

1. What topics does the Board want to learn about in 2026? Examples:

- Characteristics this Board wants its members to have (to build and maintain a pipeline)
- How to practice as a Board member
- What the Board is seeing in MCLS's states and across the country
- Library advocacy (and MCLS's potential role)
- Higher education accreditation standards and shift away from libraries
- Artificial intelligence (AI)
- Other

Board discussion included questions and points about the meaning of being “present and prepared” the Policy Governance (PG) learning curve and work that this Board requires (at and between meetings), Board member mentoring especially for newer members, communication between Board members and with Garrison as Executive Director, how this board might use others' work to assess and identify how to fill gaps, and a reminder of the Nominating Committee's processes. Garrison mentioned work that other consortia are doing around accreditation standards, and Lake mentioned the newly launched Alliance for Higher Education and its February 19 town hall meeting. Board members also raised points about (AI), accessibility, advocacy, faculty and tenure status for academic librarians, and changing demographics.

Speer offered updates from Indiana State Library (ISL). ISL has funds from the Lilly Endowment to restore and continue INSPIRE databases through July 1, 2028 (ISL will issue an RFP in 2027). EBSCO added management and dissertation collections to INSPIRE. The 200-library Indiana OverDrive consortium has created bylaws and a board structure. Evergreen Indiana continues to grow, with more libraries wanting to join. ISL has hired a Dolly Parton Imagination Library fundraising director. Following annual report work, other work including public library standards review will proceed.

Bradley offered updates from LM. LM learned their IMLS Grants to States allotment for federal FY2026 (approximately \$4.4 million). They plan to move forward on extending MeL eResources past their current September 30 contract expiration for four years (and will do a bidding process during that time). LM's MeL contract with MCLS ends September 30 and LM plans to open an Invitation to Negotiate state procurement process with MCLS in spring 2026. They plan to offer grants in summer. They hired a MeL Coordinator in January with a background in building digital health collections. LM is also working with Wayne State University on a \$250,000 state-funded grant project

to gather data on school libraries in Michigan. The State Librarian search process will be internal to the Michigan Department of Education (MDE).

## **VI. Ownership Linkage**

### **A. Approach for 2026**

The Board discussed ideas including how to do Ownership Linkage at the 2026 Annual Meeting and how Board members can help provide a presence at conferences where MCLS staff will be using simple talking points, their own reasons for committing to serving on the Board, and items reflecting a “Board brand kit” such as a potential “digital business card.” Petrusa committed to doing more work on Ownership Linkage (i.e., as part of that committee).

## **VII. Announcements**

### **A. Planning for May Board Meeting (at MCLS Office, Lansing, MI)**

Huson will begin communicating details with Board members in coming weeks. She continues to coordinate maintaining the building as issues arise.

## **VIII. Comments for the Good of the Order**

Board members thanked Hawthorne for a great job leading his first meeting as President, and Lake for her great work in her role as Vice President (and Nominating Committee chair).

## **VIII. Adjournment**

**Motion: adjourn at 1:43 p.m. *Moved and seconded. Motion passed.***

May 15, 2026 10:00 a.m. Eastern	MCLS office	Lansing, MI
August 10, 2026 10am Eastern	Concordia Theological Seminary	Ft. Wayne, IN
October 25-27, 2026 (orientation, meeting, retreat)*	Marina Grand Resort	New Buffalo, MI

\* Board begins transition from current to next year at fall retreat