

**FINKELSTEIN MEMORIAL LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR MEETING/MAY 27, 2026**

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees was held both in person and by video conference on Wednesday, May 27, 2026. The meeting was recorded in accordance with law.

Board Members Present:

Ms. Darnett Davis, President called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. with the following members present by roll call: Mr. James Johnson, Ms. Esther Waldman, Vice President, Ms. Oluwasey Banjo, Ms. Joan Soskin, Ms. Yehudis Gottesfeld (arrived at 6:33 p.m. after Ms. Davis called the meeting to order), and Mr. Yossi Rubinstein (zoom) .

Board Members Excused: None

Board Members not excused: None

Administrative Personnel:

Ms. Laura Wolven, Library Director, Ms. Beth Zambito, Assistant Director, Mr. Andrew Koblick, Business Manager, Ms. Leah Levine, Library Clerk.

Others Present in person:

Grace Riario (Executive Director of the Ramapo Catskill Library System), John Ninivaggi, staff.

Others Present via zoom:

Stephanie Cole Adams (Library Attorney), Kathleen Preston (staff), Rafael Mirabal (staff), Arelene, Juliana Anderson (staff), Laurie Needell (staff), Parveen Rahmet (staff), Judy Joseph (staff), Susanne Daley (Union President), Jeff Liz (staff), Dipa Thakkar (staff), Robert Rowe (staff), Nathalie Jean Paul (staff), Michelle Gutierrez (staff), Dan Amerouso (staff), Orion Morgain (staff), Paul Gubernick (staff), Cliverltz Alexis (patron).

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Mr. Johnson and carried unanimously to **approve the modifications of the agenda to add executive session towards the end of the meeting, noting the Director's Report and President's Report be added to the agenda, and to address actions from committee reports from April and May.**

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld and carried unanimously to **approve the Minutes of the Public Hearing of April 29, 2026.**

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Mr. Johnson and carried unanimously to **request Leah Levine, Clerk to the Board of Trustees to take the minutes of the May 27, 2026 meeting.**

A **motion** was made by Ms. Davis, seconded by Ms. Soskin and carried unanimously to **have the Library Attorney, Stephanie Cole Adams and Grace Riario, Director of RCLS speak freely during the meeting if there are any items that are not clear, and can be corrected.**

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman , seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld and carried unanimously to **approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 29, 2026 with the recommended changes.**

Ms. Riario commented on clarification on the motion regarding the Library Clerk taking minutes. If the motion was for the May 27, 2026 meeting, or taking minutes moving forward. Ms. Riario suggested for the Library Clerk to take the minutes until a Secretary is established. Ms. Cole Adams commented that all trustees now have access to the confidential legal projects tracker. The position of Secretary is open, and there are important duties that a Secretary, by law, performs for the board. Ms. Cole Adams thinks having someone who can float and can change from meeting to meeting to help take notes and help the Secretary on duties is a great way to encourage the board to cooperate and be helpful.

A motion was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Ms. Davis and carried unanimously to **approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of May 12, 2026, with the amendment of Ms. Waldman's recusal recorded.**

A motion was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Mr. Johnson and carried unanimously to **approve the Minutes of the Second Special Meeting of May 12, 2026 with the correction of the spelling of Mr. Rubinstein's name.**

A motion was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld and carried unanimously to **approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of May 13, 2026.**

Questions regarding the Library Budget Vote procedures were discussed. Ms. Cole Adams suggested the board take a look to update procedures throughout the fall until before December. If the board agrees that it is important enough, there should be a subcommittee to look into this and listen to experience staff. The board can explore these questions in an orderly way, and then bring recommendations for any updates. The Library should keep practices current and conduct elections in a way that keeps them economical and very transparent and orderly. Questions regarding Legal Fees subtotaling to \$20,075.00 from Library Attorney, Whitman Osterman & Hannah LLP were discussed. Ms. Waldman recused herself during this discussion.

Ms. Cole Adams commented that the bill in discussion is not from her firm, and there is a bill from her law office as well. Ms. Cole Adams commented anytime the board has a concern about a bill, or lack of clarity, it is appropriate to request more information. Ms. Cole Adams can send some advice on how to do so.

(Ms. Waldman, although recused from the conversation, commented in her review of the invoices, that there was a detailed invoice.)

Ms. Cole Adams recommended having 3 members, who would look into this further, who haven't been recused.

Ms. Gottesfeld questioned authorization; Ms. Cole Adams clarified whoever is authorized to enter into those types of contracts, when the matter involves a complaint, or a policy. Suggestion of tabling a bill to approval so the board has enough information to approve the expense.

Conflict of interest was discussed. Ms. Adams commented on Ms. Waldman modeling that she did not feel comfortable (during the discussion of the legal bill). Ms. Adams reminded the board that the conflict of interest policy requires when a conflict is disclosed. If the person doesn't disclose to recuse themselves, the board has to make a decision, and there's a process that's set by law, and it's in the policy.

Mr. Rubinstein questioned how voting on your own seat not a conflict of interest? Ms. Cole Adams responded that the only way to get an answer on that question is to apply your policy.

A motion was made by Ms. Gottesfeld, seconded by Mr. Johnson and carried with 6 votes yes to **have Ms. Gottesfeld, Mr. Rubinstein and Ms. Banjo look into the Whiteman, Osterman and Hannah legal bill and report back to the board before the next meeting.** Ms. Waldman recused herself from this vote.

Ms. Waldman questioned the Orange and Rockland Utility Bill regarding a termination notice. Mr. Koblick commented on payments and when there are lags in payment. Ms. Cole Adams clarified that utility bills are one of the bills, if the board wanted to put that in the procurement policy and the fiscal policies that the Library can pay

without pre-approval. Mr. Koblick further explained the Library has a 10th of the month bill run. The bill was ready on the 10th, signed on the 16th, and the termination notice dated for the 14th.

A motion was made by Ms. Gottesfeld, seconded by Mr. Johnson and carried unanimously to approve the bill list for May 27, 2026 without the legal bill from Whitman Osterman & Hannah LLP.

Ms. Waldman questioned Star Press regarding this purchase over the procurement policy and requested Ms. Cole Adams could answer this question. Ms. Adams commented on looking at policies and making sure that policies and procedures are clear, and that they are followed, and if there is a concern after that. Speaking with leadership to address going forward. Ms. Adams added that procurement complex. There is obligations, which have to do with the threshold for where you have to engage in competitive bidding. You have to make sure that when it's appropriate, you're putting the prevailing wage rate into certain contracts. Ms. Cole Adams commented on all sorts of sensitivities that the procurement policy has to address. Including adequate flexibility for day-to-day leadership to be able to get things done, emergency repairs, etc. and that the goal is to make sure it is clear and flexible enough so that it does not delay critical purchases, or take too much time. Ms. Cole Adams commented that she sent over an example of a comptroller audit, which discusses things that you have to do by law versus what are the policies that the Library wants to uphold for frugality, but also to get things done.

A motion was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Mr. Johnson and carried unanimously to approve the miscellaneous bill list of May 27, 2026.

A motion was made by Ms. Gottesfeld, seconded by Ms. Davis and carried unanimously to approve the transfer of \$1 Million from NYCLASS (New York Cooperative Liquid Assets Securities System) to the M&T General Fund, contingent upon needs before the next board meeting.

The Library budget was mentioned, and will be discussed further during the Finance Committee Meeting held at 9:15 a.m. on Friday, May 29, 2026.

Ms. Waldman questioned Mr. Koblick picking up checks from East Ramapo when the handbook mentions a treasurer picking up checks. Ms. Cole Adam commented that the Library does and should have a set of internal controls and fiscal policies that it follows, and achieve what are called segregation of important duties. Ms. Cole Adams mentions that the trustee handbook is a useful general guide, and due to the size of budget, capacity, and staff capacity, the obligation to segregate duties are greater. The comptroller audit was again presented to be sent to the board. Ms. Cole Adams comments on not to look to the handbook for answers, but to look at the in-house fiscal policies to work on for the next year.

Ms. Riario commented it is always preferable that the person depositing the check in the bank makes a copy of the check so there is a record regarding internal controls. Ms. Riario then confirmed Mr. Koblick stated he makes a copy of the check and provides that to the treasurer. This is a way to double-check that Mr. Koblick is actually depositing the check that has been provided.

A motion was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld and carried unanimously for the director and or one of her employees to look into the January 2, 2026 payroll journal and come back to the board with answer on overtime before the next board meeting.

A motion was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld and carried unanimously to approve the payroll journals for January 16, 2026, January 30, 2026, February 13, 2026, February 27, 2026, March 13, 2026, May 8, 2026, and May 22, 2026.

Ms. Waldman commented on budget transfers and requested Ms. Cole Adams to clarify on the board's say on where money is moved. Ms. Cole Adams commented changing between budget lines, depending on approval, depending on policies, the board approves that change. There are different ways to do budgeting regarding sublines, and important for all to be familiar with. Ms. Waldman began to make a motion on budget transfers be prior approved by the board before they happen. Ms. Wolven commented if this is a part of the procurement policy? Ms. Cole Adams commented on internal controls and fiscal policy. It is important for the board to see answers to these questions in a clear written document. Ms. Cole Adam suggested with permission, to put this in the tracker, and stated her office has a template of fiscal policies that is based on the comptroller's guidance.

Ms. Gottesfeld asked if Ms. Wolven just asked if there was something in our policy about budget transfers, and Ms. Cole Adams responded not to quote her, but as she recalls, the procurement policy right now has something about moving things in between subaccounts, which is a typical practice. She commented on the importance that policies define budget lines, and that the board has clarity on budget for collections. The amount that's being spent on collections, not on utilities or legal fees. Answers to questions should be driven by policy, rather than reactivity in the moment. The recommendation to review the policy from the comptroller was said, since this is the office that will audit the Library if there's a concern. Ms. Cole Adams commented on fund surplus that will be in the template regarding money that is unused. Ms. Cole Adams suggested that the board review the template with Ms. Wolven and her team. This has to be driven by the practices that are helping keep the Library operating on a day-to-day basis and keep things moving.

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld and carried unanimously **to retract Ms. Waldman's original motion, and to make a motion for the attorney to send the finance committee the template that was referenced, (policy from the comptroller), so that the finance committee can review it, and then bring recommendations to the board at the next meeting.**

A **motion** was made by Ms. Gottesfeld, seconded by Mr. Johnson and carried unanimously to **approve the Financial Statement for March 2026.**

Treasurer's Report: Mr. Glick submitted his report to Ms. Davis. There were concerns on the report regarding reconciliation and access were addressed.

A **motion** was made by Ms. Gottesfeld, seconded by Ms. Waldman and carried unanimously to **give the Treasurer access to the credit card accounts.**

Library Statistical Report: The April 2026 report was presented.

Union Report:

Ms. Daley asked if there was a special meeting date scheduled for after the Finance Committee meeting for Friday, May 29, 2026 to approve whatever is discussed in regards to changes with staff, hours, or any changes made. Ms. Waldman responded commenting on seeing how the finance committee meeting goes before a decision is made.

Ms. Waldman asked Ms. Cole Adams in regards to paying the M&T credit card bill online, if there is already a check produced for payment. Ms. Cole Adams responded that the board could pass a small resolution directing Mr. Koblick to do so.

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld and carried unanimously to **for Mr. Koblick to destroy the approved check for M&T bank, and pay the bill online for 5/28/2026 to avoid incurring late fees and interest, and to make payments online moving forward.**

Public Comment: None.

Correspondence Received: None.

Library Director's Report: Report was presented.

Ms. Wolven asked Ms. Cole Adams if it would be possible to do a revote on the Library Budget at this point. Ms. Cole Adams stated that the vote should be done by the third Tuesday in June, and we are not held to the 45-day deadline.

Ms. Wolven commented regarding the limits the board is placing are not appropriate for the level of knowledge and experience Ms. Wolven possess.

Ms. Riario recommended Ms. Wolven look at some of the limitations in the procurement policy, because limitations will hit with construction. Ms. Riario commented that any project that has to do with construction right now, is 35% more expensive than it was a year ago and believes some of these limitations will hit the library hard, and confirmed the Library has 6 construction grants. There was confirmation of a grant approved by DASNY, and a grant done in 2024 that needs to be completed in 6 years, and 2 grants in 2025. All of these grants need to be done within 6 years, otherwise the Library will lose the money.

A **motion** was made by Ms. Gottesfeld, seconded by Ms. Waldman and carried unanimously to **allow the Library Director to give 24-hour notice to inform the board via email, if something unexpected were to happen.**

Example: things like repair, or printing that is over the limit, but needs to be sent out.

Ms. Cole Adams commented on urgent procurements in order for the Director to make quick decisions.

Committee Report:

Budget and Finance: Esther Waldman, Vice President, Chair:

A motion was made by the Finance Committee to have the Director and Board President to look into cheaper options for the diligent program. Ms. Wolven recommended to amend the motion to add the Clerk to the Board.

A **motion** was made by the Finance Committee, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld and carried unanimously to **have the President, Director, and Clerk to the Board look into a program called diligent to find out what it does and to look into other programs that may be cheaper.**

A **motion** was made by the Finance Committee, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld and carried unanimously to **approve the treasurer to reconcile all accounts separately.**

Ms. Cole Adam advised that the Finance Committee review the fiscal controls template. This will be on the tracker, and this addresses this issue, specifically who performs reconciliations that is part of the duties that have to be segregated.

A motion was made by the Finance Committee to approve a letter to be sent to the Library Treasurer Mr. Glick regarding past approved overtime payment to him in the amount of \$18.75 to be applied to the next invoice submitted for the Library. Clarification is needed regarding payment.

A request was made for the Treasurer and Mr. Koblick to meet.

A request was made for the Director to gather all documents related to Sky packets.

Personnel: Darnett Davis, President, Chair: personnel items will be discussed during executive session.

Advocacy and Fundraising: Yehudis Gottesfeld, Chair: None.

By-Laws and Policy: Esther Waldman, Vice President, Chair:

A **motion** was made by the By-Laws and Policy Committee, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld and carried unanimously to **approve the Attorney Communication Resolution, with the addition of the Assistant Director, Head of Human Resources, to access the attorney for personnel matters within a budget limit of \$5,000.** – See Resolution 1

A **motion** was made by the By-Laws and Policy Committee, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld and carried unanimously to **approve eliminating remote work effective June 30, 2026.** – See Resolution 2

A **motion** was made by the By-Laws and Policy Committee, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld and carried unanimously to **approve the Gifts and Donation Policy.**

A **motion** was made by the By-Laws and Policy Committee, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld and carried unanimously to **approve the Security Camera Policy.**

A **motion** was made by the By-Laws and Policy Committee, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld and carried unanimously to **approve the ACH Policy draft.**

Procurement Policy was referred back to committee.

Personnel Policy Manual was referred back to committee.

Social Media Policy draft was referred back to committee. Recommended by Ms. Cole Adams. Ms. Cole Adams commented there are a couple of changes that are very critical.

New Business:

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld and carried unanimously to **approve the appointment of Efrain Pinzon, Custodian I (PT), Buildings & Grounds Department, effective Monday, April 27, 2026.**

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld and carried unanimously to **approve the 2025 Annual Report.**

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld and carried unanimously to **approve the to discontinue 15 computers from RCLS support.**

Budget Vote Procedures document was tabled.

A **motion** was made by Ms. Davis, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld and carried 5 yes, 1 no **to appoint Ms. Banjo as Secretary to the Board of Trustees.** Ms. Waldman voted no, Mr. Rubinstein was not present via zoom during this vote.

Ms. Cole Adams clarified that there are few things by law; the board would need a secretary. From the not-for-profit corporation law, which does apply to public libraries. A secretary has critical functions, including certifying documents, and they are responsible, typically, for generating the minutes.

Ms. Riario commented library staff can write the minutes, and the Secretary of the Board can approve and review the minutes. Ms. Cole Adams confirmed that the secretary could have all the help from another trustee, from a designated staff member. As a trustee, you need to be able to participate in the meeting, when you take notes, sometimes you are not fully engaged in the discussion.

Unfinished Business:

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld and carried unanimously to **approve the appointment of Randy Peralta, Clerk-Typist (Substitute), IT Department, effective, Wednesday, March 25, 2026.**

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld and carried unanimously to **approve the appointment of Zionna Hosty, Page (Substitute), Youth Services Department, effective Wednesday, April 15, 2026.**

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld and carried unanimously to **approve the appointment of Juliana Munoz, Librarian I, Youth Services Department, effective Wednesday, April 15, 2026.**

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld and carried unanimously to **approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of January 7, 2026.**

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld and carried unanimously to **approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 25, 2026.**

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld and carried unanimously to **approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of March 17, 2026.**

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld and carried unanimously to **approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 25, 2026 with noted changes.**

The Minutes of the Special Meeting of April 20, 2026 were tabled.

The Minutes of the Special Meeting of April 21, 2026 were tabled.

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld and carried to **enter executive session to discuss personnel matter related to a specific employee.**

The Board moved into executive session at 8:54 p.m.

Clerk to the Board was removed from this session, minutes not recorded for motion to come out of executive session and action motion on adjournment.

THE NEXT REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24, 2026.

Respectfully submitted.

Minutes taken by Leah Levine: Minutes reviewed and prepared by Oluwasey Banjo, Secretary of the Board

Darnett Davis
Board President

UNAPPROVED