

MEETING MINUTES
Olean Public Library Board of Trustees
January 21, 2026
5:30 P.M. – ConferenceRoom

The mission of the Olean Public Library is to assist all people with their educational, informational and recreational needs.

Call to Order at 5:30 P.M. by Board President Lanna Waterman. In attendance were trustees P. Shumway, L. Waterman, L. Whitford, J. Mahar, R. McElfresh and G. Copella. From the Library: Treasurer Steffen, Business Office Manager Angell, Assistant Director Mahar (via Zoom), and Director LaVoie. Excused: M. Morgan

1. Waive the reading of the minutes of the previous meetings and approve as mailed.
2. Voice of the Public/Correspondence:
 - Christmas card from Ann & Bob Lehman, which included a donation for the capital project.
 - Letter from Cattaraugus County Surrogate’s Court in regards to being named beneficiary of a will.
3. Approval of Warrant Sheets for December 31 – January 21:
 - #973 Operating Fund: \$52,182.15
 - #344 Capital Fund: \$224,312.60

Discussion:

- Annual microfilm subscription in the amount of \$2,825 payable to Advantage Archives. This is a 5.6% increase in cost over the 2025 annual subscription cost.
- National Grid (electric) is 36.44% higher than January 2025 with 2,240 more kWh billed/used & NYSEG (gas) is 15.7% higher than January 2025 with 650 more CCF used/billed 12/13/25-1/12/26.
- Q1 preventative maintenance payment to Mazza. Annual cost increase of \$560 or 3.54%.
- The TSA Consulting is an extra employee benefit option. It is a 403(b) with no company match. Currently only one employee participates with another employee expressing interest. All full-time employees are required to participate in the NYS retirement system. Part time employees are allowed to participate but not required.
- Payroll description is incorrect on the general warrant and should read “payroll 01/09/2026” instead of “payroll 11/28/2025”
- The capital appropriations includes:
 - 90% of the remaining 50% that was due to Mazza for the HVAC installation project from October 1st, 2025.
 - \$52,115.60 payable to Bergmann for Design Development. There is still \$147,265.65 to be billed and paid for the Design Development phase.
 - Third Lane Strategies is our invoices for the project consultant Larry Sorokes.

4. Review of Financial Statements Discussion:

- 2025 General Fund Balance Usage \$82,938

- Due to revenues over budget in these lines
 - Investments \$39,072
 - CLDA & CBA \$2,938
 - Gifts, grants, & donations \$22,399
- Due to expenses under budget in these lines
 - Salaries & benefits \$47,583
 - Library Supplies \$7,019
 - Professional Services \$3,865
 - Technology \$2,005
- Big expense line increases from 2024 to 2025
 - Professional Staff 11%, 78% of this increase, or \$34,343.20, is due to moving a library assistant into a Librarian position.
 - NYSLRS Pension (state retirement) increase of 15%; this is from an increase if the required employer contribution percentage for tier 4 employees from 17.8% of salary to 19.5%.
 - E-Resources up \$19,093 with books down \$17,865. This is due in part to the closing of Baker & Taylor and anticipation of the upcoming project as current collections will need to be moved, covered, stored. The physical book budget was re-allocated to e-resources and spent on both Olean and system wide patron wish lists and high demand items.
 - Fuel & Utilities expense increased by 26%--electric usage increased 9% and gas usage increased by 35%.
- We are carrying over \$12,256 in FBO funds. All Manley, Burt, & John Henry funds have been spent.
- 2025 Capital Fund Balance Usage \$77,313
 - \$74,819 Expansion project, \$4,995 Manley unfunded, offset by \$2,501 in interest earned by the State Aid Community bank account.
- Standard balance sheet adjustments for the NYSLRS required GASB entries and recognizing any previously designated unearned revenues or vice versa.
- Unrestricted fund balance is increased mostly due to a balanced 2026 budget meaning no fund balance had to be appropriated.

MOTION (R. McElfresh, L. Whitford): To approve agenda items 1, 3, and 4. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Director's Report

Trustee Election and Budget Vote Calendar [Action Item]

The 2026 Trustee Election and 2027 budget vote is scheduled for the first Tuesday in May (May 5, 2026) and will be held at the Library. Polls open at 9 am and close at 8 pm. The terms of trustees Reed McElfresh and Jen Mahar expire on June 30th, so they must decide if they will run for another 5-year term.

Petitions for nomination to the ballot for Library Trustee will be available on March 2nd, along with applications for absentee ballots. The budget hearing will be held on Tuesday, April 21st, at 6 pm. The Board should review and vote whether to adopt the attached Schedule for the 2026 Trustee Election and 2027 Budget Vote.

MOTION (L. Whitford, R. McElfresh): To adopt the attached schedule for the Trustee Election and 2027 budget vote. The motion passed unanimously.

HVAC Construction Aid Project - Updates

On November 21st we received the final bill from Mazza for the installation of the 2 new

HVAC units. According to Mazza, they completed the work on November 8th (insulating the units). Because the job did not end up being clerked as planned, we hired M/E Engineering out of Rochester to commission the work, to ensure everything was satisfactorily completed before issuing the final payment, which is slightly more than 50 percent of the total project cost.

M/E came to the Library on 12/10 and spent several hours looking over the different project components, including the remote controls. There was a meeting on 12/19, between the M/E engineer (Jeff Jaskier) and Mazza reps to review the findings from the initial inspection and to visually inspect the installations. Later that day, Jeff sent the Commissioning Plan and updated Site Observation Report to Mazza (uploaded for Board review). As far as we know, Mazza has not completed additional insulation of the units as requested. M/E sent an email to Mazza on 1/20 asking for a progress update; they responded that they would reach out to their insulators for an update as to whether or not the work was done. Given the temperatures, it would be disappointing if Mazza did not ensure insulation was completed several months after the units were installed.

M/E will be coming out sometime in the coming month to do heat testing (startup and shutdown of the new units) and then again in the spring for testing of the AC. Final payment of 10 percent of the project total will be withheld until all testing is satisfactorily completed (5 percent will be paid after the heat testing and any needed fixes are done, and the other 5 percent will be paid after the AC testing and any needed fixes are completed).

At this time the Library is unsure if the work by Mazza has been completed as recommended by ME.

Pest Control Policy [Action Item]

The Library has pest control procedures in place, as incidents of materials returned to the Library with evidence of pest infestation have increased dramatically in recent years. The recommended protocol has been to quarantine items showing infestation for a period of time, notifying the Library's pest control company of infested materials to determine the best course of action for treatment, and putting a temporary hold on the borrowing privileges of the patron who returned the materials. Patrons are notified of the requirements for reinstating borrowing privileges, which include presenting the Library with a receipt from a professional pest control company proving the premises have been treated. In cases where the patron is a tenant, the landlord should provide proof of treatment.

Typically, patrons are agreeable to this resolution and provide proof of treatment. Recently, however, we have been experiencing pushback, including claims that the landlord will not provide proof of treatment (in such cases, patrons are referred to the city to file a complaint against the landlord, but this does not always resolve the problem). Sometimes statements from the landlord are provided that do not include proof that professional treatment was done. Some patrons whose accounts have been blocked are asking other patrons to borrow materials for them, which leads to their accounts being blocked as well.

The Library should adopt a Pest Control Policy (see attached), demonstrating that the Board supports the rationale for the procedures described above. Bringing pests into the Library can damage materials, require expensive treatment of the building and furnishings, and may result in staff and patrons unintentionally taking infestations home with them, so an additional consideration is whether patrons should be temporarily banned from visiting the Library until they can provide proof of professional extermination. This could also include patrons who have not borrowed materials but who have visible evidence of pests on their person or belongings.

The board stands behind the director and the staff with safety being the highest priority. If the police need to be involved and problem patrons need to be banned proceed as such.

MOTION (G. Copella, L. Whitford): To adopt the formal pest control policy presented. The motion passed unanimously.

December Gifts/Grants/Donations [Action Item]

MOTION (J. Mahar, P. Shumway): To accept, with gratitude, the following gifts,

grants, and donations received in December 2025. The motion passed unanimously, with:

- \$152.62 PayPal Giving Birthday Fundraiser (Taylor Eade)
- \$45.71 memorial for Marshall Dieteman, Phillip Bernsetin, & Diane Elliot
- \$25 memorial for Mr. & Mrs. Victor Stebbins
- \$15 memorial for Rhonda Sue Dieter
- Fish (mollies & catfish) from our new fish tank volunteer, Anthony Kasperski
- \$18.83 in anonymous donations

Friends of the Library

The Friends' annual beer tasting fundraiser, FeBREWary, is scheduled for Friday, Feb. 27th. It will run from 7-9:30 PM at the Library. Tickets will be on sale soon. Prices will be one for \$25, two for \$45, and \$15 for designated drivers. As they do at all of these events, the Friends are requesting basket donations for the basket raffle. If the Board is interested in donating again, it would be greatly appreciated by the Friends. All of the proceeds from these events go to the Library to help pay for presenters, programming supplies, circulating materials, furniture, technology, and many other needed items.

The Friends raised more than enough money through their Giving Tuesday event in December to pay the remaining balance (\$4,995) of the new microfilm reader/scanner/printer, which was approved at their January meeting. The other \$5,000 was covered by a Manley grant received last summer. Their treasurer was not at the January meeting, so the funds have not yet been received.

6. Committee Reports

CCLS Board Meeting (McElfresh)

The CCLS board met to work on the annual budget. The budget process is difficult because the budget begins on January 1st but funds received from NYS aren't known until April.

Another topic of discussion was the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. grant opportunities.

CCLS is pressing NYS legislation to address the issue of E-Books being more costly for libraries than individuals. When a library purchases an E-book, they don't own that book. The purchase is for a certain number of check outs. Once those have been exhausted the title would need to be repurchased.

2024 NYS Construction Aid has finally been approved with no word on 2025 yet.

Personnel changes at CCLS include a new business office manager, and Ripley Library now has a new director.

CCLS is, and has been, operating at a deficit and is actively looking at cost sharing opportunities. The annual cash grant given to each library in the system of \$250 has been cut. Another way for CCLS to reduce expenses involves payroll processing fees. Those are currently being covered for libraries with 8 or fewer employees. CCLS is pushing for libraries to look for sustainable funding. More to come on cost sharing options in the future.

7. Old Business

Capital Project Updates

Consultant Reports (Larry not present at meeting due to another commitment). He provided the Library Director with a report that included the following topics:

- The Library should consider opening an account at CRCF for donors of the capital project. Endowment funds could be used to fund speakers & programs or left unrestricted and vague to allow the library to use as they see fit. The board is not opposed to donors setting up funds with CRCF.
- Laurens Street property transfer is now with the lawyers. If the paperwork and process completes timely, the tax-exempt paperwork should be submitted to the

accessor's office prior to the 3/1 deadline to ensure a year of taxes are not due. The trustees would like confirmation that there are no back taxes on the property. The Director will check with Palumbo on this. The Library will need to secure insurance on the property. Public recognition of the family that donating the property will be done at a later date.

- The Library was unfortunately not awarded the Empire Grant. The application was for the meeting room space.
- The Board President, Director, and Larry have a meeting scheduled for Friday 1/23/2026.

Staging Area & Parking Lot

Construction Management will look into price estimate on demolition and parking lot construction. Michelle reached out to Jan at CCLS to confirm if NYS Construction Aid can be used for this type of project. The recommendation would be to apply for both aspects, demolition and lot construction, as we can take 3 years to complete the project and request an additional 3-year extension. If this project is applied for during the 2026 Construction Aid round, the work cannot start until 7/1/2026. State Historic Preservation would need to be involved due to ground disturbance.

Funding Opportunities

- Requests to larger donors in the community should be finalized by Friday (1/23/2026).
- Larry will continue to look into other grant opportunities including the Wilson Fund, which stated they were open to discussions.
- Michelle attended a WNYLRC meeting for the Wilson fund, Rural Libraries Grant program. They are releasing \$500,000/year for three years. The grant program will be very competitive as it encompasses several large library systems. The Wilson Fund encouraged libraries to apply for small projects with a big impact. The recommended goals include: youth sports recreation, after school, parks/trails, nonprofit innovation, caregivers, young adults, working families, workforce development for ages 14-24.
- The Friends of the Library have an established fund for the construction project. They are pushing the FeBREWary event as it will be the last large fundraising effort held in the Library before the start of construction.
- Opportunities for naming as part of the capital project need to be solidified.

Thank you letters/notes to donors

The Library had cream-colored cards and envelopes made that can be used for Thank You letters.

Meetings with Architect

Construction management will be attending the meetings held with the architect going forward. This will help keep the timeline on track and make sure that all parties have access to the same information.

A meeting held with the head of children's, the Director, and architect revealed that the dedicated small meeting room space for speech, physical, and occupational therapy had dropped off the design. There was also a desire for a sensory room/area. The mother's room should also be relocated to the children's area rather than next to the public restrooms.

Construction Management

The construction management contract has returned from legal for a final review by the trustees & director. It was agreed that BSK, legal, is working in the best interest of the Library. The revision containing the red lines and comments can be sent to the construction management

company.

2025 Annual Audit

Items as requested by the auditor for the 2025 audit were provided between 1/6 & 1/9/2026. The auditor, Ed Bysiek, noted on 1/21/2026 that we are ahead of schedule as compared to the past couple years and his first draft is almost complete. He has completed the 990 and is just waiting for the IRS to finalize schedule A. Ed will attend the February meeting to present the audited financials. As a reminder we approved a 5-year commitment with Ed Bysiek as our auditor with the following pricing:

2025 \$13,000

2026 \$14,000

2027, 2028, & 2029 \$15,000

2027 Budget Planning

Director and Business Office Manager are currently working on the 2027 budget. Facts and items to keep in mind:

- \$29,001 would be the 2% tax increase
- To bridge the gap a mixture of exceeding the tax cap & fund balance is a possibility
- From 2023 to 2025 major expense categories are up an average of 43.79% while the tax increase totaled 34.83%.
- CPI for all items in 2025 is 2.7%
- NYS minimum wage increase for 2027 will be tied to a 3-year average of the CPI. Preliminary calculation would indicate a 3.63% mandatory increase.
- \$10 in January of 2023 has the same buying power as \$10.83 in December of 2025.

Schedule Finance committee meeting (R. McElfresh, G. Copella, P. Shumway)

February 4th @ 5:30pm

8. New Business

Munistat agreement [Action Item] No motion made at this time.

Munistat is the financial advisor company being used to work on the DASNY financing for the upcoming capital project. The agreement was presented to our attorney, BSK. They indicated that it was a very standard agreement with no concerns.

The agreement did contain an appendix with a requirement to enter into a separate ongoing agreement to pay \$1,850, fixed for 5 years, with 2% increases annually thereafter. The trustees and director are asking for additional clarification on the appendix before approving the agreement.

Conflict of Interest forms

The trustees, treasurer, and staff must annually complete the Conflict of Interest form. The trustees were asked to complete the form and return to the Director.

Trustee Training

It is a requirement that trustees receive two hours of training annually. A suggestion for 2026 trustee training is a library director that has been through a DASNY bond and project, specifically managing cost escalations to ensure the bond covers all necessary aspects of the project. The Director will check with Noah from Munistat to see if he has a list of locations that have worked with DASNY. Other possible options include Jan from CCLS and Rebecca Smith Aldrich, the co-author of the trustee handbook. The CCLS annual event is also considered eligible for the 2-hour annual requirement.

Final 2025 budget adjustments (Angell) [Action Item]

2025 Budget line adjustments for 2025 for approval by the board are as follows:

- Increase Books (appropriations line 301)

- Increase by \$200
- Received orders by 12.31.2025 in excess of originally expected by \$200. Moving unspent electronic resource funds back to this line to cover.
- Reductions on the following lines could be made:
 - Electronic Resources \$200 (appropriations line 307)

MOTION (G. Copella, P. Shumway): To approve 2025 budget adjustments as proposed. The motion passed unanimously.

Adopt 2026 EBALR amount [Action Item]

Employee benefit accrued liability reserves needs adjusted from 2025 balance of \$32,975.81 to \$33,040.03. The increase is \$64.22.

MOTION (R. McElfresh, G. Copella): To approve an adjustment in the amount of \$64.22 to the EBALR Fund balance. This will make the total fund balance \$33,040.03. The motion passed unanimously.

First of the Month Bills & bank account authorization [Action Item]

MOTION (L. Whitford, P. Shumway): To authorize the Treasurer to pay utilities, insurances, equipment leases, periodical renewals, credit card bills, database subscriptions, payrolls and payroll withholding, and local contracted services as they become due in 2026.

MOTION (P. Shumway, J. Mahar): Motion to authorize the Treasurer to maintain the following accounts for 2026:

- Tax Fund Account – Community Bank
 - General Operating Fund Checking – Community Bank
 - Capital Fund Checking – Community Bank
 - Investment Holdings Checking – Community Bank
 - State Aid Fund Account – Community Bank
- The motion passed. One abstention: G. Copella.

Personnel

MOTION (R. McElfresh, J. Mahar): To enter executive session at 7:28pm to discuss personnel matters. The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION (L. Whitford, P. Shumway): To leave executive session at 7:54pm. The motion passed unanimously. (No actions voted on in executive session).

Other Discussion

None

MOTION TO ADJOURN (R. McElfresh, J. Mahar): Meeting adjourned at 7:55P.M. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Whitford, Secretary