FINKELSTEIN MEMORIAL LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SPECIAL MEETING/JULY 13, 2026

The special meeting of the Board of Trustees was held both in person and by video conference on Monday, July 13, 2026. The meeting was recorded in accordance with the law.

Board Members Present:
Ms. Darnett Davis, President called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with the following members present by roll call: Ms. Esther Waldman, Vice President, Mr. Yossi Rubinstein, Ms. Yehudis Gottesfeld, Mr. James Johnson, Ms. Oluwasey Banjo, and Mr. Ariel Dahan

Board Members Excused: None
Board Members not Excused: None

Administrative Personnel:
Ms. Laura Wolven, Library Director (virtual), Mr. Andrew Koblick, Business Manager

Others Present in Person:
Many staff members (names not provided), Todd Messner (patron)

Mr. Johnson was asked to lead the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Mr. Rubinstein and carried with four votes in favor **to amend the agenda to include annual organization meeting as required by the bylaws which stated that the annual meeting must be held concurrent with the first meeting in July.** Ms. Davis, Ms. Banjo, and Mr. Johnson abstained.

Mr. Dahan **confirmed that he took his oath of office** on July 7, 2026.

Confirmation of the oaths of office for the director and clerk to the board were tabled.

Ms. Wolven commented that the meeting was not advertised as the organizational meeting and that the library was unprepared for the organizational meeting. Ms. Davis commented that she was not prepared for an organizational meeting, and was only prepared to vote on the contingency budget and restoring Sunday services. Ms. Waldman reiterated that the bylaws state that the annual meeting is held concurrent with the first meeting in July.

A **motion** was made by Mr. Dahan, seconded by Mr. Rubinstein, and carried with four votes in favor **to appoint Ms. Waldman as President of the Board**. Ms. Davis, Ms. Banjo, and Mr. Johnson abstained.

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Mr. Dahan, and carried with four votes in favor **to appoint Mr. Rubinstein as Vice President of the Board**. Ms. Davis, Ms. Banjo, and Mr. Johnson abstained.

Ms. Banjo objected to proceeding with the organizational meeting.

Ms. Davis, Mr. Johnson and staff who were present at the Board meeting excused themselves from the meeting at 6:15 p.m.

Ms. Banjo excused herself from the meeting at 6:18 p.m.

The **nomination for Secretary of the Board was tabled**.

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Mr. Rubinstein, and carried with four votes in favor **to appoint Mendy Glick as Treasurer to the Board**.

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Mr. Dahan, and carried with four votes in favor **to appoint Baldessari and Coster as the library's auditor**.

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman **to continue appointing Stephanie Cole Adams as attorney to the Board**. Motion failed to carry due to lack of a second. Item was tabled to the next meeting.

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld, and carried with four votes in favor to retain Guercio & Guercio (Anthony Fasano) as special counsel to the Board.

A motion was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld **to have Guercio & Guercio not address any pending appeals with the library**.

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Mr. Dahan, and carried with four votes in favor **to allow for the inter-account transfer of funds within the M&T Bank**.

Approval of signatures for vouchers was tabled.

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Mr. Dahan, and carried with four votes in favor **to keep M&T Bank as the depository for funds.**.

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Mr. Rubinstein, and carried with four votes in favor **to set the meeting time and date for the fourth Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. unless changed by the Board**.

Legal advertising was tabled.

Committee assignments were tabled.

Mr. Dahan clarified that that primary distinction between regular meetings and special meetings is that special meetings are scheduled outside of the regular schedule, but otherwise they are just a board meeting.

Ms. Waldman made a statement, clarifying that the Board did not approve nor consider closing the library on Sundays as a means of closing the budget delta.

Ms. Wolven explained that not enough staff have been volunteering to work on Sundays, which is why the library has been closed.

A **motion** was made by Ms. Gottesfeld, seconded by Mr. Rubinstein, and carried with four votes in favor **to pass the following resolution which was read aloud by Ms. Waldman**:

WHEREAS the proposed 26-27 levy was not approved by taxpayers; and

WHEREAS that means that the levy of $9,408,346 will be collected for the 26-27 fiscal year; and

WHEREAS the library must continue to fulfill its long-range plan and commitments to the community; and

WHEREAS the board wants to ensure it is taking into account the full impacts of fiscal decisions prior to identifying any reductions based on them;

BE IT RESOLVED that effective July 1st, 2026, the Board has approved the amounts of the no-increase budget with the modification of the payroll line items from the 4.5% budget, but removing the budget for salary increases for non-union employees which shall be continued as it was for the 25-26 fiscal year, and adding $50,000 for books and $10,000 for additional materials; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that it is understood that until another solution is reached, the difference is made up using the unrestricted fund balance, but the Board prefers that the permanent budget shall not so rely; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Finance Committee shall meet with senior leadership every two weeks until a solution is reached; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that it is the intent of the Board to have a proposed permanent budget, the 26-27 permanent budget, by October 1st, 2026; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board shall direct the Director and her team to prepare proposed solutions as needed to be delivered 3 business days prior to meetings; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee shall direct a memo of options to be prepared for the regular September meeting, with the intent that the 26-27 permanent budget shall be in place.

Ms. Wolven invited Mr. Dahan to a new trustee orientation.

The air handler bids were tabled to allow for time for the head of Buildings and Grounds to find clarity on the details of the NYS Construction Grant that funded it.

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld, and carried with four votes in favor **to establish a temporary finance committee, chaired by Ms. Waldman and including Mr. Rubinstein, Mr. Dahan, the treasurer, business manager, and director, until such time that formal committees are established.**

A **motion** was made by Mr. Dahan, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld, and carried with four votes in favor to **add public comment to the agenda**.

Public Comment:

Todd Messner (patron) made a comment regarding apparent breakdown in communication between the staff and the board, and the risks of the interim budget.

Mr. Dahan made a comment regarding his commitment to making the library accessible to everybody and not reduce services if possible.

A **motion** was made by Ms. Waldman, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld, and carried with four votes in favor to **adjourn at 7:49 p.m**.

THE NEXT REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, JULY 29, 2026.

Respectfully submitted,

Minutes taken by Esther Waldman.

Esther Waldman

Board President