

Minutes are **DRAFT** until
approved at the next
Board Meeting

John C. Hart Memorial Library
1130 Main Street
Shrub Oak, New York 10588

Board of Trustees Meeting
Wednesday, January 21st, 2026

PRESENT: Cathy Bahan (Member-at-Large), Yvonne Cech (Library Director), Barry Erenberg (Treasurer), Kathy Law-Imperato (President), Laura Tropp (Secretary), Jean Zappia (Vice-President)

The public meeting commenced at 6:05pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There were no public comments.

REGULAR BUSINESS

Approval of Minutes

The Board voted to approve the minutes with a minor clarification.

Treasurer's Report:

The Board reviewed the treasurer's report. We rolled over the T-bill for an additional 3 month renewal. The Board discussed the taxes and requested to confirm with the accountant that the taxes will be on time this year. PCSB Bank is becoming Beacon Bank so the library will need to download all current statements.

Approval of Invoices:

The Board approved the following invoices: 12/12, 12/15, 12/23, 1/2, and 1/8

Circulation Report

Looking at the circulation status, the circulations for adult books decrease and e-materials increase. The Library increased in adult fiction by 1 percent but there is a drop in non-fiction. Children's books non-fiction stayed steady. Overall, the total book circulation, grand circulation totals went up 2%. The library has been successful in investing in e-materials, which is driving our overall positive net circulation. Adult reference questions have gone up 9% and children's reference questions have gone up 27%. The library has also seen an increase after the children's library renovation. The Board discussed the decline of the publishers' use of mass market paperback books. Our public computer usage is increasing, despite a trend downward

immediately after the pandemic. The website usage is increasing, likely due to *Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times* increase. Foot track is still increasing. Item usage by Cortlandt is down but not as significantly as expected, due in large part to the previous adjustment in calculation. The library is hovering at about 50% of the library service area having a library card but the goal is to continue to increase this number. A strategy being used is to start with the schools. Adult programming is up 60%. YA programming is also up 28% and our children programming is up 15% year over year.

Budget Report

The 2025 budget is closing out. The revenue report includes the passport and fines which were on target. Interest earnings were below what was projected although this number is projected by the Town finance department. The Town of Cortlandt calculation was higher than we had anticipated.

Director's Report

The installation of the EV Charging station is in progress but has been hampered by weather. The library had to do a lot of tree maintenance, with a cost of \$6800 for now but there is additional tree work that needs to be done. One of our two boilers was out of service so it needed to be repaired for about \$2700. This is part of ongoing issues with our HVAC so we will need to advocate for additional funds, ideally using grant funds. The library is replacing the rusty fire exit doors. Library Advocacy Day will be February 3rd, 2026 and the Director will be attending this day in Albany. We will also advocate for assistance on the lease agreement. There were issues last month with the WLS and the loss of library computer programs although it was eventually resolved. The Library discussed concerns with upcoming costs of moving cloud based and the operation and budget costs. The library will create a tech steering committee to wrestle with these tech issues and begin planning. The library also discussed the loss of the software platform (that was with the Baker & Taylor book vendor that has gone out of business) that we were using to track the data for the State.

The library also discussed issues with the town finance department using the library's fund balance to pay for expenses without seeking approval or even consultation with the Director or the Board. The Fund Balance should be controlled by the Board of the Library as per library requirements. This continues to be an issue which makes the library out of compliance in terms of library expectations of control of funds and would be ideally addressed with an MOA as discussed later in the agenda.

The Board discussed the plans for the "Super Desk" that will be part of the new arrangement of the library.

Friends of the Library Update

The Board of Friends received the Library Board donation on behalf of Susan Kravari. The profit from The Friends iPad basket raffle is estimated to be \$1500.. The final amount from the Ipad raffle was \$1600. They will continue with new baskets. Library Giving Day will be April 7th.

Investment Committee Update

The update was reported in the treasurer report.

OLD BUSINESS

Wetland Survey Update

There was no new update

Update on Capital Campaign

The Board discussed the estimates of potential donation. The Library is planning additional rounds with our current consultant, Keven Wallace. The Board solicited additional proposals for furthering the campaign. The Board would like to see some additional proposals, renderings from an architect, and continue discussion on vision at a separate meeting.

Policy for Age Participation in Children's Room

The library staff is currently doing additional research and rather than creating a policy but will offer some all ages inclusive storytelling. They will likely hire a professional who regularly offers programming in the library.

Update on Girl Scout Gold Award Project

There was no additional update.

Discuss Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Town of Yorktown

Terry Kirchner came to speak to the Board regarding the MOU with the Town of Yorktown and the lease agreement with Town of Yorktown. The Library continued to discuss the challenges with the requirement that we need the lease agreement as a Dormitory Authority of the State of New York (DASNY) requirement in order to continue to apply for grants. There will be additional policy guidelines in terms of various areas to make sure libraries have policies in place. The library will need to make sure it has full accountability in terms of finance to confirm we are meeting minimum standards to avoid negative financial consequences, including potential loss of grants and funding.

Confirm 2026 Meeting Dates

The Board voted to confirm the meeting dates as follows: 2/25, 3/18, 4/15, 5/20, 6/17, 7/15, 8/19 (budget meeting only), 9/16, 10/22, 11/18, and 12/16.

Discussion/Vote on Charter Amendment to increase number of Trustees

The Board received guidance from Terry Kirchner regarding how to progress with the Charter Amendment. The Board voted to move forward to amend the charter to increase the potential number of board members to a range of 5-7.

Discussion of library lease agreement with Yorktown

The Board is seeking additional information from the town as a lease agreement is a request as part of a new requirement for State grants.

Request for menorah lighting on library property

This discussion was tabled.

NEW BUSINESS**Approve 2026 Full Time Staff Raises**

The Board voted to approve the 2026 staff raises, in alignment of the CSCA contract.

Approve 2026 opening/closing dates for library

The board voted to accept the proposed 2026 Library Closing/Early Closing Dates, including specific dates not included in the CSEA contract, as presented.

RW250 Update

The Library will host events in conjunction with the RW250 celebrations. The Friends fund will help support the event at the library.

Policy on Snow days

The Board reviewed the policy on snow days.

Upcoming meetings

Upcoming Board of Trustee meetings will be on the following dates at 6 p.m.: February 25, March 18, and April 15th.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting concluded at 9:00 p.m.