

**Saugerties Public Library
Regular Board Meeting
Date: January 8, 2026**

Present: Trustees Paul Vanbenschoten, Timothy Scott, Erin Poll, Yosefa Karchmar, Charlotte Herscher, Alice Graves, Valentina Kielland, Rebecca Lang, Kerry McQuaide

Excused: Ken Goldberg, Teresa Girodano

Staff: Director Jennifer Russell

Public Attendees: Ray Rebholz, Bill Barr

Meeting called to order at 6:00 PM by President Tim Scott

Public Comment: Bill Barr new town liaison.

Friends of Library: Reminding us we can also be members of the friends group too. You sign up yearly. Forms are at the reference desk and online. The festival of trees went well. Bigger each year. Next meeting 1/26/26 at 7:00 pm. One of the Vice Presidents has resigned. They need to replace that position mid-term.

Unfinished Business: None

New Business:

1. ***Library Advocacy Day in Albany (February 3, 2026):*** Members of board have attended in the past. The MHLS funded bus is not an option this year. Tim is going and is asking if folks want to carpool. Long day meeting with legislatures and a mid-day rally. We will receive talking points from MHLS that we can use. Discouraging message from the governor regarding protecting the libraries. Tim would like to know who lobbied for that bill to die so he is gathering more information about that to be prepared. Advocacy day can be fun. Trustees and Librarians from all over the state come together. Talk to Tim if you want to go.
2. ***Postcard Campaign to Governor Hochul:*** Samples around the room. Good to send out prior to advocacy day. Put a little personal message and include that we are trustees. Tim passed along some talking points that we could include.
3. ***E-Book and E-Audio Material Budget:*** This is hard to keep up with. MHLS keeps tabs on how many digital items each library's residents are taking out and how much we are spending on digital materials. We take out a lot of digital materials. Last year's budget for this was \$16,000. We are still under. MHLS is taking steps and threatening to stop delivering materials to the library, unless we come up with a plan. MHLS says we need to pay \$20,544 in 2026. We

budgeted \$19,000. That's a \$1, 544 difference. We amended the budget in December to up the budget by \$3,000, making it \$22,000. Jen will be writing a plan of action to submit to the Resource Sharing committee and MHLS. If we are still under for the spring report, the board can amend the budget again. The finance committee is discussing where that would come from. She may not include the total that we will add to our budget each year in her writing. More and more people are using it and they are expensive.

At the last Ulster County Association meeting, Jen said that something needed to be done because this isn't sustainable. Spoke to the NY public library. They have reduced the number of holds that patrons can check out which decreases the number of holds. We allow 10 checkouts and 10 holds. Jen recommends we reduce this to 5 holds. Library purchases based on how many holds we have. That is how it works in the entire library system. We can't make a change because it has to be for the entire system. We can make a suggestion to the committee and it will take time for the proposal to be made at a Director's Association meeting. MHLS wants to do marketing to let the public know how the system works and how expensive digital materials are. Maybe a banner message on the Libby site to tell people how this works.

There is a formula for purchasing hard books as well but it isn't quite as expensive as the digital formula. We also have a kindle that people could borrow with titles already loaded. We can encourage folks to get audio books from alternate sources.

Secretary's Report:

MOTION:

Motion by Tim and seconded by Charlotte to approve the minutes as written. All in favor.

Treasurer's Report: Budget vs. Actual for 2025. The initial financial report from the accountant seems to indicate we are very over budget. That is not accurate. It includes money for retirement for 2026, and does not account for donated funds used in programs and other various budget lines. The accountant will work through this for the Annual Fiscal Report to NYS and it may take a few more months to get final numbers.

MOTION:

Motion to pay the bills in the amount of \$25,143.23 made by Charlotte and seconded by Erin .
All in favor.

Director's Report: Please see the report included in the Meeting Packet.

- 1) Book purchasing: Beginning to slowly get books in from Ingram. We got a few from Inquiring Minds and one from Amazon.
- 2) Lost books: The Saugerties library went fine free a few years ago. However, if a patron never brings a book back they get a bill and they need to pay for it. A staff member

created a 2025 list of books that have not been returned and the total cost of those books is \$4,903.90. Staff is calling these patrons to remind them to return those items. We might be able to create a list to see how long people are keeping books out since we are fine free. Many of the lost books are from the same person. For example, you could check out 10 books and just not return the 10. If you owe a bill to the library, you can't take anything out until it is paid.

- 3) Programs: The artists who show in the gallery are different from groups that reserve the community room. The gallery is not considered a part of the Community Room. According to the Community Room and Outdoor Use policy, you can only use the library's address to advertise your meeting / program. Many disparate organizations or groups use the Community Room and we don't want the library to appear to align with any particular group.

Ambassador's Report: Teresa is the Ambassador. She is not here but the postcards are her most recent contribution.

Committee Reports

Finance: Did not meet

Next meeting: February 9th at 6:00

Personnel/Policy: Did not meet

How would one suggest the creation of a policy? The suggestions could be brought to the policy committee.

Next meeting: January 28th at 6:15

Facilities: Did not meet

Next meeting: January 20th at 6:00

Outreach: Did not meet

Next meeting: January 26th at 5:30

Motion to adjourn at 6:52 PM by Tim;

Seconded by Alice.

Passes unanimously.

Submitted by Rebecca Lang

Next meeting: February 12, 2026 at 5:30 with meeting starting at 6:00