



**Montana State Library Commission**  
February Business Meeting  
Wednesday, February 11, 2026 | 9:00 a.m.  
Montana State Library | Gertrude Buckhouse Conference Room  
1201 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Helena, MT 59601

MINUTES

**Date:** February 11, 2026

**Time:** 9:00 a.m.

**Place:** Montana State Library, Gertrude Buckhouse Conference Room, 1201 11th Avenue, Helena, MT 59601 and Zoom

**Recording Link:** [https://youtu.be/\\_c9DrNSH4Sg](https://youtu.be/_c9DrNSH4Sg)

**Attendance**

- **Commission Members:** Robyn Scribner (Chair), Tammy Hall, Carmen Cuthbertson, McKenna Gregg, Tom Burnett, Peggy Taylor, Kris Goss.
- **Staff:** Jennie Stapp (State Librarian), Malissa Briggs, Victoria Gersdorf (Admin), Tracy Cook, Colet Bartow, Erin Fashoway
- **Guests:** Chris Tarabochia, Chief AI Officer

**Call to Order and Introductions**

**Timestamp: 00:00:00**

- **Chair Robyn Scribner** called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees.

**Consent Agenda - Action**

**Timestamp: 00:03:37**

- **Discussion:** Commissioner Burnett requested removal of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter Fiscal Year 2026 financial report. Commissioner Cuthbertson requested removal of the Commission bylaws.
- **Item:** Consent agenda included December 10, 2025 meeting minutes.
- **Motion:** To accept the consent agenda with the removal of the Fiscal Year 2026 financial report and the Commission bylaws.
- **Moved by:** Hall
- **Seconded by:** Taylor
- **Vote:** Unanimously approved
- **Public Comment:** None

**Commission bylaws**

**Timestamp: 00:05:49**

- **Discussion:** If the Commission adopts a policy where continuing education credits are reviewed, the Commission may need a standing continuing education subcommittee.
- **Next steps:** Stapp, Cuthbertson, and Cook will work on draft language to make this change to the bylaws. The goal will be to have it ready for the April meeting.

**2<sup>nd</sup> quarter Fiscal Year 2026 financial report**

**Timestamp: 00:08:45**

- **Discussion:** The budget committee reviewed the financial reports and requested a report about what is included in the Other expenditures account. Briggs will provide additional information. The Commission can act on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter financial reports during their April meeting. The Commission briefly discussed having subcommittees report during regular Commission meetings. Finance subcommittee members agreed to report back to the Commission as needed.

**Approve initial Montana Geospatial Information Act grant awards - Action**

**Timestamp: 00:12:48**

- **Discussion:** The Montana Geospatial Information Act is recommending four grants for initial approval. These projects are priorities in the geospatial information plan. Commission discussed the priorities, the projects, and potential future impacts.
- **Motion:** To approve the initial Montana Geospatial Information Act grant awards as presented.
- **Moved by:** Cuthbertson
- **Seconded by:** Taylor
- **Vote:** Unanimous
- **Public Comment:** None

**Consider whether to hold October business meeting in Miles City - Action**

**Timestamp: 00:23:07**

- **Discussion:**  
The Commission has been invited to hold its October 14, 2026, business meeting in Miles City. Commissioner Goss moved to hold the October meeting at that location, noting that the Sagebrush Federation will be meeting concurrently. The Commission briefly discussed the process of selecting meeting locations, including the use of local libraries. Commissioner Goss further stated that, if the Commission is considering potential bylaw revisions related to scheduling, he is willing to draft

proposed language to help guide the process, ensure geographic representation, and clarify timing considerations.

- **Motion:** To hold the October meeting in Miles City, noting that the Sagebrush Federation will be meeting concurrently.
- **Moved by:** Goss
- **Seconded by:** Burnett
- **Vote:** Unanimous.
- **Public Comment:** Sarah Peterson, Director of the Miles City Library, expressed appreciation and asked Commissioners to let her know if there is anything they are particularly interested in seeing while in the area.

### **Consider whether to participate in the Montana Library Association (MLA) Conference - Action**

**Timestamp: 00:28:58 – 01:47:23**

- **Discussion:** Commission discussed whether to hold their business meeting during the Montana Library Association (MLA) conference and whether to hold the “Conversations with the Commission” session. Commissioners heard from members of the MLA executive board who clarified their relationship with the American Library Association and expressed their appreciation for the ongoing conversation. Commissioners and the MLA board discussed various concerns: cost, logistics, following Presidential executive orders, and complying with the open meeting law. With little idea of what the conference agenda included Commissioners remained concerned about participating in the MLA conference.
- **Motion:** To hold the Commission’s April meeting and “Conversations with the Commission” session at the 2026 MLA Conference in Great Falls.
- **Moved by:** Goss
- **Seconded by:** Cuthbertson
- **Amendment to motion:** an amendment was made to “delay action until more information is available”
- **Vote:** 4 nays, 3 ayes.
  - **Burnett** – Aye
  - **Cuthbertson** – Nay
  - **Goss** – Nay
  - **Gregg**- Aye
  - **Hall** – Aye
  - **Scribner** – Nay

- **Taylor - Nay**
- **Next steps:** Amendment failed
- **Motion was withdrawn by Goss** after concerns were raised about combining the two items in one motion.
- **New motion:** To hold the Commission’s April meeting at the 2026 MLA Conference in Great Falls.
- **Moved by:** Goss
- **Seconded by:** Taylor
- **Vote:** 3 ayes. 4 nays.
  - **Burnett – Nay**
  - **Cuthbertson – Nay**
  - **Goss – Aye**
  - **Gregg – Nay**
  - **Hall – Nay**
  - **Scribner – Aye**
  - **Taylor - Aye**
- **Next Steps:** Motion failed
- **Motion:** To hold “Conversations with the Commission” at the MLA conference in Great Falls.
- **Moved by:** Goss
- **Seconded by:** Taylor
- **Discussion:** Commission discussed the value of having this session. They asked about a hybrid option with Zoom and the ability to comply with open meeting law. MLA board will discuss this request and get back to the Commission.
- **Amendment:** Taylor made a motion to amend the main motion to add language to the end “if the session is able to comply with the open meeting law.” Goss accepted amendment.
- **Vote on Amendment:** unanimous
- **Vote on main motion:** unanimous
- **Public Comment:** MLA board indicated they would get back to the Commission as quickly as possible. Commission also suggested MLA consider allowing recordings of their sessions to increase access.

10-minute break occurred at 10:50am

### **Discussion and Information Items**



**Informational presentation on the vision for the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Montana State Government**

**Timestamp: 01:47:56 – 02:34:09**

- **Discussion:** Christ Tarabochia, the Chief AI Officer, gave a presentation about AI and how libraries can help. He discussed AI’s presence, how it can be used, what the State of Montana is working on currently, and how librarians can assist the public with AI. He emphasized the focus on information literacy, the trust, the access provided to others, and how libraries can be learning hubs for AI. His suggestions for the Commission included setting a strategic direction, identifying resources needed, and deciding what to try.

**Informational presentation on AI applications for GIS** – Matt Sheehan was unable to join the Commission for their meeting.

**Business item**

**2026 Commission goals and next steps - Action**

**Timestamp: 02:36:05**

- **Discussion:** Commission briefly discussed the 2026 goals and process for review.
- **Motion:** To accept the 2026 Commission goals and next steps as presented.
- **Moved by:** Cuthbertson
- **Seconded by:** Gregg
- **Vote:** unanimous
- **Public comment:** none
- **Next Steps:** Motion carried. Commission will review at each business meeting.

Lunch break until 12:20pm. Timestamp: 02:37:41 – 02:37:51

**Discussion items**

**Draft Commission newsletter review**

**Timestamp: 02:38:03**

- **Discussion:** Stapp shared a draft newsletter. It was created with AI tools. She suggested adding an introduction from the chair. Commissioner Gregg is willing to review the newsletter. Commissioners briefly discussed the content, tone, and asked about metrics. Stapp reported that GovDelivery can give us metrics.
- **Next Steps:** Stapp will explore different models and tones with AI and will see what the metrics reveal for usage and dissemination.

**Initial review of 10.102.1159 (2) – (12) Administrative Rules of Montana *Serving the Community* and discussion of next steps**

**Timestamp: 02:44:35**

- **Discussion:** Commissioners discussed the use of the word “everyone” and the need to shift the focus to the library. The Commission doesn’t see a need to change the intent of any standards in this section other than adding something about artificial intelligence. Goss suggested adding an introductory statement and connecting the standards to the Constitution and Montana Code Annotated.
- **Next steps:** Stapp, Goss, and Cuthbertson will review the standards and propose draft language. Tentative goal is to have the new language by the April or June Commission meeting.

### Neutrality

**Timestamp: 02:55:54**

- **Discussion:** Cuthbertson initiated a discussion about neutrality. Commissioners discussed libraries and changes they have observed. Commissioners also discussed the importance of objectivity, meeting community needs, and not being caught in strict binaries. They discussed advocacy for literacy and the importance of balancing community needs with limited resources.
- **Next steps:** Cuthbertson will lead a conversation about objectivity. Goss will assist if needed.

### Continued review of the Continuing Education Handbook

**Timestamp: 03:32:13 – 03:48:26**

- **Discussion:** Cook and members of the subcommittee reported on their work. They discussed two areas that need more work – the initial certification track and continuing education credit approval process. Commissioners had questions about the course catalog and relevance of courses. They also discussed the drop-in sessions and a few of the nuances with continuing education that still need to be addressed.
- **Next steps:** Subcommittee members will meet again. The goal is to have a final draft of the policy and course of study for the Commission to act on at the April business meeting.

### Standing reports and information items

#### State Library Reports

**Timestamp: 03:48:36**

- **Discussion:** Stapp made note of a change in the report. She is now including a report with highlights of her work. Commissioners discussed the new report. They expressed their appreciation for the information. They found it very interesting. The



group briefly discussed whether it would be possible to use AI to more quickly generate information. Scribner commended Jennie for her work and knowledge.

### **Commission goals and objectives**

**Timestamp: 03:53:45**

- **Discussion:** Commission reviewed future agenda items which include acceptance of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter financial reports, revised draft bylaws, revised continuing education policy and course of study, and a discussion of objectivity. Mark Sheehan may also be able to present. Commission also discussed their April meeting. It will be moved to April 8, 2026. Stapp will notify the public. Commissioners must wait until hearing back from MLA before deciding whether the meeting happens via Zoom or in-person. Commission agreed to meet May 6 via Zoom at 11 am to act on the MGIA grant applications. Commissioners identified who will be at each spring federation meeting.

### **Public Comment on any matter not contained in this agenda and other business and announcements**

**Timestamp: 04:08:16**

- **Discussion:** Hall asked about a member of the public who has concerns. Commissioners recommended inviting her to give public comment.
- There was no other public comment or other business and announcements.

### **Adjournment**

**Timestamp: 04:09:42**

- **Motion:** To adjourn the meeting.
- **Moved by:** Taylor
- **Seconded by:** Hall
- **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 1:53 p.m.