

## **Minutes for DFPL Board of Trustees Meeting 11/19/2025**

### **Call to order:**

A regular monthly meeting of the Dobbs Ferry Library Board of Trustees was held on November 19, 2025 at the Dobbs Ferry Public Library. The meeting began at 7:30 pm and was presided over by Linda Stutz as President, David Tabacoff as Vice President and Jennifer Andrews as Secretary.

### **Attendees:**

- Voting members in attendance: Linda Stutz, David Tabacoff, Jennifer Andrews, David Agosto, Inna Livitz, Alex Peck, Sam Gruen
- Library Staff in attendance: Erik Carlson, Director, Christina Di Russo, clerk, taking minutes
- Guests: Gina Elbert, Children's Librarian
- Members not in attendance: Erika Abelon

### **Approval of Minutes:**

The minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees. No corrections or changes were requested.

### **1. President's Report**

- The Trustee Search Committee interviewed four candidates; two were deemed strong fits. Candidate David Webber was recommended.
- The Board will carry on the tradition of holding a holiday party at the December meeting, with a shortened meeting from 7:00 to 7:30 followed by a potluck-style gathering afterward.

### **2. Director's Report**

- Staff member Gina Elbert approached the Board with questions about the upcoming retirement of Assistant Director Ned Canora and confirmed the staff's wish for an appropriate retirement party.
- Erik reported on the status of restructuring Library assistant hours.
- A discussion has been initiated with Sustainable Dobbs regarding the development of a Library of Things to expand the Library's existing offerings.
- Summer hours to be the same in 2026 as they were in 2025.
- The Director described a potential partnership with Intigli, an online platform connecting customers needing 3D printing with local makers, using the library as a pickup point for completed prints.
- Designs for exterior banners discussed.
- Discussion of moving Wickers Creek exhibit to area currently housing CD/DVD collection.

### **3. Secretary's Report**

- President Linda Stutz and Vice President David Tabacoff have expressed willingness to renew their terms, consistent with bylaws allowing up to three consecutive three-year terms.
- Proposed Slate of Officers for 2026 presented as: Linda Stutz as President, David Tabacoff as Vice President, and Ina Livitz as Secretary.
- The originally scheduled Board meeting for February 18 will be rescheduled to February 25 to accommodate family schedules during the school Winter break.
- Incoming Secretary Livitz discussed organizing a working session in early 2026 to help reorganize the shared Google Drive.

### **4. Librarians' Report**

- Strong attendance reported at recent programs: a stargazing/astronomy program drew around 30 attendees, Diwali celebration enjoyed, and the Battle of the Books team performed better than expected, avoiding last place in a competitive field.
- Staff created and shared a National Native American Heritage Month reading list with local schools.

### ***Social media and marketing proposal***

- Christina Di Russo presented a proposal from Hearst Local Media, which approached the library with an offer to provide digital advertising services, including content creation and targeted social media ad buys.
- Discussion covered target audiences, potential goals and concerns about the long-term cost of ad spend.
- Trustees acknowledged that many parents discover programs and make donations via social media, yet also questioned whether the most critical engagement gaps lie primarily online or require more personal outreach. Several trustees noted that any digital marketing effort should be closely coordinated with the Friends, whose current fundraising and membership processes need modernization.
- The Board prefers a clear articulation of goals (e.g., specific attendance or membership metrics) and comparison with alternative approaches (e.g., hiring or contracting social media expertise directly) prior to committing funds.

## **5. Friends of the Library Report**

- Erik is helping the Friends with the Mini Golf fundraiser; initial partners have been identified, but more volunteers are still needed. Focus on securing a few larger “big ticket” sponsors.
- Holiday sale scheduled for December 6th.

## **6. Village Liaison Report**

### **7. Committee Reports**

#### **Policy Committee:**

- The Policy Committee has worked with counsel and the Director to update the bylaws. Updated bylaws will be in the January board folder for trustee review, with discussion anticipated in January and a vote in February.
- The Committee, with Erik, also updated the Code of Conduct to align with current operational needs and legal guidance. The revised Code of Conduct will follow the same timeline as the bylaws: review in January and vote in February, as it is treated as a formal policy.
- Upcoming work includes developing a Volunteer Policy and an internal template/letters for reconsideration of materials.

#### **Finance Committee:**

- The Finance Committee reviewed monthly financials and reported that current expenses and revenues remain in order.
- Committee discussion focused on long-term HVAC costs and the need to quantify recent spending on emergency repairs to support a capital strategy.
- The Committee recommended adding a specific line item for building maintenance in the next year’s budget to reduce reliance on the Director for minor repairs and to distinguish routine maintenance from major capital projects.

#### **Personnel Committee:**

- The Personnel Committee is in the process of revising the Employee Handbook and integrating links to already-existing Village and WLS policies to streamline and shorten the document for better staff usability. The Committee invited trustees to review the condensed draft stored in the shared folder.

- In response to staff input on Ned's retirement and growth opportunities, the Director will meet with the Personnel Committee to consider role restructuring, internal promotions, and compensation adjustments before bringing any proposal to the full Board.

#### **Building Committee:**

- Trustees and the Director discussed the aging HVAC system, highlighting that repeated compressor failures have become a significant financial and operational burden.
- Village engineers and Honeywell previously estimated that a comprehensive replacement and system reconfiguration could cost roughly 2–2.5 million dollars, including structural work to relocate compressors from the basement and address air circulation inefficiencies.
- The Board discussed the possibility of including the HVAC project in a larger Village bond issue to spread costs, as well as pursuing external grants.

#### **Old Business:**

##### **Items for Vote**

- Motion made and seconded to recommend David Webber to the Village as new Library Trustee to take over the remaining term of Alyssa Kociuba. All trustees voted in favor of this recommendation, with one trustee recusing themselves from vote.
- Motion made and seconded to accept the term renewals of trustees Stutz and Tabacoff. Unanimously approved by a vote of hands.
- Motion made and seconded to accept the proposed slate of Officers for 2026. Unanimously approved by a vote of hands.
- Motion made and seconded to decommission the large CD/DVD shelving unit and dispose of it via the Village. Unanimously approved by a vote of hands.

#### **Announcements and Upcoming**

- Next meetings scheduled: December 17th and January 21st.

#### **Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The meeting ended at 8:45 pm

*Secretary signature: Jennifer Andrews, November 20, 2025*

*Date of approval by the Board: December 17, 2025*