FINKELSTEIN MEMORIAL LIBRARY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, July 29, 2026

Board Room • Finkelstein Memorial Library • 24 Chestnut Street, Spring Valley, New York

Preliminary Organizational Business

The Board continued the Annual Organizational Meeting commenced at a prior meeting. The newly elected Trustee's Oath of Office was administered on July 7, 2026, and administration will verify filing with the Rockland County Clerk. Oaths administered to the Library Director and Recording Secretary on July 16, 2026 will likewise be filed.

Election of Secretary

Following the resignation of the Secretary of the Board, **Oluwaseyi Banjo,** the Board discussed the required office of Secretary and the statutory responsibilities associated with certifying Board actions, resolutions, minutes, and official notices. A possible nomination of Darnett Davis was discussed; however, no action was taken because Trustee Davis was absent. The election was tabled to a future meeting.

Appointment of Library Attorney

The Board considered continuation of its legal services agreement with current counsel.

MOTION moved by the President, Esty Waldman: The Board moved to continue retaining the Law Office of **Stephanie Adams Cole** as legal counsel to the library.

SECOND: Oluwaseyi Banjo

VOTE: Motion was carried by only few (not a quorum)

Authorized Signatories

The Board reviewed annual authorization of signatories for Library vouchers and checks.

MOTION moved by the President, Esty Waldman: to authorize the Board President and Treasurer as primary signatories on Library vouchers and checks, with the Vice President serving as alternate signatory when necessary.

SECOND: The motion was seconded.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Committee Appointments

The Board reviewed and approved the proposed 2026–2027 committee assignments. The assignments included Personnel; Finance; Bylaws and Policy; Buildings and Grounds; Strategic Plan of Service; and Advocacy. Absent trustees were to be notified of their assignments.

MOTION moved by the President, Esty Waldman: to approve the committee appointments as presented.

SECOND: The motion was seconded.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Annual Policy Acknowledgements and Conflict-of-Interest Disclosures

The Board reviewed the annual Confidentiality, Conflict of Interest, and Personnel Policy acknowledgements. Trustees were directed to sign and return the forms, with additional time permitted where necessary. The Board also reviewed the annual Conflict of Interest Disclosure process.

ACTION: The Library Director will distribute Conflict of Interest Disclosure Forms to trustees and designated employees, with completed forms submitted to the Board President and Vice President before the next Board meeting for review and acceptance.

Legal Advertising

The Board reviewed the annual designation of newspapers for legal notices and budget-related publications.

MOTION moved by the President, Esty Waldman: to designate The Journal News (LoHud) as the Library's official newspaper for legal advertising, with the Rockland County Times as the alternate publication when necessary.

SECOND: The motion was seconded.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Board Meeting Location

The Board considered the location of future meetings. After discussion concerning accessibility, seating capacity, technology, and public access, the proposed Founders Room designation was amended to the First Floor Meeting Room.

MOTION moved by the President, Esty Waldman: to designate the First Floor Meeting Room as the location for regular and special Board meetings beginning August 26, 2026, unless otherwise designated by the Board, and to direct the Library Director to ensure appropriate audiovisual equipment, internet connectivity, and Zoom capability.

SECOND: James Johnson

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

REGULAR BOARD MEETING

I. Confirmation of Quorum and Attendance

A quorum was established. Trustees present included Esther Waldman, Yossi Rubinstein (participating remotely at the outset), Yehudis Gottesfeld, James Johnson, Oluwaseyi Banjo, and Ariel Dahan. Darnett Davis was absent. Yossi Rubinstein subsequently left the meeting after a brief period of participation. Library Director Laura Wolven, Business Director Andrew Koblick, Mendy Klick, security personnel, Board Counsel Stephanie Adams Cole, and members of the public participated in person and/or remotely.

II. Call to Order

President Esther Waldman called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Welcome and Recognition of Guests

The Board recognized the members of the public and other attendees participating in person and remotely.

V. Approval and/or Modification of the Agenda

The agenda was amended to add the New York State Construction Grant Assurance Resolution under New Business, an update regarding the SkyPackets invoice, an update regarding the outstanding legal invoice, outstanding Bylaws and Policy Committee recommendations, and discussion of Sunday library operations.

MOTION moved by the President, Esty Waldman: to approve the agenda as amended.

SECOND: The motion was seconded.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

VI. Minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 24, 2026

The Board reviewed the June 24, 2026 draft minutes and identified several clerical and substantive corrections, including names, vendor names, and clarification of a budget-transfer motion.

ACTION: Approval of the June 24, 2026 Regular Meeting minutes was tabled pending revision.

VII. Minutes of the Special Meeting of July 13, 2026

The July 13, 2026 Special Meeting minutes were not included in the meeting packet.

ACTION: Approval was tabled until the draft minutes are distributed for Board review.

VIII. Bill List – July 29, 2026

The Board reviewed the July 29, 2026 Bill List and received clarification regarding departmental Amazon purchases and individual invoices. No further questions were raised.

MOTION moved by the President, Esty Waldman: to approve the July 29, 2026 Bill List.

SECOND: The motion was seconded.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

IX. PO Purchase Requisition Status Report

The Business Manager presented outstanding purchase requisitions and purchase orders exceeding $5,000, totaling approximately $86,000.

Hauser Brothers – HVAC Maintenance

The Board reviewed the approximately $24,600 annual HVAC maintenance requisition. Discussion focused on procurement requirements and whether the vendor qualified for sole-source treatment. Counsel

advised that any sole-source determination would require appropriate documentation. The Board preferred competitive procurement while ensuring that necessary maintenance is not delayed.

MOTION moved by the President, Esty Waldman: to direct that the Library's HVAC maintenance services be put out for bid in accordance with the Library's procurement policy, with the process completed in sufficient time to ensure timely maintenance.

SECOND: James Johnson

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Other Requisitions

The Board reviewed additional requisitions, including Lightpath communications services, Consolidated Computing technology services, EnvisionWare computer and printing systems, and Miller's Touch cleaning services. The Board also noted the need to clarify procurement thresholds during the next policy review.

MOTION moved by the President, Esty Waldman: to approve the remaining purchase requisitions exceeding $5,000, excluding the HVAC requisition referred for competitive procurement.

SECOND: The motion was seconded.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

X. June 2026 Payroll Journals

The payroll journals had not yet been reviewed because of the Finance Committee's workload.

ACTION: Review and approval of the June 2026 payroll journals was tabled until the August Board meeting.

XI. Financial Statement for May 2026

The May 2026 financial statements and related bank reconciliation were not yet complete.

ACTION: Consideration of the May 2026 financial statements was tabled pending completion of the bank reconciliation.

XII. Financial Summary for July 2026

The Board reviewed the July financial summary. Administration reported that approximately 92% of the annual budget had been expended and anticipated that the Library would finish the fiscal year under budget, with the final year-end variance still to be determined.

The Board also approved a transfer of $1,000,000 from NYCLASS to the Library's M&T Bank operating account to provide sufficient funds for upcoming obligations. Administration advised that additional operating transfers would be made as needed to cover health insurance and other approved expenses while maintaining an appropriate NYCLASS balance.

XIII. Treasurer Report

The Treasurer and Business Manager reported continued progress in reconciling the Library's accounts. Most accounts were reconciled, with only a minor discrepancy remaining in one category. The Board also

discussed improvements to the format and clarity of the Treasurer's Report and related financial policies. The Finance Committee will continue its review, including at its August 7, 2026 meeting.

XIV. Library Statistical Report for June 2026

The June 2026 Library Statistical Report was included as a Board agenda item. No separate Board action on the report is reflected in the source minutes.

XV. President's Report

Open Meetings Law

President Waldman reported that she had contacted the New York State Committee on Open Government concerning notice requirements for the July 13, 2026 Special Meeting. She reported that, based on the Committee's response, she understood the meeting to have complied with the applicable notice requirements. The correspondence was included in the supplemental Board packet.

Trustee Continuing Education

Trustees were reminded of the requirement to complete two hours of continuing education annually through RCLS or other approved sources.

Sunday Library Services

The President reported that the Library had been closed on Sundays for approximately four weeks because of operational and financial considerations. The Board expressed its desire to resume Sunday service when financially and operationally feasible.

Finance Committee

The President reported that the Finance Committee met July 24, 2026 and will meet again August 7, 2026 to continue its budget and financial review.

XVI. Library Director's Report

New York State Construction Grant

The Director reported that the application deadline was August 1, 2026 and requested approval of the required assurances so the application could be submitted. Bids had been received for the next phase of the Library expansion, involving mechanical/HVAC systems. The assurance does not itself approve construction bids or authorize expenditures.

Passport Services

The Board discussed passport acceptance services. Staff explained that appointments require substantial staff time for application review, document verification, copying, photographs, accuracy checks, and processing. The Library processed 12 passports during the reporting period following approximately 20 telephone inquiries and two in-person inquiries. Passport services are provided by appointment.

Collection Maintenance and Damaged Books

Staff explained the process for repairing, removing, or replacing damaged books. Where practical, missing pages may be reproduced rather than replacing an otherwise usable item. Suitable withdrawn materials may also be donated to the Crisis Library.

Mobile Library Grant

Administration reported receipt of a $12,000 grant to support a mobile library pilot. The pilot is expected to begin in September 2026 and will use an existing Library van equipped with technology, library materials, mobile carts, and accessibility equipment. The program is expected to serve community locations including senior housing and senior centers, with staff assisting in implementation and outreach.

Annual Audit

The annual audit remained in progress, with auditors working on-site. Administration will contact the auditors for an update on the status of the audit and the anticipated completion date.

XVII. Union Representative Report

Union Representative Susanne Daley addressed the Board regarding staffing, Sunday closures, budget uncertainty, public communication, and financial reporting. The Board and Administration reported that budget and staffing discussions were continuing, with a goal of finalizing an operating budget for consideration in September and implementation targeted for October 1, 2026. Ms. Daley also requested clearer and more consistent public communication concerning Sunday service and financial information. The Board noted that the Finance Committee was reviewing the financial figures and reconciliation process.

XVIII. Public Comment

Members of the public raised questions and comments concerning passport services, the Library budget and budget vote, Sunday closures, voter participation, trustee candidate information, publication of Board resolutions, Finance Committee scheduling, and air-handler grant funding. The Board responded to the questions and indicated that certain matters would be investigated or addressed under the applicable agenda items.

Martha Rodriguez suggested establishing designated passport appointment days to make the service more predictable for staff and patrons. The Board thanked her for the suggestion. Public comments also emphasized the need for stronger community outreach concerning Library services, programs, budget matters, and trustee elections. The Advocacy Committee was asked to note the broader communication concern.

XIX. Correspondence Received

The Board reviewed correspondence from LARC concerning an upcoming event and donation request. Additional correspondence from a bookseller containing lists of available genres and books was also received and will be forwarded to appropriate Library personnel.

XX. Committee Reports

Budget and Finance

The temporary Finance Committee, which met July 24, 2026, reviewed off-site programs, substitute staffing, Sunday service, budget spreadsheet discrepancies, programming, and information technology. The Committee identified a correction needed to the administrative budget total for longevity and step increases and requested additional budget documentation. Approximately $80,000 in potential savings had been identified from approximately $197,000 in reductions under discussion. The projected annual cost

associated with Sunday service was discussed at approximately $220,000, depending on assumptions. Further review was scheduled for August 7, 2026.

Other Committees

No separate substantive reports from the Personnel, Advocacy and Fundraising, Strategic Planning, or Buildings and Grounds Committees are reflected in the source minutes for this meeting.

XXI. New Business

1. AI Platforms for Boards

The Board discussed AI-based board-management platforms. The President and Vice President will further review the leading options and return with a recommendation at a future meeting. No action was taken.

2. New York State Library Construction Aid – Assurance Resolution

The Board reviewed the required assurance confirming its intent to proceed with the applicable construction project if grant funding is awarded. The assurance confirms the Library's authority to apply, designates the Library Director as Construction Project Manager, and confirms compliance with applicable requirements. Execution of the assurance does not itself approve construction bids or authorize expenditures.

MOTION moved by the President, Esty Waldman to approve the New York State Library Construction Aid Assurance and authorize execution of the required application documents.

SECOND: Yossi Rubinstein

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

3. Sunday Library Operations

The Board discussed its preference for resuming Sunday operations. The Director explained that Sunday staffing has historically depended on voluntary sign-ups and that current availability is insufficient, particularly in Circulation. Additional clerk substitutes and security coverage may be necessary. Counsel advised that any staffing solution must comply with the collective bargaining agreement, Civil Service requirements, and other applicable law. The Board discussed possible staffing options and the feasibility of reopening by August 9, 2026, but no final action was taken. The Director was expected to work with counsel on a legally compliant operational and staffing plan for future consideration.

SkyPackets

The Board reviewed the SkyPackets IT audit and outstanding invoice of approximately $4,997. The Board concluded that SkyPackets appeared to have completed the work described in its proposal, although the Board's expectations regarding an IT cost-savings analysis may not have been fully reflected in the engagement scope. The Board authorized further communication with SkyPackets to clarify the work performed, the Board's expectations, and the outstanding invoice. The source minutes do not identify the mover or seconder by name.

Outstanding Legal Bills

The Board discussed outstanding legal invoices and the distinction between work expressly authorized by the Board and other charges still under review. Counsel recommended written communication with the firm confirming that the Board was reviewing the bills and consulting with counsel. The Chair of the ad hoc committee was to respond to the firm and advise that further review was underway. No final payment determination was recorded.

Bylaws and Policy Committee Recommendations

The Board considered a recommendation to move toward a board-centered committee appointment model supported by a comprehensive committee charter and agreed that the matter should be referred to the Bylaws and Policy Committee for further consideration. A proposed amendment concerning the length of trustee terms was then considered but failed for lack of sufficient votes; only two members voted in favor. The Committee also moved to approve the Board Calendar; the motion carried. The source minutes do not identify the individual movers or seconders by name.

XXII. Unfinished Business

1. Approval of 2026/2027 Budget

No final action on approval of the 2026/2027 budget is reflected in the source minutes.

2. Air Handler Bid / Grant Matters

Questions concerning air-handler grant funding and the status and use of grant funds were raised. The matter was not resolved before the meeting proceeded to other business.

3. Retirement Incentive

No substantive action on the Retirement Incentive item is reflected in the source minutes.

4–6. Prior Meeting Minutes

The May 27, 2026 Regular Meeting minutes and the April 21 and April 20, 2026 Special Meeting minutes were listed as unfinished business. No substantive action on these items is reflected in the source minutes.

7. Personnel Policy – 2026

The Personnel Policy, including the PFM Policy, was listed for consideration. No final action is reflected in the source minutes.

8. Procurement Policy

The Board continued its review of the Procurement Policy. Discussion focused on budget-line transfers and the distinction between intra-departmental and interdepartmental transfers. The Board generally agreed that intra-departmental transfers of up to $5,000 may be permitted without prior Board approval, while interdepartmental transfers should require prior Board approval.

MOTION: to amend the Procurement Policy to permit intra-departmental budget transfers of up to $5,000 while requiring prior Board approval for all interdepartmental budget transfers.

SECOND: The motion was seconded.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

The Board also discussed the $5,000 and $6,000 thresholds in the procurement provisions. Counsel explained that the thresholds address different requirements, including competitive bidding and prior Board approval. The discussion was not completed before the Board moved to Executive Session, and the remaining Procurement Policy discussion was deferred to a future meeting.

XXIII. Executive Session

MOTION moved by the President, Esty Waldman to enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing specific personnel matters concerning a particular employee, including matters relating to personnel discipline, suspension, termination, or other personnel-related action, as permitted by law.

SECOND: The motion was seconded.

VOTE: Motion carried; Executive Session commenced at 8:56 p.m.

The Board determined that an Executive Session was necessary to discuss specific personnel matters concerning a particular employee, including matters relating to personnel discipline, suspension, termination, or other personnel-related action, as permitted by law. The Board entered Executive Session at 8:56 p.m. Guests were asked to leave and the recording was stopped. The Library Director remained for the portion requiring her participation.

Personnel Matter

Board Counsel provided an update regarding a pending personnel proceeding, including a potential resignation arrangement involving a Library Aide and the status of a hearing officer's determination, which was expected by the end of August. Counsel also advised that a transcript of the proceeding was available to the Board.

Director Evaluation

The Board President provided the Library Director with the previously completed Director evaluation and requested that it be reviewed in its entirety. No further substantive discussion of the evaluation was recorded.

MOTION moved by the President, Esty Waldman moved to exit Executive Session.

SECOND: The motion was seconded.

The Board exited Executive Session at 9:00 p.m. No final action arising from the Executive Session is reflected in the source minutes.

XXIV. Adjournment

There being no further business recorded, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

_____

Recording Secretary

Date Approved: _____