

GREENWICH FREE LIBRARY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

October 2025 MEETING MINUTES

Regular Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, October 15, 2025

7:05 pm

Main Library

Attendees: Patrice Abate, Cliff Oliver, Ellen Fronhofer, Aaron Northrup, Paul Thurston, Tony Jordan, Sarah Murphy (Library Director), Suzanne Seay, Lynne Weygint, Lisa Hayes (architect for Community Room Renovation), John Hartnett (clerk-of-the-works for Community Room Renovation), Dave Battis (public)

1. Call to order 7:04 pm
2. Motion to accept Suzanne Seay to the board. Suzanne's term will begin today and we will vote to extend the term to a full five-year term at our annual meeting in early 2026.
Aaron made a motion. Ellen seconds. Board approved.
3. Motion to accept Lynne Weygint to the board. Lynne's term will begin today and we will vote to extend the term to a full five-year term at our annual meeting in early 2026.
Aaron made a motion. Ellen seconds. Board approved.
4. Board Action Items
 - a. Approval of proposed September 2025 Minutes (separate document).
Aaron made a motion to approve the September meeting minutes without changes. Cliff seconds. (Tony, Suzanne, and Lynne abstain.) Board approved.
5. Board Committee Reports
 - a. Facilities Committee (Aaron, Paul, Teri) – Lisa Hayes and John Hartnett are in attendance to discuss the Community Room renovation. The project was originally scheduled to be completed the first week of August. Work has slowed in the past weeks and workers have shown up only sporadically. Lisa explained that several factors played into this including delays in receiving the light fixtures and the ceiling tiles. Additionally, the original job foreman from F.H. Alexander was assigned to a different project and that led to a slow down in progress. A letter was drafted by Patrice on 10/11 to Lisa to express our concerns. Lisa was very responsive and called a meeting on 10/15 attended by Lisa, John, Sarah, Patrice, Rulyn, F.H. Alexander, and Trevett. Lisa put together a plan to get the space usable by 10/25. The board (and community member) was able to tour the space and see the progress that has been made. The carpet is due to be installed on Friday 10/17. After that, painting can be completed. Trevett has temporarily closed their shop to make some equipment changes so the barn doors, cabinetry, and dirty wall will be installed in November (though will not prevent the space from being used). We are still waiting on a quote for the soffit (and wiring required for lighting) on the opposite wall which we have not yet received from F.H. Alexander. We are also

waiting on a quote for windows but Lisa recommends removing that alternative from the bid. Sarah mentions that FH Alexander has not completed a daily log since 9/12. Lisa will be in next week for a walk-through and to create a punch list which will include items such as sanding/painting, painting of rear stairwell, swapping out shelves/arms that are mismatched, etc.). Lisa will come up with a comprehensive list and final payment to FH Alexander will not be made until the project is complete.

Aaron gave a report on the audiovisual in the renovated Community Room. Board agrees that we will go with the proposed 83" interactive screen and (2) portable sound systems (one for each level). We will also get a quote on the recommended sound bar w/camera so we can do virtual meetings with the entire room. Finally, we will inquire about a cover for the screen for storage.

Teri has found appliances that will work for the space. Our budget was \$2500 but these will come in closer to \$1600 plus installation.

Lisa will provide us with some suggestions for room signs for both the Community Room (Fort Miller Community Room) and the large meeting room on the lower level (to be named for Claudia Blackler).

- b. Finance & Fundraising Committee (Mary Ann, Patrice, Paul) – Reminder postcards were sent after the last meeting. Annual appeal stands at \$16465.06. We need \$6035 in additional earnings to reach our goal.
 - c. Material Review Committee (Cliff, Patrice, Paul) – No report.
 - d. Policy & Audit Committee (Mary Ann, Patrice, Paul) – Board will receive a copy of a camera policy to be voted on at the November meeting
 - e. Board Recruitment (Cliff, Patrice) – We have a new application for a board member. The application will be shared with the board for review. A reminder that we have (1) remaining board seat (12 max) and our priority is finding someone interested in becoming our treasurer.
 - f. Personnel & HR Committee (Mary Ann, Paul) – N/A
6. Gill Room Report (presented by Sandy McReynolds, Historian) – Sandy is currently working on two house requests. Last week while on vacation, Sandy attended the APHNY (Association of Public Historians New York State) conference in Cazenovia. Though this was technically aimed at more of the town office position, Sandy will be able to utilize the information in the Gill Room as well. On Saturday at 1:00 pm, Sandy will be leading the cemetery tour in the Greenwich Cemetery.
7. Treasurer's Report – Review of September transactions as well as quarterly financial review. Discussion on leaving approximately (3) months of operating capital in our general operating account and moving the remainder of our money into short term CDs and/or a higher yield savings account to get a small return on that money. This included the bequest from the estate we are receiving (that will be used to provide Hoopla to patrons). It was

decided that we should open new savings and/or CD accounts. Ellen and Sarah will determine the best course of action for selecting the CDs. Discussion is made on the library using a debit card for purchases and a decision is made to transition to a credit card for both safety (in case card is compromised) as well as convenience (transfers will no longer need to be made to a debit-card account at the bank). Patrice will research credit card options. There is a lengthy discussion on whether depreciation (which is recorded by our accountant at year end) needs to be reflected in our annual budget. We will get a professional opinion on this. There is also discussion on how we will treat grants in our budget (since the money is often budgeted but not guaranteed). Ellen will look at a new system and instruct Marge on how transactions related to grants should be recorded.

8. Friends of the Greenwich Free Library Update – Ellen was able to have a discussion with the acting treasurer of the Friends group. Apparently there is no interest from the current members to do fundraising beyond the book sales and annual calendar. A plan is made to create a Friends group with interested members and keep the current (book sale) Friends group as a subsidiary of the larger Friends group but with a focus solely on their very successful monthly book sales. Our hope is that the new Friends group would have interest in attracting new members, supporting new initiatives, and helping organize fundraisers (plant sale, holiday tree raffle, Cheers to the Library parties, etc). There is also discussion of having the Friends room open during all Library hours as is typical in many libraries.

9. Library Director's Report – (presented by Sarah Murphy)

3rd Quarter Comparisons

	Visitors to the library	Community space use	Community attendees	Library programs	Library program and event attendees	Early Learning programs (ages 0-5)	Early Learning program attendees	Volunteer hours	Farm 2 Library participants	Pounds of waste diverted
Third Qtr 2024	11674	170	773	79	1291	32	876	463	901	2,297.00
Third Qtr 2025	10555	100	617	66	1394	33	874	436	952	3,485.60

	Check outs	Borrowers	Holds satisfied	New cards issued	Computer sessions	WiFi uses	Libby checkouts	New Libby Users	Kanopy plays
Third Qtr 2024	8,581	1378	1670	48	587	2080	1185		329
Third Qtr 2025	7,518	1368	1476	29	576	1959	1573	16	371

We can definitely see the effect that the construction has had on our third quarter numbers, especially in visitors to the library and check-outs. This has been partially answered by increased numbers at Outreach and offsite events, and by some increases in streaming films and eBooks, but we would prefer to see more people back at the library, and we hope that they will return once the project is complete.

STRATEGIC PLANNING GOALS:

Public Promotion

A12 Expand Patron Base, A3 Outreach

- Earlier this month, I spoke to about 20 members of the DAR and about 25 members of the public who came to the Mason's Lodge breakfast. Both events went well, with thoughtful questions and lively interaction from the public.

Programming

B1 *Programs that fulfill patron needs*

- Current and upcoming programs and events can be found [on our website calendar](#).
- Emilly and Kris have provided an [overview](#) of their regular programs and special events. Current highlights include a crochet club running concurrently with Lego Takeover. Upcoming events include Dinoman at the school in collaboration with the PTSA on November 9 and TinyCon here at the library on November 15.

B2 *Give local artists, writers, creators, and experts a platform:*

- Local birder and photographer Rey Wells will present a selection of his best bird photos on Saturday October 25
- Artist Hannie Varosy has created an installation of some of her smaller mixed media works for our lobby case. On view now through mid-November.

B3 *New programming ideas*

- I was approached by some Lions Club members about a potential speaker who wasn't the right fit for a Lions meeting, but would likely be of interest to the general public. He is Associate Director of Policy at the Center for Constitutional Rights, and he and his family are patrons. I think it would be excellent to create a speaker series featuring local residents with interesting or unusual jobs. Seeking input and ideas!

Partnerships

C1. C2 *Local not-for-profits and businesses*

- We are helping out with the Greenwich Youth Center's Halloween Parade on Sunday October 26, and members of the Friends will be there, too, to sell books.
- We have been approached by the county Board of Elections about possibly using our space for the November 4th general election
- As previously reported, the PTSA have partnered with us on the Dinoman presentation at the school. The Friends of the Greenwich Library have also volunteered to share some of that cost.

Place

- See Facilities report & construction report

Preservation

- See Gill Room report

OTHER

Fundraising and financial

- We have raised \$16,465.06 towards our annual appeal. Considering the promised match, we need to raise \$6,035 more in order to reach our 2025 goal. We should consider the following events to raise additional funds:
 - Tractor Parade
 - Cocktail Party at a local home

- Christmas Trees

10. Period for Public Expression – None

11. Old Business – Sarah needs to check with the lawyers regarding the bequest that we received to see if the patron can be recognized for the gift.

12. New Business – Our NY Forward Grant application (involving improving the backyard space) has moved to the next round. We need to get updated numbers from Andy Rymph and his team at LaBella.

13. Dates of Future Board Meeting Calendar – The next monthly Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 19, 2025 at 7 pm.

14. Adjournment – **Cliff made a motion to adjourn. Ellen seconds. Board approves.**
Meeting adjourned at 9:24 pm.

Digitally signed by Patrice Abate