

**Saugerties Public Library  
Regular Board Meeting  
Date: March 12, 2026**

**Present:** Trustees Paul Van Benschoten, Timothy Scott, Erin Poll, Yosefa Karchmar, Charlotte Herscher, Alice Graves, Valentina Kielland, Rebecca Lang, Kerry McQuaide, Ken Goldberg, Teresa Giordano

**Excused:**

**Staff:** Director Jennifer Russell

**Public Attendees:** Bill Barr

**Meeting called to order at 6:01 PM by President Tim Scott**

**Public Comment:** From Bill Barr (town board): Winston Farm applicants are responding to public comments. Battery storage system: applicant before board. The approval or disapproval process will be done as a special use permit. The board is looking for grant opportunities for water/sewer areas. They will need a new grant writer due to retirement. They did get a grant to look at water and sewer infrastructure. They are looking at short term rentals and impact on long term rentals. They are looking into unpermitted rentals. Conservation advisory commission: looking for a volunteer for the climate smart task force. Someone who is following environmental issues. Will give information to us to share with the environmental book club.

**Friends of Library:**

**Unfinished Business:**

1. **Harassment prevention training:** Get this done ASAP. We'd like all the training done before the organizational meeting in October.

**New Business:**

1. **Bike Borrow Program:** NYS Department of Transportation is working with public libraries to set up bike loaning. They would get donated bikes and give them to the libraries. They would offer us potentially up to six bikes. We are thinking two might be enough to start. Concern about the bike rack out front would be vandalism or theft. We do have another rack and it is possible to set it up in the back for accessibility. They could be stored in the shed in the winter. NYSDOT would like them to be stored inside somewhere each night. We would need to purchase locks but patrons need to bring their own helmets. NYSDOT recommends that kids under 16 cannot use them. When inquiring with the insurance company, the question came up as to who owns the bikes. We would need an MOU regarding who holds the insurance and who really owns the bikes and if there is an age range that affects coverage. Suggestion of a wall bike rack

was mentioned. That would keep them inside but out of the way. They would be checked out like any “library of things” item. NYSDOT suggests you loan them out for a week.

**2. Snow removal services (Robert Flanagan or Village DPW):** After last snowfall, Robert Flanagan, who shovels our sidewalks, mentioned that the DPW person who plowed damaged the sidewalk. We’ve been trying to get in touch with the department head but we’ve gotten no response. Tim may just show up to have a conversation. He’d like to talk to Rich Forbes (DPW head). The alternative is having Robert Flanagan do the plowing of the parking lot but that will be an additional cost. Bernie Carol had a verbal agreement for the village DPW to plow our lot for no cost. Thoughts are a contract with Mr. Flanagan would make for a more reliable plowing situation. He would charge between \$125-\$150 to do the lot and he’d keep doing everything else too. We are already over budget for snow removal. We will set a deadline of August to get agreement with the village to iron this out. If we cannot get an agreement by then, we will look into Mr. Flanagan.

3. Tim took part in a round table event hosted by Rebekkah Smith Aldrich. It focused on resiliency and they discussed how libraries are doing.

**Secretary’s Report:**

**MOTION: to approve**

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

**Treasurer’s Report:**

**MOTION:** The total for the bills is 25,522.81 .Motion to pay the bills in the amount of \$ 25,522.81 made by Charlotte and seconded by Kerry.

All in favor.

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

**Digital books:** We have to purchase books for the minority group that has 15 holds. If we limit the holds, we would, potentially, decrease how much we spend. The Resource Sharing Advisory Committee system has voted down this suggestion.

**Annual Report:** The report is still late. We have a deadline of April 3rd to get it done, but we haven’t received the website to enter data into yet.

**Ambassador’s Report:** Teresa gets emails from Rebekkah Smith Aldrich when there is a perceived need. She forwards that to the board and the friends of the library. This month the request was to get in touch with representatives to not pass a bill that they refer to as “stop sexualizing young children”. The next ask was to reach out to help fund a healthy budget for next year. During the April 17th Celebrate Libraries event, we are going to ask people to be advocates of the library and sign up to get these emails as well.

## **Committee Reports**

**Finance:** see minutes attached

Talking about salaries and minimum wage. Also considering changing the phone service to coincide with the move to Archtop Fiber. Jen sent the friends a wish list for 2026.

Next meeting: March 16th at 6:00

**Personnel/Policy:** see minutes attached

We looked at the vulnerable adults policy, which can be folded into the Safe Child Policy and renamed. We are going to vote on a draft next time, of a combined children and vulnerable adult policy.

We looked at the environmental policy. It would be good to see what we are using now and what is listed in the policy. We may need to shift some of our thoughts to resilience. We will all take a look at the policy so we can share ideas and bring them to the committee to discuss.

Law and enforcement policy came up due to concerns about ICE. . Questions came up regarding staff being trained to recognize legitimate warrants. Also, what happens if we cannot reach our own counsel.

We talked about changing a staff member's status as regular part-time. Also, we discussed minimum wage and salaries.

Creating an AI policy was mentioned as a topic that needs to be discussed going forward.

Next meeting: March 25th at 6:15pm.

**Facilities:** Did not meet last month

Next meeting: March 17th at 6:00 pm

**Outreach:** See minutes attached.

April 17th event: Divided into three parts 1) Gus Pederson (historian) discusses the history of SPL and libraries in general as well as Carnegie libraries. The underlying theme is libraries as central to democracy. 2) Rebekkah Smith Aldrich will talk about the library system and the challenges facing libraries now. 3) Jen talking about our library and what it has to offer and giving a tour. Food and drinks will be included. Local politicians, school leaders and maybe town/village board members will be invited. The goal is to learn about and celebrate libraries..

Three Fridays in April: Librarian as a main character film series event.

A representative from the NYS library will be coming in June to talk about the history of public libraries in America.

Next meeting: March 23rd at 5:30

Motion to adjourn at 7:12 PM by Tim;

Seconded by Alice.

Passes unanimously.

Submitted by Rebecca Lang

Next meeting: April 9, 2026 at 5:30 with meeting starting at 6:00