

August 19, 2025

Dear Caledonia Library Board of Trustees,

Thank you again for the opportunity to meet with you and share information about sustainable funding models for libraries. I was thrilled to hear your interest in pursuing a 414 referendum, and I want to affirm how important and exciting this step is for your library and your community.

Based on your discussion of a possible November 2026 vote, the following timeline outlines the major milestones of the 414 process:

- **Early 2026:** Board finalizes funding request and prepares case statement/FAQ.
- **Spring 2026:** Petition drive and volunteer training.
- **Summer 2026:** Petitions submitted to municipal clerk and Board of Elections.
- **Fall 2026:** Public education campaign and required legal notices.
- **November 2026:** Community vote.
- **December 2026:** Levy is added to tax rolls if approved.

Between now and then, the most important priority is strengthening your **financial policies, procedures, and accountability systems**. Establishing strong controls and documented practices not only ensures compliance with state standards but also builds the public trust that underpins a successful referendum. Key areas include:

- Financial controls and claims audit process
- Audit/review schedule
- Credit card and purchasing policies
- Data security
- Reserve funds and investments
- Fundraising and gift acceptance
- Friends group MOU
- Petty cash, inventory, and surplus property disposition

I encourage you to take time to review, update, and adopt these policies. You do not need to start from scratch, I have samples of each policy that can be tailored to fit the library's needs. Doing this work now will position the library for long-term success under a tax-supported model.

Another essential step is meeting with the Town of Caledonia to confirm that municipal funding will continue should the 414 vote not succeed. This partnership with the town is vital during the transition period.

Regarding the district model we discussed; since the board has expressed interest in becoming an Association Library District, the right sequence will be to **first establish stable funding through the 414 vote**, and then address the governance changes (trustee elections and bylaw revisions) that are required for district status. I'll be glad to assist with that process once the referendum is in place.

I want to emphasize how exciting this opportunity is. Moving to a 414 referendum represents a major step forward in securing stable, sustainable, and community-supported funding for your library. With thoughtful planning and preparation, the Caledonia Library will be well-positioned to thrive.

I look forward to supporting you on this journey. Please let me know when you are ready to begin.

With appreciation and optimism,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Kirsop". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ronald Kirsop
Executive Director
OWWL Library System