



## Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting

**Date:** 10/16/2025

**Location:** Library Community Room

### **Trustees Attending in person:**

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

**Excused:** Jared Muehlbauer, Sean Gilleran, Sharon Javna

**Absent:** N/A

**Staff Attending:** Emily Chameides (Director)

**Others Attending:** Jill Leinung, Janet Schnitzer, Jenny Post, Diana Gavales and Lloyd Koedding

The meeting was called to order by Gary Sheffer at 06:05pm. He welcomed trustees and guests.

*A motion to approve the September minutes was made by Patty Brennan and seconded by Joseph Ferris. The vote to approve minutes was unanimous.*

## **Reports**

### **President's Report: Gary Sheffer**

*Joe Ferris recused himself from the meeting for the portion of the President's Report focused on Bard College.*

Gary and Patty attended the in-person MHLS Trustee Education session 7 Habits of a Highly Effective Board Members and found it helpful and instructive and Gary will share out pertinent learnings with committees. Regarding the Armory and its ownership, we continue to be in conversation with Galvan and they have been supportive and communicative. We have requested a follow up meeting with Bard College representatives after the first meeting in August. We have been reviewing and considering potential modifications to our leases. When Bard will communicate details regarding properties and their transferred ownership status is unknown but expected to occur in 2026.

### **Treasurer's Report: Patty Brennan**

Through September, we collected 105% of our annual budgeted operating income (exceeded our goal) and spent 63% of our budgeted operating expenses. In income, total receipts were \$204,836.95 for the month. Notable in income for the Month, donation from the Estate of Judith Ritter \$122,343.46, annual benefit \$70,141.40 (primarily related to the Gala in September). Greylock Federal Credit Union quarterly statement was not received after September 2025 monthly reports were prepared. Earned amount on CD was \$2,341.73 during the months July, August & September (\$766.04 was earned in September). Total Expenses were \$95,738.31 for the month. Notable in Expenses for the Month: Fundraising: The Caboose Hudson LLC \$24,921.55, Public

Program: The Real Mothershuckers LLC \$1,545 and Andes Manta Music LLC \$2,400.

Emily and Patty met with Berkshire-Taconic Community Foundation representatives to learn more about their Non-Profit Agency Funds and how they manage endowments and their brokerage accounts and also discussed drafting potential updates to our fiscal policy that will be discussed in the Finance Committee and then shared with the Board. The 6 month Certificate of Deposit with Greylock is coming up for renewal with the plan to renew it for another 6 month period with a 3.5% interest rate.

*A motion was made to approve the Treasurer's Report by Dani French and seconded by Carol Pledger. Vote to approve the report was unanimous.*

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

### **Director's Report: Emily Chameides**

Personnel: 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.

A new draft of the Assistant Library Director job description is being reviewed.

The New York State Secure Choice program, which we first heard about back in 2021, is finally launching. This is New York State's retirement savings program for private-sector employees who do not have access to a retirement plan at work. We are required to enroll unless we decide to offer a separate, qualified retirement plan. They have not announced deadlines for enrollment yet, but registration is now officially open.

We anticipate receiving \$60,000 from the Donald J. Marshall Living Trust sometime in the next month. This is a second partial distribution; we received \$50,000 last year. We still need to follow up with Gala attendees with outstanding pledges, as well as sending thank you letters and tax receipts.

Roof repair is underway. It is quite loud at times, but patrons have been understanding. We have a sign out apologizing for any inconvenience this causes.

Room use requests have increased in recent weeks, with several asking for repeat meetings or events. Emily is doing her best to accommodate without overextending myself too much (for after hours events/meetings) and the board discussed making it possible to offer an incentive for other employees to assist with this.

Our primary book vendor, Baker & Taylor, recently announced that they are ceasing operations at the end of the year. Emily has online meetings scheduled with two other book vendors who work with libraries - Brodart and Ingram. In the meantime, Emily has been purchasing the majority of our books through Amazon to ensure that our patrons are receiving high demand titles and new releases in a timely manner.

The Columbia County Libraries Association is hosting a dinner for legislators and trustees to celebrate the accomplishments of our libraries, highlight collaborative efforts across the county, and discuss the challenges and opportunities ahead on Monday, October 27 at 5:30pm. If you wish to attend and need help registering, please let Emily know.

Trustee Education (two hours required annually - annual deadline 12/31): Please enter your 2025 activities in the Trustee Education Activities Records spreadsheet as you complete your hours this year.

**Ghostly Gallop: Ryan Kelly/Dani French**

We could still use about 5 more volunteers for Race Day, if you can or have friends and family who could volunteer, please let Ryan know. We are up to almost \$12,000 in sponsorship, Return Brewery is hosting a race afterparty and is donating \$1 for each Polished Pilsner sold this month to the Gallop. Please re-post or like Ghostly Gallop social media posts if you can. We have around 200 registrations and suspect landing near last year's number of 390 (many registered close to the race date).

**Gala: Jessica Almeleh-Frazer**

There is a new hotel (Pocketbook Hudson) and Jessica and SJ inquired about their capacity and they can hold around 200 people so Jessica will visit and learn more about it as a potential venue. Post-Gala reflections included discussing who we want to honor earlier so that we can plan and develop materials earlier in the year.

**Board Development: Gary Sheffer in place of Sean Gilleran**

We will have some upcoming Board openings and will discuss and hear more next month.

**History Room: Gary Sheffer**

We have raised \$600 net earnings from the Whaling shirt/sweatshirt campaign. Carol has helped us move History Room assets online at the Hudson River Valley Heritage website ([hrvh.org](http://hrvh.org)). There is a video of the epistolary drama event that occurred and is planned to be posted to the library YouTube channel and to the Hudson River Valley Heritage website.

**Long Range Planning: Gary Sheffer**

A meeting is scheduled for 12/15 with Rebekkah Smith Aldrich regarding the Turning Out process - more to come after that meeting.

**Fundraising: Miranda Barry**

This has been a fantastic year for fundraising and related events have gone well. In discussing where we go from here, Miranda noted that an important focus now is how to expand our reach and pool of those potentially interested in attending events and utilizing and supporting the library. Miranda noted a plan carving out some time in the next month's board meeting for general discussion and idea sharing regarding where and how we can raise money for and otherwise support the library. We have to raise 1/3 of our budget every year for fundraising and want to expand our network and become more proficient at asking for support for the library. More to come regarding fundraising strategy next month.

**Programming: Kellen Henry**

Upcoming event highlight: Cooking up Community (November 17 at 6pm) in the Community Room. The Programming committee has been drafting a Program Proposal form and working towards developing and operationalizing a programming review and selection process.

**414: Joseph Ferris**

The 414 Committee is ensuring alignment with the Long Range Planning committee and will note any updates to its goals, strategy, and process to the board in future board meetings.

**Friends of the Library: Joseph Ferris**

The next Friends of the Library meeting is upcoming and Joe noted that he will share with the Board in November's meeting any relevant notes that come out of that meeting.

**New Business/Public Comments**

Lloyd Koedding requested that the Board extend the Library’s three hour limit on computer use and otherwise consider expanding activities and hours at the library.

*Motion to adjourn was made at 06:58 pm by Wesley Brown and seconded by Joe Ferris . Vote to adjourn was passed unanimously.*

Jim Kelly, 10/16/25	11/20/25
<b>Recording Secretary</b>	<b>Date of approval</b>