



Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting

Date: 09/18/2025

Location: Library Community Room

Trustees Attending in person:

Gary Sheffer (President), Dani French (Vice President), Patty Brennan (Treasurer), Aaron Able, Jessica Almeleh-Frazer, Miranda Barry, Wesley Brown, Joseph Ferris, Kellen Henry, Sharon Javna, Ryan Kelly, Jared Muehlbauer, Carol Pledger, Kelley Robinson, Heather Thiry, and Sherry Jo Williams

Excused: Jim Kelly (Secretary), Sean Gilleran

Absent: N/A

Staff Attending: Emily Chameides (Director)

Others Attending: N/A

The meeting was called to order by Gary Sheffer at 6:02pm. He welcomed trustees.

A motion to approve the August minutes was made by Joe Ferris and seconded by Sharon Javna. Vote to approve minutes was unanimous.

Reports

President's Report: Gary Sheffer

Gary reported that he, Emily and Dani had a good conversation with the Galvan Foundation regarding the building. They're open to us making suggestions on our 3 leases in the building. We're putting together suggestions for Galvan prior to them handing over leases to Bard, including possibly extending our leases. Each lease has different terms. Combining the leases was discussed, along with potentially aligning them to be more consistent in renewals and payment schedule.

If Bard chooses not to keep the building, it's not clear what their plan is, although Bard says they are committed to meeting the obligations of the leases and are keen to be involved in the Hudson community.

There are some members of the community who have expressed interest in the library or city buying the building.

Treasurer's Report: Patty Brennan

Through August, we collected 81% of our annual budgeted operating income and spent 50% of our budgeted operating expenses.

Total Receipts were \$20,933 for August. Notable income for August included \$3,450 from the Mid-Hudson Library System representing Local Library Services Aid from New York State and Annual Benefit income of \$11,115.

Total Expenses were \$31,503 for the month. There were no notable expenses for August.

A motion was made to approve the Treasurer's Report by SJ Williams and seconded by Wesley Brown.
Vote to approve the report was unanimous.

A motion was made to approve the Profit & Loss Statement by Miranda Barry and seconded by Joe Ferris.
Vote to approve the report was unanimous.

Director's Report: Emily Chameides

Emily reported that Danielle, who returned to finish up her AmeriCorps contract with us (ends in November), may be able to continue working with us through another program of the Mental Health Association of Columbia and Greene Counties.

Emily plans to develop a new draft of the Assistant Library Director job description so the role can be posted.

Judith Ritter left the library \$122,342 in her estate. Emily is doing some research on what we might want to do with the funds and will present ideas to the Finance Committee and Board. In the interim, the funds will be deposited in an interest earning account. Emily will reach out to Carl Whitbeck regarding how we might recognize Judith.

Emily thanked the Gala Committee and all of the trustees, staff, volunteers, and donors who helped make the gala a great success. Approximately \$31,000 has been collected for call for the cause pledges so far and about \$22,000 is outstanding. Emily will follow up with donors as needed. Emily anticipates that the library will net around \$61,000 after expenses. Gary mentioned that there is a potential donor who offered to make up any shortfall in donations vs. our goals, and he plans to follow up with her.

The MHLS Annual Membership Meeting will be held on Friday, October 24, 8:30am - 12pm at The Wallace Center at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library in Hyde Park. Trustees are welcome to attend; registration is required.

An in-person training session "Seven Habits of Highly Effective Boards" will be held at Philmont Public Library on October 9 from 5:30pm – 7:30pm and attendees will receive 2 hours credit.

Gala: Jessica Almeleh-Frazer

The trustees thanked Jessica for leading the gala committee, which was seen as a great success. SJ Williams was thanked for her work on the video shown at the gala. SJ is exploring options for sharing the video further.

Board Development: Gary Sheffer (on behalf of Sean Gilleran)

There are a number of trustees whose first term will end in March 2026. Gary reminded trustees that they have the option to renew for a second 3-year term if they are interested in doing so.

History Room: Sherry Jo Williams

Congratulations were offered for the Whaling Epistolary Drama event which was oversubscribed. The Board thanked Miranda Barry for organizing the event, and Wesley Brown for his performance.

Miranda reported that there may be options to do another performance as a fund raiser or through Hudson Hall at the Winter Walk, and there is also a video of the event that will be made available.

Long Range Planning: Gary Sheffer

Gary proposed extending the 2020 long range plan for another year given all going on and our plans for Turning Outward. The committee is meeting with Rebekkah Smith-Aldrich of MHLS on December 15 to discuss the Turning Outward community engagement process.

Gary asked the Board to send him suggestions for things we could advance from the 2020 plan in the meantime.

Fundraising: Miranda Barry

Miranda had a conversation with a guest at the gala who has fundraising experience who suggested we explore planned giving more actively. Miranda will follow up with suggestions for how we might do this.

Programming: Kellen Henry

The Summer Reading program had a 74% increase in participation year-over-year with increases in participants at all age levels.

Coming up is Cooking up Community in collaboration with NY Folklore which will be held on October 6 and will be taped. There is also a concert by a West African Kora player on October 15.

The Programming library staff are working to build stronger relations with the high school.

The committee is looking to see how we can improve how we manage suggestions for new programs, the process to update community calendars, and the registration process.

Kellen proposed organizing a breakfast get-together to help continue to build relations between the Board and staff, which was well received by the trustees.

Ghostly Gallop: Ryan Kelly

The organization for the race is in good shape overall. So far we've received around \$5,000 in sponsorship commitments vs \$13,000 total last year. Neighbor Running is a new sponsor and offered to host the bib pick-ups the day before the race.

We have 97 registrants so far, which is ahead of last year, with a target of around 400.

414: Joseph Ferris

The committee did not meet in the past month so there were no updates to report.

Friends of the Library: Joseph Ferris

The September Book and Bake sale raised \$1,400 and netted \$1,200, which was a little less than the last one.

The next Book and Bake sale will be held on March 13 - 15.

New Business/Public Comments

Motion to adjourn was made by Joe Ferris at 6:55 pm and seconded by Ryan Kelly. Vote to adjourn was passed unanimously.

Carol Pledger 09.18.2025
Recording Secretary

10.16.25
Date of approval