

Minutes for DFPL Board of Trustees Meeting 1.15.2025

Call to order:

A regular monthly meeting of the Dobbs Ferry Library Board of Trustees was held on January 15, 2025 at the Dobbs Ferry Public Library. It began at 7:30pm and was presided over by Linda Stutz as President, David Tabacoff as Vice President with Jennifer Andrews as Secretary.

Attendees:

Voting members in attendance: Erika Abelon, David Agosto, Jennifer Andrews, Inna Livitz, Linda Stutz and David Tabacoff

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: Alysa Kociuba

Approval of minutes:

JA made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 11 2024 meeting, which was seconded by DT. By a vote of hands, all trustees were in favor, and none were against.

Review:

1. President's report

The former and new Trustees introduced themselves to start the new year. The Board thanked Village Trustee Galen for her attendance as the new liaison and looks forward to working with her. Trustee recruitment and resignation was discussed by Linda Stutz, reporting that John Kauffmann submitted his resignation from the Board. We regret his resignation. LS also reported that a new candidate, Alex Peck, has submitted an application for Board membership, and all trustees are invited to be part of his interview process next Wednesday, January 22nd at 2pm via Zoom. LS provided a reminder that all new Trustee appointments can begin their own three-year terms regardless of resigning Trustees' remaining term amounts.

2. Director's report

Eric Carlson reported on the Library's operational status, including:

- The Library's hydraulic lift recently went out of service and could not be used for the Noon Year's Eve balloon drop. It is being repaired. Once repaired, the outdoor banner brackets can be installed.
- WLS app is temporarily out of service for all users. WLS is working to fix the disruptions.
- Luis Peredes has been reassigned as Spanish-speaking Library Assistant. Part of his new role will be to engage in community outreach to the Spanish-speaking community in Dobbs to better understand how the Library can serve their needs.
- There have been delays in book delivery with new vendor Ingram and Baker & Taylor.
- EC is phasing out the multiple book rental program for new releases from vendors. It is not an efficient system and it makes better financial sense to buy copies as needed and resell them after their initial, higher circulation period. Other libraries are making this same decision.

- EC decided to maintain book processing in-house by clerks instead of paying external vendors

3. Librarian's report

EC recapped the main items from the Librarians' joint monthly written report, including:

- Noon Year's Eve Childrens' program very successful
- Much work going into upcoming Lunar New Year program
- Child and Youth librarians attended specialized training sponsored by Children's Village about children's safety

4. Friends of the DFPL's report

As no members of the Friends were present, EC made mention of their upcoming Tea and Valentine's Sale events and encouraged all Trustees to attend. EC also noted that he is discussing a live music program series with the Friends, to be named in honor of major donor Mary Caruso.

5. Committee reports

Data and Research Committee launched new initiatives: EA presented a draft Program Feedback Form to gather information from attendees. In addition, EA also presented a draft of an annual report template. The committee to review the drafts and present final copies to the Board.

Policy and Personnel Committees will be in communication as the Library's Employee Handbook is updated with the Director. Writing a new Volunteer Policy will be the Policy Committee's next focus in 2025, after completion of Handbook updates.

DT reported that the Finance Committee reviewed the Director's initial budget proposal for 2025-2026 and the Committee feels it makes sense. Revenue and expense reports for the month were reviewed and found to be in order.

LS and JA discussed the likelihood of a Building Committee reorganizing now that there are enough new Trustees interested in joining.

Issues:

- Need for new Friends' liaison to replace Trustee Jed Ilany at Friends' meetings

Solution: David Agosto offered his service in this position

- HVAC system control access limitations

Next action: EC to coordinate with DPW to arrange meeting with Honeywell to address control access issues

- First aid kit and defibrillator maintenance costs

Next action: EC exploring options for Library to purchase own defibrillator and implement staff training through Dobbs Ferry Fire Department. Trustee Galen offered EC assistance in this coordination if needed.

- Janitorial services quality concerns

Next action: EC planning to rewrite parameters for janitorial services contract to improve cleaning standards. Trustee Galen to investigate DPW's schedule for cleaning exterior entrance plaza.

- Unclear direct-to-Library donation acceptance procedures

Next action: IL, LS to investigate and clarify rules regarding Library's ability to accept private donations and the tax deductible status of such donations.

- Memo of Understanding or similar document needed to define Village vs Library responsibilities

Next action: EC and Policy Committee to investigate if any Westchester Libraries have existing policy to use as a starting point. Trustee Galen offered to access the NY Conference of Mayors as an additional resource.

Main motions and Decisions:

- Motion to recommend Trustee applicant Sam Gruen to the Village Nominating Committee for appointment to the Board: Moved by LS. The motion carried with all Trustees in favor and none against by a vote of hands.
- *Additional Motion was made via email to all Trustees on 1/23/25 to recommend Trustee candidate Alex Peck to the Village Nominating Committee, to take over the remaining two years of resigning Trustee John Kaufmann. ADT, LS, EA and JA interviewed Alex via zoom on 1/22 and all found him to be an excellent candidate. In an effort to onboard Alex alongside Sam Gruen, and not delay the process by another month, the vote was made outside of the usual meeting time. The motion carried with all Trustees in favor and none against via a vote of individual emails to President LS.*

Announcements and Upcoming:

February meeting should be moved forward a week due to President's Day school break. April meeting should similarly be rescheduled due to school break timing. Upcoming Board meeting dates are as follows: January 15, February 26, March 19, April 23, 2025

Adjournment

LS moved that the meeting be adjourned, and this was agreed upon at 8:43pm

Secretary signature: Jennifer Andrews 1/16/2025

Date of approval by Board: 3/26/2025