



## Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting

**Date:** 12/18/2025

**Location:** Library Community Room

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

Gary Sheffer (President), Dani French (Vice President), Jim Kelly (Secretary), Patty Brennan (Treasurer), Aaron Able, Miranda Barry, Kellen Henry, Sharon Javna, Ryan Kelly, Jared Muehlbauer, Carol Pledger, Kelley Robinson, Heather Thiry, Sherry Jo Williams

**Excused:** Sean Gilleran, Jessica Almeleh-Frazer

**Absent:** Wesley Brown

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

**Others Attending:** Lloyd Koedding

The meeting was called to order by Gary Sheffer at 06:01 pm. He welcomed trustees and guests.

*A motion to approve the November minutes was made by Jared Muehlbauer and seconded by Kellen Henry. The vote to approve minutes was unanimous.*

## **Reports**

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

Gary noted that this has been a strong year for the library's impact in serving its community and thanked the board and staff for their contributions in 2025.

Gary noted that we have board vacancies for the coming year. If you know or are interested in recruiting a board member, please reach out to Sean Gilleran.

Regarding Bard College's acquisition of the Armory, at the community question and answer session held at Park Theater, Bard noted that they are not invested in becoming long term owners of the Armony building and indicated openness to selling it to the city or the library. We anticipate having decision points in 2026 regarding whether we continue to lease or want to consider transitioning to ownership. The board discussed what the role of owning the building would entail and Gary shared a decision framework with factors to consider regarding whether ownership would offer strategic, operational, or financial advantages.

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

Through November, in expenses we collected 119% of our annual budgeted operating income and spent 77% of our budgeted operating expenses. In income, total receipts were \$81,808 for the month. Notable in income for the month included a donation - the second distribution bequest from Donald Marshall Living Trust of \$60,000. In fundraising events, from the Ghostly Gallop donations of \$1,688.00 and entries \$7,690.28 processed through zippyreg (the website used for registration). Total expenses were \$65,222 for the month. Notable expenses for the month include, in fundraising expenses, the balance due for race

production for the Ghostly Gallop to ARE Event Productions, Inc. for \$3,050.37.

*A motion was made to approve the Treasurer's Report by Dani French and seconded by Miranda Barry. The vote to approve the report was unanimous.*

*A motion was made to approve the Profit & Loss Detail by Sherry Jo Williams and seconded by Jim Kelly. The vote to approve the report was unanimous.*

Emily emailed an internal controls and financial accountability policy for review by the Finance Committee and will send a draft to the board for review before our next month's board meeting. It creates segregation of duties and a stronger internal set of controls within our fiscal policy.

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

The Assistant Library Director job description has been finalized and outreach for this position will continue through January 11.

The annual appeal cards are on their way! If you have contacts that you would like Emily to send a card to, please send Emily their names and addresses. The cards were sent to donors who have contributed in recent years and new library card holders.

Emily is working with staff on the 2026 budget and will have a draft for review prior to the January Board meeting. We're scheduling a Finance Committee meeting for early 2026 to review that as well.

Patron code of conduct requested change: it currently states that food is not allowed in the building and covered beverages are not allowed in the computer area. We would like to allow for covered drinks in the computer area and allow for light snacks in designated areas away from library equipment and materials.

*Motion to approve updates to the patron code of conduct was made by Sherry Jo Williams and seconded by Kelley Robinson. The vote to approve was passed unanimously.*

### **Programming Committee - Kellen Henry**

This is a slow time of year for special programs but there are still great recurring programs happening. We are experimenting with posting to community calendars to aid the programming staff. Kellen noted that the committee is interested in organizing a thank you breakfast for the staff sometime in the new year.

### **Fundraising Committee - Miranda Barry**

There is interest in a retreat in the new year that would include fundraising training and discussion of the long range plan at the library. The committee has attached different team members to different roles after our fundraising discussion in last month's board meeting. These roles include recruiting new donors and how we could all help with that, helping with communication during February which is library lovers month and blind date with a book, working to try to recruit an advisory board of large donors, and ensuring we find the fun in fundraising and include new team members in various activities. The idea of an advisory board would be to gather a group of major contributors who could also advise the board regarding fundraising.

### **History Room Committee - Gary Sheffer**

Grants, donations, and sales to the history room this year amounted to around \$46,000. The History Room thinks it may be time to move away from producing merch due to a low return from the time spent on it. We will continue designing logos but step back overall from merchandising. The History Room will have a retreat with a 5 year long range plan that is supportive of and consistent with the library plan. The History Room wants to

think about needs and goals for focus areas like space needs and programming. Patriots of Hudson (and surrounding areas prior to the city incorporating) exhibit will depict individuals who served in the Revolution from this area. It will provide information on indigenous population and gravesites from soldiers. There may be an opening event. The Leisler Institute and Daughters of the Revolution will help with that.

**Long Range Committee - Gary Sheffer**

A recent meeting with Rebekkah Smith Aldrich walked committee members through the process of Turning Outwards. A key aspect of the process is outreach and listening to the community about what the community wants and needs (more than what they want or need from the library specifically). We will engage in this process to identify themes and how we can align with what people state they want and need in their community. Page 9 of the document Gary emailed to the board lists the types of individuals and organizations we may want to speak with (either one on one or in groups of 5-10 people). Please suggest any individuals or groups you believe we should meet with for this process to Gary (e.g. municipal officials, chamber of commerce, police and fire department, schools, general community members). Identifying individuals and scheduling meetings to listen will be a priority in the first half of the new year.

**Ghostly Gallop - Ryan Kelly**

In January, the Ghostly Gallop committee will reach out to the city and schools to confirm the dates for the 2026 Ghostly Gallop.

**MHLA Advocacy Ambassador Update - Jared Muehlbauer**

The Advocacy Ambassador initiative includes one ambassador from every library in the MHLS joining MHLS Advocacy Ambassador meetings and sharing information with their library boards. The MHLS identifies any timely issues and important topics and Jared distributes that information to the board and helps us know better how to advocate and grow our network of advocacy to ensure long term adequate funding and patrons rights. Feel free to send to Jared any ideas or thoughts or feedback. Jared discussed current and upcoming advocacy issues and topics and the short and long term goals of the Advocacy Ambassador program.

**Friends of the Library - Emily Chameides**

The Friends approved our fall wishlist (\$3,660). They proposed a slate of officers for 2026 and welcomed new members. Next Book and Bake Sale: March 13-15. They plan to have another spring fundraising event in 2026.

**New Business/Public Comments**

Lloyd Koedding noted liking the idea of advocacy, suggested the History Room cover recent history, and reiterated his desire for a 9am opening and removal of computer time limits. He asked that the meeting minutes from the prior meeting be amended because some of his comments were not noted, including his suggestion that the library host two sponsored donor events (one during the week and one during the weekend).

*Motion to adjourn was made by Kelley Robinson at 07:13 pm by and seconded by Dani French. The vote to adjourn was passed unanimously.*

Jim Kelly, 12/18/25
<b>Recording Secretary</b>

1/15/2026
<b>Date of approval</b>