

The Daily Mining Gazette

Chassell Checkout: Millage-free services for year resolves possible library asset forfeiture dispute



Garrett Neese/Daily Mining Gazette The Portage Lake District Library, pictured above, will be available to Chassell Township residents free of charge through the end of 2018 in an agreement reached between the library and the township.

HOUGHTON — The Portage Lake District Library will provide services to Chassell Township residents under an agreement reached between the two.

Residents will continue to get free access to the library until December 31, 2018. In November, Chassell Township voters approved withdrawing from the library system 580-480.

Library Director Dillon Geshel said the agreement was made in part to avoid a dispute with the township over whether it would be entitled to any of the library's financial assets. The library's agreement with member municipalities states a withdrawing entity is entitled to part of the assets upon withdrawing. However, that only applies if the municipality has a certified public library, which Chassell Township does not.

The township will also provide the library with the township's penal fine revenue for 2018, while the library will still receive the township's 2018 state aid for library use.

"Part of the reason that it's in the best interest of the library district to come to this agreement is we avoid time-consuming and costly calculation to determine an amount that would be owed to the withdrawing party," Geshel said. "It also avoids tens and thousands of litigation fees should Chassell Township tries to obtain those assets."

Geshel said the agreement does not affect the library's cost-cutting plans in the take of losing the \$150,000 in millage revenue from the township. That includes closing an extra day per week and cutting its book and technology budgets.

Chassell Township Supervisor David Mattson said the agreement worked for both parties.

"It's good for everybody," he said. "It just makes sense."

COMMENTS