



Schenectady County Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting
February 27, 2025 - 6:00 pm
Swanker Room - Karen B Johnson Library

1. Call to Order, Roll Call
2. Public Comment
3. Consent Agenda
 - a. Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes for January 23, 2025
4. Schenectady Poet Laureate
5. President's Report
6. Director's Report
7. Friends of the Library Report
8. Committee Reports
 - a) Finance Committee
 - b) Planning Committee
 - c) Policy Committee
9. New Business
10. Adjournment

The next regular Schenectady County Public Library Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled to be held on March 27, 2025 at 6:00 pm in the Swanker Room at the Karen B. Johnson Library.

SCHENECTADY COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

The regular monthly meeting of the Schenectady County Public Library Board of Trustees was held on Thursday, January 23, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. in the Swanker Boardroom at the Karen B. Johnson Central Library.

PRESENT: Madelyn Thorne, President; Brenda Schworm, Vice-President; Carmel Patrick, Treasurer; Justin Chaires; David Fronk; Jude McQueen; Tina Chericoni Versaci

ABSENT AND EXCUSED: Steve McCutcheon; Julie McDonnell; Bernice Rivera; Angela Tatem

STAFF: Charity Thorne, Executive Director; Beth DeMidio, Director of Operations; Michelle Dannenhoffer-Cau, Public Services Manager

GUESTS: Charlene Roman, President, Friends of the Library; Shirley DeBono, First Vice-President, Friends of the Library

President Madelyn Thorne called the meeting to order at 6:07p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Patricia Gosda/Niskayuna, NY-SCPL's most avid readers and users of the library have had to adjust their ways to access library materials for the last several months. This includes having to acquire cards from other libraries. She is concerned about the relevance of SCPL in the future.

David Gosda/Niskayuna, NY- He urges the board to work with the County IT Department to have Library Board of Trustees meetings livestreamed. He also recommended that the email addresses of the Library Board of Trustees be made public.

Mike Norris/Quaker Street, NY-He has been working with staff member, Michelle, to help him acquire books/e-books, but wanted to express that previously reserving books was seamless.

Nancy Gifford-Scotia, NY-Remarked on the statistics included in the board packet and discussed the importance of professional and experienced librarians for collection development.

Deborah Noyes-Schenectady, NY-She highly recommends The Library Book, by Susan Orlean. It was the book club choice for Niskayuna. Trustees would enjoy reading the book and it reinforces how important the trustees' job is to make policy for this organization.

CONSENT AGENDA

Moved by Justin Chaires, seconded by Tina Chericoni Versaci. Motion passed.

APPROVAL OF LONG-RANGE PLAN – Discussion ensued. Moved by Carmel Patrick, seconded by Jude McQueen. Motion passed.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

- Draft of 2025 Committee Assignments have been sent out
- Reminder about required 2 hours of training for trustees for 2025. See MVLS website for online training options
- Library Advocacy Day in Albany – February 5, 2025
- Discussion ensued about regular meeting time 6:00 or 6:30
- By-Laws need revision

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Trustees reviewed the written report by Executive Director Charity Thorne. Charity Thorne recognized library staff who worked extremely hard to provide excellent customer service through all the changes and challenges over the past several months as we were transitioning to be more flexible, have autonomy and work to improve our services. She acknowledges that it has been difficult, and staff were outstanding. Lynn Vincent who supervises central circulation held evening and weekend public programs to teach patrons how to use the new catalog and place requests. The programs were well attended, and patrons were very appreciative.

CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

Beth DeMidio reported.

- The garage at the Central Library was demolished. Replacement will be a pre-fab garage-to arrive in 2025
- Work on the cooling tower was completed earlier this year/new fencing as well.
- Staff breakroom and restrooms should be completed in February
- Elevator at KBJ-replacement date TBA
- Meeting was held recently with C2 regarding master plan for KBJ
- Need feasibility study for Quaker Street and Woodlawn libraries/Both are in the 2025 Capital Projects

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

- The winter book sale will be held on Saturday, February 1, 2025 from 10:00 am-4:00 pm and Sunday, February 2, 2025 from 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Finance – None
- Planning – None
- Policy – None

NEW BUSINESS

Jude McQueen commented that she loves the new Website.

David Fronk corrected a statement that was made about SCPL.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:53 pm on a motion by Carmel Patrick, seconded by Justin Chaires.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, February 27, 2025 at 6:00 pm in the Swanker Boardroom at the Karen B. Johnson Library.

In January it was exciting to begin work on many of our projects to improve patron access and experience with the lengthy transition out of the Joint Automation Project largely complete. We had to create and iteratively improve a lot of temporary processes during the transition so we are delighted to shift our focus to building out our longer term standard operating procedures. Here are a few key areas of focus from the last month:

Interlibrary loan: our behind-the-scenes automation with OCLC Worldshare was implemented, automatically sending patron requests through to potential lending libraries as well as flagging newer materials for librarians to review for potential purchase. Using the built-in interlibrary loan functions available in Polaris, we can now better track, process and document interlibrary loans from a variety of sources than ever before. We are continuing to promote our video on using Worldcat to place an interlibrary loan request to help get the word out in addition to the tutorial programs we offered and the one on one assistance our staff provide at all locations.

Collection development and management: all librarians now have collection development responsibilities, ensuring we have a broad variety of strengths, interests and experience helping select materials for our collections. The previous changes we made to embed both adult and youth services librarians at every one of our libraries as part of the team will allow them to be more familiar with each community's collection needs and interests to inform collection development and management. The new ability to review interlibrary loan requests for potential gaps in our collection also helps us ensure we are purchasing the materials Schenectady residents really want. As part of our transition, we updated key parameters in Polaris such as material types, collections, shelf locations, fund names and spine label conventions. These updates are intended to allow for more consistent use of each parameter and more clearly and simply identify items for both staff and patrons in our staff client and in the public catalog, as well as allowing us to easily track statistics on different material types and collections in a variety of ways and quickly make bulk updates to item records if and when needed. With the Polaris migration, we've been working on fresh Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) configurations with our two main vendors, Ingram and Midwest. EDI is the machine-to-machine communication that allows us to receive items shelf-ready without staff manually entering a lot of data. Our new configurations will allow us to specify more information at the point of ordering which saves staff manually updating item records or creating or changing spine labels when the items are received and allows us to get items out for patron use more quickly. We also launched our SCPL Overdrive/Libby platform in January, allowing us to prioritize our patrons' holds for items purchased with our budget and to select the items purchased with our budget. While our platform is not intended to fully replace the MVLS Overdrive platform, which SCPL patrons can still access with an active library card from any MVLS library, we hope it will help fill the demand for new and popular titles available through Overdrive/Libby for our residents.

Automated phone notifications: we have launched IPA Alerts, which allows Polaris to initiate automated phone notifications for any patron who has chosen phone as their notification

preference. Now patrons can get due date reminder calls, hold pick up notices, and overdue notices by phone. Previously staff manually ran reports and made phone calls to notify patrons of holds ready for pick up. Automating this frees staff up to provide more in-depth and direct customer service to patrons who need assistance.

We also worked on our mobile app configuration for launch, which is now available for download by clicking [here](#). The mobile app allows library users to easily check their accounts, place holds, renew materials, access digital content and find the nearest library along with its operating hours.

Public Services

The Circulation Department is pleased to present the following report highlighting our recent activities and achievements.

Patron Growth and Engagement:

We are delighted to report a significant increase in patron engagement, with **547 patron accounts** registered in January. Notably, **209 of these new accounts were registered at the KBJ branch**, demonstrating the continued vitality and importance of that location within our community.

Collection Management and Organization:

We have successfully completed the significant projects of shifting our non-fiction and fiction collection, as well as the relocation of Large Type (LT) books and CDs. These changes have enhanced the accessibility and organization of our materials for our patrons. Our current project for February is the interfiling and shifting of our DVD collection, which we anticipate will further improve patron experience.

Catalog Training and Support:

The highly anticipated rollout of our new catalog system was accompanied by comprehensive training programs conducted in early January. These sessions were met with **outstanding attendance**, and patrons were provided with thorough instruction on utilizing the new catalog and its features, including logging into the classic catalog and accessing WorldCat. In addition to the formal programs, our dedicated clerks at the KBJ branch have been providing personalized, one-on-one assistance to patrons, guiding them through the catalog and ensuring they can effectively access our resources.

The Circulation Department remains committed to providing efficient, accessible, and user-friendly services to our community. We are continuously seeking ways to improve our operations and enhance the patron experience.

Bornt and Mont Pleasant:

Our new librarian, Ali Bailey assigned to the Bornt and Mont Pleasant branches has brought back Book-a-librarian at both locations. This has already been a well-attended program with people coming in with a range of troubleshooting problems, new phones, backing up documents and pictures, resume help, job searching, website searching, computer issues, etc. Ali teaches them how to use them or tries to help fix their issue. Many are recurring patrons and will come in for multiple sessions, until their issue is fixed or back up is done.

Mont Pleasant had a movie matinee showing Next Goal Wins.

Ali also worked on the collection at Bornt by moving various types to help boost circulation and highlight those that are popular within this community. With the focus on collection development the branch also made space to add and showcase large type materials.

Similarly, the Mont Pleasant branch received a nice large type collection, so space was made and collections were moved to group AV more closely together for patrons browsing to more easily find.

Our Youth Services librarian, Kaela Wallman, coordinated a diverse, new program "Hola Hello Bilingual Story Time" presented by Ms. Fiorella Rojas at Central and Bornt started in February. A popular program, Baby Café, is also starting a Spanish speaking breastfeeding support group at the Bornt Branch in March. Historically, the library has offered little in the way of activities for Spanish speakers and this is a response to patron demand.

Rotterdam and Quaker

Youth Services

We resumed programs after our winter break at the Rotterdam & Quaker Street branches towards the end of the month. We had a great turnout for Library Assistant Jody Monroe's program at Rotterdam, "Finger Knitting Fun." 18 kids with their adults came and made a small blanket section that they could use as a pillow cover or even the start of a bigger blanket. We have also been getting good attendance for our Paws for Reading program. We switched the day from Friday to Thursday starting this month, and so far, we've been getting more kids who want to read to Genny, our therapy dog who comes twice a month.

Adult Services

Rotterdam patrons beat the winter doldrums by participating in classes at the library.

Beginner Yoga at Rotterdam with Mayleen Medina of Rock and Soul Wellness on January 15th was a success, with a number of our patrons coming to relax and recharge.

There was a full house for the Sharpie Alcohol Ink Tiles w/ C.R.E.A.T.E. Community Studios at our Rotterdam branch on January 22nd. We had 14 patrons come to this class where they had fun watching the colors they dropped onto tile coasters begin to move as they mixed with the alcohol, blending into one another to create bright patterns. The patrons left with two completed tiles each. The few I was able to speak with commented that they had enjoyed the class very much.

Staff continued to provide personalized one on one assistance to patrons in learning to navigate our new catalog.

The Rotterdam branch also had a blood drive on January 8th and were able to collect 10 units of blood to support the Red Cross.

Cozy Crafters continues to be popular every Wednesday afternoon at the Quaker Street branch, with patrons coming in to work on different crochet/knitting projects, enjoying conversation with one another as well as sharing helpful tips for their work.

Niskayuna & Woodlawn

Adult Services

The Niskayuna and Woodlawn Adult Services programs were busy in January. At Niskayuna, the Qigong, Everything Fiber Arts, and the Firehouse Artists all met. The Yoga Relax program met every Tuesday at Woodlawn. Eleven people attended and enjoyed this activity. The children's area is emptied of the chairs, tables, and toys to accommodate the group for each program. The participants have become quite friendly with one another, lingering after class to talk. They borrow books and browse the shelves. Staff enjoy the event, and we hope to continue until the end of March.

A patron at Niskayuna accompanied her elderly father in his search for a book specifically about tomatoes. After an extensive search, a tomato book was located and reserved for them. She renewed her registration with us, and both were very pleased.

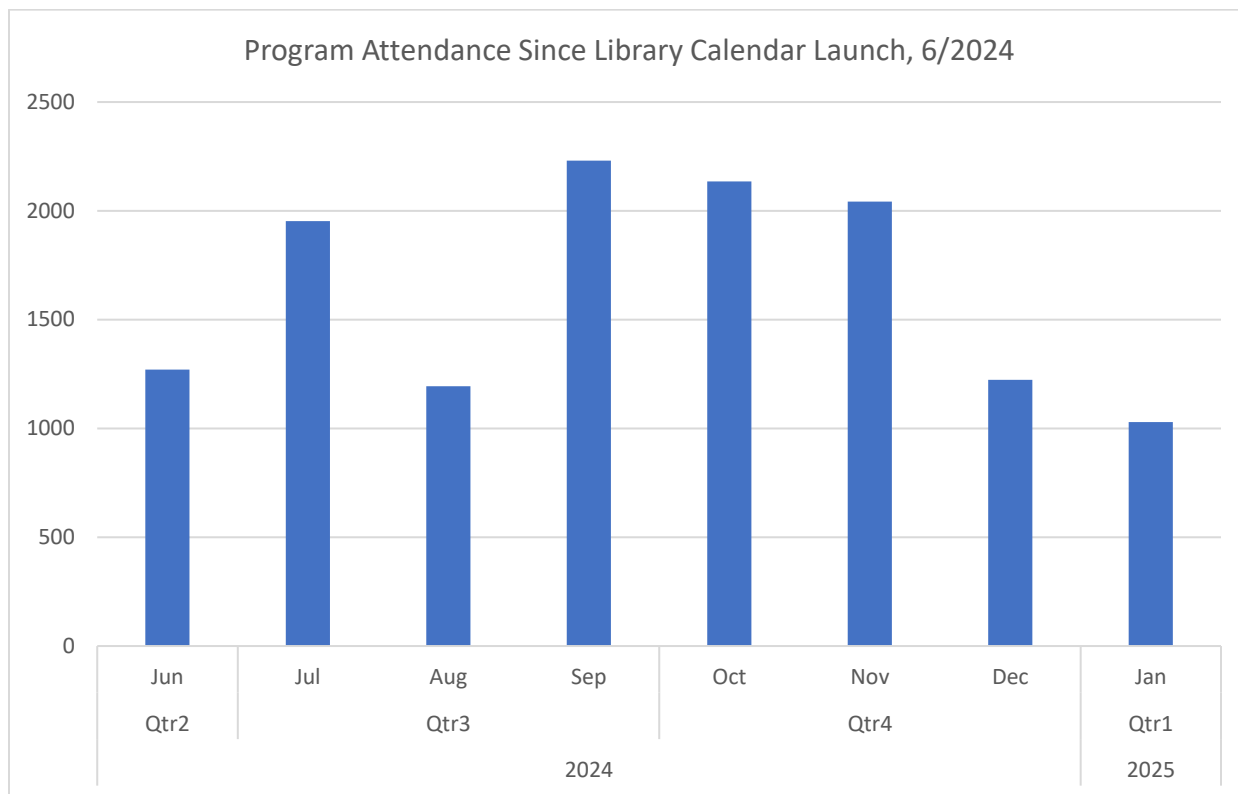
Our Adult Services librarian helped a patron access Consumer Reports and search for hearing aids. She spent time reading reviews and was quite appreciative.

The Niskayuna Book Club, with 21 members (!), read *The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store* by James McBride. The Woodlawn Book Club read *The Outsiders* by S. E. Hinton.

The fiction collection, magazines, and DVDs have all been weeded.

Thoughts are turning to spring at the Woodlawn branch as we plan a Plant Exchange in April. New upcoming programs include: Health and Wellness with Essential Oils, painting experiences, origami creation, and a crafting group at both branches. We're hoping to also offer some musical programs and smartphone instruction classes.

Patrons are still adjusting to the new website and catalog, and staff continue to provide friendly, helpful support and guidance.



01/2025 CIRCULATION	CURRENT	LAST YEAR	CHANGE	FYTD	LAST FYTD	CHANGE
Bornt	1,198	625	92%	1,198	625	92%
Central	19,464	14,799	32%	19,464	14,799	32%
E-Resource	17,770	17,327	3%	17,770	17,327	3%
Glenville	4,454	4,902	-9%	4,454	4,902	-9%
Mont Pleasant	1,390	1,257	11%	1,390	1,257	11%
Niskayuna	9,748	10,175	-4%	9,748	10,175	-4%
Quaker Street	1,390	1,716	-19%	1,390	1,716	-19%
Rotterdam	5,913	6,382	-7%	5,913	6,382	-7%
Scotia	3,091	3,536	-13%	3,091	3,536	-13%
Woodlawn	1,502	1,172	28%	1,502	1,172	28%

Support Services

Jackie Halpin began as a part-time Library Assistant. She has experience working in the Niskayuna Central School District libraries and we are excited to welcome her to SCPL as part of the Youth Services Team at the Hon. Karen B. Johnson Library.

Woodlawn and Glenville's ScanEZ stations were installed, the final to be completed. All nine locations are equipped with the new public printing enhancements. Our December 2024 sales through the new payment kiosks was \$775.10, trending upwards with sales at \$2,140 in January 2025.

Our credit card sales through the self-check kiosks were up \$100.37 in December 2024 compared to December 2023. Sales in January 2025 were steady compared to January 2024.

Our second-floor renovation project continues. We were excited to welcome staff back into the break area in early February. There are a few finishes remaining, but the space is a significant upgrade! Tiling for the restrooms began with the expected completion in March. The cooling tower at Karen B. Johnson Central Library was replaced in early January.

Our Niskayuna Branch program room renovation is scheduled for May and we will be working on a communications plan to announce the project; the library proper will remain open during the project. The dates for the Scotia and Glenville sound attenuation projects are not yet finalized while we await the status of materials being shipped.

January was the first full month of new services under the new Information Technology services provided by Schenectady County. Work continued on rolling out our new Public PC & Copying/Printing/Faxing/Scanning system from TBS for the public to use. The system at our KBJ Main Library allows patrons to scan various pieces of documentation from book pages down to ID cards, which then can either be printed off or sent to various digital hosting devices; such as thumb drives, sent to email, faxed, and saved to online drives. Our branch libraries have the same set up as the Main Library with one exception, only the Main Library has a large format flatbed scanner for scanning a full page spread from a standard sized book. As with any new technology roll out, there have been many questions and a few bumps in the road, however staff and our public are taking it to with a good deal of ease and comfort.

We have found that our AV systems, which are used for programming and patron room rentals, across our locations are in need of some TLC. Some systems were installed in the early-mid 2010's and are becoming out of date and do not mesh well with modern technology. We will begin an analysis of these systems and make recommendations as to how to bring our systems up to date in the next few months.

Public wifi access points have been updated across all nine locations during January. Users must now agree to internet use terms before using the wifi, as they do when signing on to the public computers.

We have made training videos available to the public on our website to teach them how to use the new catalog system, including placing interlibrary loan requests through WorldCat.

Social media statistics:

MONTH	TYPE	VIEWS	ORGANIC REACH	AD REACH	INTERACTIONS	FOLLOWERS
Nov-24	FACEBOOK	70,375	20,252	4,259	817	5,672
Nov-24	INSTAGRAM	2,672	483	98	80	1,611
Dec-24	FACEBOOK	36,919	6,526	3,235	384	5,672
Dec-24	INSTAGRAM	1,596	292	9	46	1,611
Jan-25	FACEBOOK	43,252	11,906	672	541	6,301
Jan-25	INSTAGRAM	2,097	690	216	128	1,621

Website statistics:

MONTH	VIEWS	ACTIVE USERS	NEW USERS
Nov-24	36,488	10,566	8,800
Dec-24	30,467	10,247	8,268
Jan-25	33,673	12,159	9,782

teen corner: february 2025

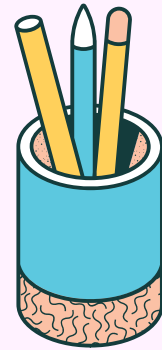
teen service pillar: learning



from YALSA: promote social & emotional learning; identify & build on teen interests; provide informational opportunities about jobs & careers.

learning is fun!

- gamify reading, program attendance, and library card use with a bingo sheet
- bring brief programs to school outreach



days of displays! (and programs)



February 5: World Read Aloud Day
February 11: National Inventors Day
January 22: Comfy Day

3 on a theme: Black History Month

YA Fiction: The Blackwoods by Brandy Colbert
YA Graphic Novel: The Sacrifice of Darkness by Roxane Gay
YA Nonfiction: Black Girl You Are Atlas by Renee Watson



teen corner: february 2025

Let There Be Learning

- social-emotional programming:
 - offer space for teen art displays
 - design multi-generational programs
- teen-led programming:
 - try a branch TAB/TAG to assess patron interests & needs
 - offer volunteer credit for designing a library program in collaboration with YS staff
- career programming:
 - host a college fair
 - offer "a day in the library" job shadowing

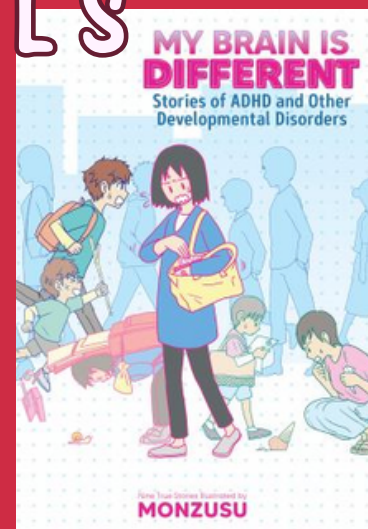
NEW ARRIVALS



YA Graphic Novel



YA Fic



YA Nonfic



modeled after the
successful Re-Use Center
in Ithaca.

Being able to use a space
like yours is so helpful
to us as we will be
trying to raise funds, get
grants and so on.

We are all just volunteers!

Thanks so much
to all of you - Wendy Day
for ZWCD!!

Ilean Schenectady Library
staff including Larry,
Jan and Security,
2-11 evening,

On Behalf of Zero Waste
Capital District I am writing
to thank you for your
kind assistance to us
hosting our Community
Meeting about creating a
Re-Use Center for the area
←