

Minutes for DFPL Board of Trustees Meeting 5.21.2025

Call to order:

A regular monthly meeting of the Dobbs Ferry Library Board of Trustees was held on May 21, 2025 at the Dobbs Ferry Public Library. It began at 7:30pm and was presided over by Jennifer Andrews as Secretary.

Attendees:

Voting members in attendance: Erika Abelon, David Agosto, Sam Gruen, Inna Livitz, Alys Kociuruba, Alex Peck, Jennifer Andrews

Library Staff in attendance: Erik Carlson, Director, Donna Garofalo, clerk assisting with minutes

Guests in attendance: Jessica Galen, Liaison, Village Board of Trustees

Members not in attendance: President Linda Stutz, Vice President David Tabacoff

Approval of minutes:

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the April 23, 2025 meeting. By a vote of hands, all trustees were in favor, and none were against.

Review:

1. President's report

- Secretary Jennifer Andrews presided over the meeting in the absence of President Stutz. Jennifer welcomed all present and thanked Trustees and staff for their ongoing work during a very busy month.
- The Chamber of Commerce of the Rivertowns will host a first annual Gala on September 18, 2025, to benefit local libraries. Each library will have an honoree and brief remarks. Invitations will be sent mid-July; the event is organized by the Chamber, not the Library. President Stutz would like additional Trustee(s) to join her on the planning committee. We have invited Friends' president Lisa Bai also to join the Chamber's planning committee.

2. Director's report

- Director Erik Carlson reported on the Library's operational status, including:
- The NYS Library Construction Grant portal is expected to open mid-June. Application is nearly complete, with only the sliding door component pending. This is a 50/50 matching grant.
- The Friends Budget Proposal was submitted and approved at the annual meeting.
- The NYS Legislative "bullet aid" grant window opened and closed quickly; an application was submitted despite confusion about official dates.

- The current fiscal year is being closed out, with all invoices being submitted and paid. Preparation of next year's spreadsheets is underway. The library is on track to come in under budget by approximately \$20,000.
- Roku were purchased for circulation and streaming subscriptions are being finalized.
- River Towns e-bike racks will be installed in Dobbs Ferry and neighboring communities. One rack will be placed near the Library's existing bike rack. Racks are not charging stations; power is supplied by bike batteries.
- Blood drive scheduled for June 9th, vampire-themed, with a raffle for Subway Series tickets and curated book lists.
- Yoga workshop and Westchester Breathes meditation program to be held Tuesday evenings in June, both in-person and on Zoom.
- Board game program will continue through the summer due to community interest.

3. Librarian's report

- Recent programs have been well-attended, including the 10th anniversary of Classic Movie Nights. A Juneteenth Comedy Showcase is scheduled for June 21.
- Gina attended the NYLA Conference in Mount Kisco; found it moderately useful.
- Programming attendance statistics are being tracked and shared for board review.
- Ongoing weeding and maintenance of the children's collection.
- Door counter statistics were discussed; new counters are in use, though some technical issues remain.

4. Friends of the DFPL's report

- Trustee Agosto attended the Friends' Annual Meeting which was well attended.
- Friends' fundraising remains a challenge despite a large endowment; the operating budget for next year is approximately \$20,000, with \$12,000 of the Friends' budget allocated to Library requests.
- Concerns discussed regarding compliance with 501(c)(3) public support requirements and the use of endowment funds.
- Suggestions made for more family-oriented fundraising events to attract new and younger members to join the Friends.
- Storage issues noted: Friends' materials occupy much of the Library's storage space. They are buying more carts to store books.
- Trustees discussed the boundaries and collaboration between the Library Board and Friends Board, including questions about dual service.

5. Committee reports

Policy Committee: Reviewed internal procedures for staff responding to law enforcement and reconsideration of collection items. Streamlined forms and incident reporting are being finalized.

Personnel Committee: Continued review of the Employee Handbook with the Director; will be sent to counsel for legal review over the summer.

Finance Committee: Budget closeout and preparation for next year proceeding smoothly; Library was under budget for the past year. The finance committee reviewed the month's expense and revenue reports and found all to be in order.

Building Task Force: Discussion of wayfinding and branding within the Library to align with Village placemaking initiatives.

Research Committee: Preparing the first annual one-page community report for June. Feedback forms for programs are being piloted.

6. Village Liaison report

- The Village is pursuing multiple projects with New York Forward grant funds, including public art, park improvements, and streetscaping. The Library is encouraged to participate in planning and consider submitting its own proposals.
- Working towards a future where it will be easier to get from the train station to Main Street which will benefit the Library. Discussed ongoing issues with shuttle service from the train station to the Library; Village is seeking funding for a new bus and driver.

Old Business:

- Director only received one quote on new janitorial scope of service, from the existing vendor. Reviewing their quote to understand the steep price increase proposed.
- Director received quotes on carpet replacement and will put it on a NYS construction aid grant.

Announcements and Upcoming:

- Next Board meeting: June 18, 2025. No meetings in July or August.
- Terry Kirchner will provide board training preceding the October and November meetings; sessions will be recorded for Continuing Education credit.
- The annual July 4th party will be held at the Library. Trustees and families are encouraged to attend, bring a dish for the potluck, and enjoy games and fireworks from the Library's second floor. The event is family- and pet-friendly. Invitations and RSVP forms will be sent to Trustees.

Executive Session:

At 8:36 p.m., Secretary Jennifer Andrews requested that the Board enter Executive Session to discuss the process for the annual Director review. The Board exited the Executive Session at 8:47 p.m.

Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Secretary signature: Jennifer Andrews 5/21/2025

Date of approval by Board: 6/18/2025