



Schenectady County Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting  
July 25, 2024 - 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 June 26, 2024
  - b. Board of Trustees Finance Committee Minutes for July 16, 2024
4. Approval of Revised Policy 6.1 Library Cards
5. Upper Hudson Library System
6. President's Report
7. Director's Report
8. Friends of the Library Report
9. Committee Reports
  - A. Building Committee
  - B. Finance Committee
  - C. Planning Committee
  - D. Policy Committee
  - E. Mohawk Valley Library System representatives
10. New Business
11. Executive Session
12. Adjournment

The next regular Schenectady County Public Library Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled to be held on September 26, 2024 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 Trustees was held on Thursday, June 27, 2024 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; Angela Tatem, Secretary; Justin Chaires; Steve McCutcheon; Jude McQueen; Tina Chericoni Versaci

ABSENT AND EXCUSED: David Fronk; Sharon Jordan; Julie McDonnell; Bernice Rivera

STAFF: Beth DeMidio, Director of Operations; Devon Hedges, Assistant Library Director; Jan Martin, Board Clerk

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 6:05 p.m.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

Deborah Noyes-Parkwood Boulevard, Schenectady, New York – Provided information on per capita spending among eight libraries, including SCPL. Voiced concerns about withdrawal from JA and on staffing and programming.

Nancy Gifford – Scotia, New York – Spoke about withdrawal from JA, staffing and programming.

Wade Abbott – Rotterdam, New York/Staff member of MVLS – Gave feedback on events that took place at the MVLS Spring Symposium held in May. Addressed the withdrawal of SCPL from JA and potential issues with MVLS.

### CONSENT AGENDA

Moved by Justin Chaires, seconded by Carmel Patrick. Motion passed.

Resolution 2 – Acceptance and Expenditure of Ryan Bequest

Moved by Carmel Patrick, seconded by Justin Chaires. Motion passed.

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Madelyn Thorne participated in an ad hoc meeting today discussing the withdrawal from JA.

### DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Trustees reviewed the written report by Executive Director, Charity Thorne. Beth DeMidio highlighted the following:

- All librarian vacancies have been filled. Once completely onboarded, there will be adult and youth services librarians at all branches. Programming will continue to grow. The huge pool of applicants has also resulted in the hiring of part-time Library Assistants.
- Summer Reading for Adult and Youth Services kicked off on June 15, 2024.
- The interior painting at the Rotterdam Branch Library was completed earlier than expected. Photos were shared.
- Designs were displayed for sound attenuation for the Glenville, Niskayuna and Scotia Branch Libraries.

Discussion ensued.

#### FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

- The Friends of the library have a new program within the Outreach Committee and they gave out eight scholarships to high school seniors in Schenectady County.
- The volunteer picnic was held on June 7, 2024 at the Central Park Pavilion.
- The fall book sale will be held on October 5 and 6, 2024.
- Harry Potter Day is scheduled for Saturday, October 19, 2024.
- The Friends funded Museum Pass Program has been reinstated.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Building – None
- Finance – None
- Planning – None
- Policy – None
- MVLS Representative – None

#### NEW BUSINESS

Angela Tatem reported that Albany Public Library shut their doors for a day in order to have a staff retreat. She asked if that was something SCPL would consider doing.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:44 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, July 25, 2024 at 6:00 pm in the Swanker Boardroom at the Karen B. Johnson Central Library.



Schenectady County Public Library Board of Trustees

Finance Committee Meeting

July 16, 2024

Minutes

**Present:** Carmel Patrick, Committee Chair; Tina Chericoni Versaci; Julie McDonnell

**Absent:**

**Ex-officio:** Madelyn Thorne, SCPL Board President

**Guests:** Steve McCutcheon

**Staff:** Charity Thorne, Executive Director; Beth DeMidio, Director of Operations

Executive Director Thorne and Director of Operations DeMidio updated trustees on the two 2025 budget request meetings they had with County Finance Budget staff and the County Manager's office, respectively. DeMidio also provided an overview of 2025 Capital Projects requests for the library, submitted by County Facilities and trustees discussed priorities if not all projects can be funded.

Trustees discussed the upcoming hours of operation expansion in September 2024.

Trustees discussed the collections budget, including the spending for the last couple of years and anticipated future needs.

## **6.1 Library Cards**

Library cards may be issued at no cost to individuals who reside or own property within Schenectady County or the service areas of the Mohawk Valley, Southern Adirondack or Upper Hudson Library Systems.

Current proof of identity and address must be presented to obtain a library card. For minors who do not have their own current proof of identity and address, an adult caregiver may provide theirs on behalf of the minor.

### **Types of Library Cards:**

1. SCPL card – issued to Schenectady County residents and taxpayers, those employed by Schenectady County, and those living in an unserved area of the Mohawk Valley Library System and provides full access to all SCPL resources.
2. Non-resident card – issued to individuals living outside the service areas of MVLS, SALS and UHLS who pay a non-resident card fee. Provides full access to all SCPL resources.
3. MVLS/SALS card – issued to those who live in the service area of another Mohawk Valley Library System or a Southern Adirondack Library System library and provide the same level of access a card from the individual's home library would provide.
4. Core card – Schenectady County residents or taxpayers who do not have current proof of address with them may be issued a card that allows limited access to some library services and provides time to bring in proof of eligibility. Upon presentation of current proof of address, these cards will be converted to a SCPL card.
5. E-card – issued to residents of the MVLS/SALS service areas at least 13 years of age and provides temporary, limited access to some library services, primarily digital collections.
6. Agency card – issued to agencies, businesses, organizations and schools located in Schenectady County and provides full access to all SCPL resources.

## Executive Director Report to the Board

July 25, 2024

June's two major focus areas were the expanded operating hours project and our potential partnership with Upper Hudson Library System. Our goals for this change in operating hours are to ensure all of our branch library locations provide their surrounding communities with equal opportunities to access library services six days per week including friendly, helpful customer service, diverse and responsive collections, librarian level assistance for a majority of open hours, and robust programming and outreach for all ages including evening and Saturday programming for both youth and adults. Standardizing the hours so each branch has two nights that alternate with their next nearest branch's nights also removes a barrier to access in that with hours all over the place, it's harder for patrons to know and track when a branch is open and available to them.

Activities relating to Upper Hudson Library System included a visit from several UHLS staff members and UHLS library directors to tour our Karen B. Johnson Central Library and two of our branches - Bornt and Niskayuna. We also compiled statistics for them in response to a number of questions, and I had a meeting with their ILS administrator Joe Thornton to discuss some of what Sierra can do in terms of things like floating collections and circulation parameters, and how UHLS handles those. I also had a meeting with Judith Wines and Anne Myers of UHLS to discuss how SCPL and UHLS handle interlibrary loan, respectively. I also attended the UHLS Directors Association meeting to speak with the UHLS directors and answer their questions about SCPL and our proposed partnership.

Other activities in June included:

- A tour of MiSCI with the Chamber of Commerce Non-Profit Executive Dialogue group
- Beginning work on the site map and design for our new website with Doug and Syracuse Design
- Meeting with Laura Combs of New Choices to discuss partnership possibilities relating to SCPL distributing informational pamphlets about services through New Choices
- Budget meetings with the County Finance department and County Manager's office
- Capital District Library Council board meeting
- Exploration of OCLC costs for SCPL to begin handling its own non-regional interlibrary loan directly as many large area libraries do

### Public Services

SCPL is once again participating in the Summer Meal program at Karen B. Johnson Central Library. We are thrilled to continue this partnership with SiCM to serve our community.

The adult services team received a certificate of appreciation from the NYS Department of Taxation and Finance for participating in the 2024 taxpayer assistance program. New adult services team member, Jenn Malave, has been recognized by patrons on at least four occasions

for her amazing customer service. One patron was so thankful for Jenn’s assistance they sent flowers to the reference desk to express their gratitude.

Beth DeMidio, Director of Operations, and Michelle Dannenhoffer-Cau, Public Services Manager, successfully completed Fundamentals of Collection Management Development through ALA.

Several library employees and many volunteers attended the Friends of the Library Staff & Volunteer Picnic early in the month.

June began with Youth Services librarians conducting outreach at local schools to promote Summer Reading. Hundreds of students are reached through each librarians’ efforts to get young people engaged in our Summer Reading program. Kickoff events like “Captain’s Hook Mini-Golf Adventure” at the Karen B. Johnson Branch helped draw in crowds to celebrate the start of Summer Reading with an Ice Cream Social donated by Stewarts Shops. StoryWalks have been placed in key areas around the county like Collins Park in Scotia. An LGBTQ+ book group (the “QUILT BAG+ Book Club”) for teens and tweens at Glenville has gained some traction in attendance. Also, the “Growing Minds Bilingual Story Time” has brought many new library users out at the Quaker Street Branch. Additional preparation for Summer Reading included assembling fabulous gift baskets for raffle winners, featuring generous donations from local businesses including Bear & Bird Boutique, Town and Country Skate Shop, Open Door Bookstore and the Schenectady Greenmarket.

Now that we have Library Calendar, we can easily run reports on program and room reservation use. In June at least\* 670 attendees were recorded at 52 offered programs. There were also 161 room reservations across our 9 locations in June; many of these were still staff facilitated however we expect the majority to be reservations made online once word gets out about the ability to check availability and reserve a space that way.

06/2024	LAST			LAST		
CIRCULATION	CURRENT	YEAR	CHANGE	FYTD	FYTD	CHANGE2
Bornt	737	871	-15%	4,256	5,570	-24%
Central	16,699	20,645	-19%	104,945	108,778	-4%
E-Resource	16,048	13,354	20%	98,411	79,673	24%
Glenville	4,965	5,328	-7%	30,237	32,718	-8%
Mont Pleasant	1,071	1,213	-12%	7,940	7,253	9%
Niskayuna	9,990	9,051	10%	59,835	64,769	-8%
Quaker Street	1,534	1,720	-11%	10,070	11,443	-12%
Rotterdam	4,293	7,815	-45%	37,028	39,947	-7%
Scotia	2,775	3,654	-24%	18,862	18,024	5%
Woodlawn	1,117	1,503	-26%	6,798	7,273	-7%

06/2024 INTERACTIONS	CURRENT	LAST YEAR	CHANGE	FYTD	LAST FYTD	CHANGE2
Bornt	219	192	14%	1,691	1,497	13%
Central	1,826	1,842	-1%	11,543	10,023	15%
Glenville	31	58	-47%	405	515	-21%
Mont Pleasant	430	121	255%	2,572	1,118	130%
Niskayuna	360	183	97%	2,234	2,565	-13%
Quaker Street	24	26	-8%	372	329	13%
Rotterdam	44	121	-64%	730	727	0%
Scotia	182	183	-1%	1,248	1,269	-2%
Woodlawn	24	138	-83%	235	448	-48%

\*It appears attendance for some June programs has not been entered in Library Calendar yet so this number does not reflect total attendance for June programs.

### Niskayuna

With school closing for the summer, our Niskayuna branch was even busier than ever this month!

The *Summer Reading Kickoff* was held on June 26. Over seventy participants engaged in fun camping theme activities like pin the antlers on the moose, build a campfire, craft a forest animal mask, and more. *Pre-school Play* began for ages 3-5 and *Build Zone* continued creating with Legos. The *Nisky Climate League* still worked to protect the environment.

Adult programming returned to the branch this month! On June 10, volunteer Tracy Loring offered *Intuitive Painting for Adults*. 14 people turned out for this unique offering.

On June 28, Branch Manager Michelle Dannenhoffer-Cau and Director of Operations Beth DeMidio met with two of the Niskayuna volunteer gardeners and staff from the County Facilities Department for a discussion on improved communication and areas of concern on the branch property, including irrigation system repairs. The discussion was followed by a thorough grounds inspection. At the conclusion of the meeting, all parties were optimistic about the potential for improved communication, cooperation, and collaboration.

Several piano recitals were scheduled by teachers, and high school students presented vocal auditions for college entrance. A memorial service was held for Charlotte DuBlois who formed the Young Musicians Forum at the branch. Several prominent pianists performed her favorites on the beautiful Steinway.

Debbie Bertasso exhibited her nature photographs in the meeting room.

The meeting room hosted the Republican Club, the Philanthropic Education Organization, and a Medicare Seminar. The Niskayuna Debate Team reserved the room to hone their rhetorical skills.

Patrons thanked us for keeping the library so attractive and thanked us for the services we provide.

The family of a regular patron, who died young and very suddenly, returned her books and told us she loved the library and called it her “happy place.”

### Niskayuna/Woodlawn

Patrons continued to praise the *Book A Librarian* program and the technical assistance librarians offer at the Niskayuna and Woodlawn branches. Patrons with health challenges and disabilities, patrons on fixed incomes, and patrons attempting to resolve tax and unemployment issues all rely on our technological expertise. Many traveling and retired patrons call in from considerable distances to update their accounts for uninterrupted access to Hoopla and Libby. Many patrons state that having access to these platforms is the main benefit of having a library card. Branch book clubs remain popular and well-attended. Book club members and patrons in general have stated that having a librarian to host special events such as *Books on Tap* and to offer book recommendations in person is a wonderful addition to service at both branches.

### Woodlawn

*Dragons and Unicorns and Yeti – Oh My!* was the exciting theme of the Woodlawn Branch’s Summer Reading Kickoff on June 25. A roomful of youngsters enjoyed creating stickers and magnets starring their favorite imaginary creatures.

### Rotterdam

A major interior painting project that began after Memorial Day was expected to wrap up by June 17, but it concluded well ahead of schedule to allow for reopening on June 10. Our patrons have been very positive about the colorful change overall.

*Meet your Historian* came to a quiet close for the summer, while the Kickoff for our Summer Reading Program started with a bang with Whispering Willow Wild Care presenting wild birds of prey. 67 excited attendees showed up for this fantastic event!

The Red Cross hosted a blood drive towards the end of the month. They exceeded their goals thanks to a few walk-in donors. The drive was a huge success!

Food Truck Wednesdays continued to delight the palates of hungry patrons at lunchtime with *First Prize Mike’s* and *Flaco’s Tacos* each having their day in the sun in our overflow parking lot.

## Quaker Street

Miss Steph hosted 2 classes of first graders at the branch where they were read the classic *Caps for Sale*. Each child also received their first library card, along with an SCPL tote bag, and enjoyed choosing and checking out a library book to bring home.



Our *Drop-in Board Games* hour attracted 10 participants. Not a surprise as patrons enjoy spending time at this cozy and friendly branch.

Volunteer gardener Leonard Bala visits the branch on a near daily basis to lovingly tend to the garden beds he planted in May. They are a source of pride for all of us at the Quaker Street Branch!



## **Support Services**

This month we are excited congratulate Lynn Vincent, Cindy McKeon and Jenn Malave on their promotions to full-time Library Assistant positions. We also welcomed Nataliya Benacquista, a new part-time Library Assistant. Two new Librarian Is have accepted positions to start in July just as we enter the busy summer reading months.

June was the first full month offering credit card payment options at all locations (one at KBJ remains outstanding). We've seen an increase of \$360.29 in sales in June 2023 compared to June 2024.

Our new Library Calendar went live at the beginning of June with little to no issues. Patrons can now "reserve" their own rooms online through the system on our website. The overall look and feel of our new calendar is much more modern and easier to navigate than the one we used for over a decade.

Trainings were held on the workings of our new RFID gates and self-checkout kiosks and the software that runs them.

New magnetic name tags were handed out to employees to better facilitate an open and friendly customer service focused approach to our patrons, and we are offering the option for employees to list their preferred pronouns on their name tags.

Work is under way with Syracuse Design on our new website.

Summer Reading Program always involves a lot of graphic design and kicked off on June 15 with this year's theme as "ADVENTURE BEGINS AT YOUR LIBRARY."

Support Services Manager, Doug Bixler, was a panelist for the Capital District Library Council's "Digital Dialogues: Exploring the Intersection of Libraries and AI" webinar on June 5<sup>th</sup>. Doug presented on how machine learning/AI in a visual world can be both a blessing and a curse, and should be looked at as a tool in everyone's daily lives. Guidance and tips were shared with attendees on how to help educate their patrons on how to recognize a potentially fake image in their studies, but most importantly in the consumption of their news and information.



Department of  
Taxation and Finance

Taxpayer  
Assistance  
Program

# CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

The New York State Department of Taxation and Finance recognizes

**Schenectady County Public Library**

for your dedication to the taxpayers of New York State through your participation in the

**New York State 2024 Taxpayer Assistance Program**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Hiller".

Acting Commissioner Amanda Hiller

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Schollar".

Executive Deputy Commissioner Michael Schollar

5/22/2024

**New response has been submitted to Microsoft Form at 7/11/2024 5:23:14 PM**

Bixler, Doug <DBixler@mvls.info>

Thu 7/11/2024 1:23 PM

To: Martin, Janice <jmartin@mvls.info>; Thorne, Charity <cthorne@mvls.info>; DeMidio, Beth <bdemidio@mvls.info>; Hedges, Devon <DHedges@mvls.info>

A new response has been submitted to Microsoft Form:

Question/Comment:

Comment

Which SCPL location does this pertain to?

Overall Schenectady County Public Library System

What is your Question/Comment?

I want to recognize your Research Librarian, Jenn, for an exceptional job helping me today. She was knowledgeable, friendly and went above and beyond to help me.

What is your Name:

Margaret Blohm

Best way to contact you?

Email

Please enter your email/phone number:

[REDACTED]

## **BUILDING COMMITTEE REPORT FOR SCPL MEETING ON JULY 25TH**

This report lays out the GOALS FOR 2024 regarding CAPITAL PROJECTS.

**\*COMPLETE LANDSCAPING AT GLENVILLE BRANCH. (this is a hold over from 2023).**

7/25 – Project has started and will be completed by the end of August.

**\*BRANCH LIBRARY DAMAGE REPAIRS AT MT. PLEASANT BRANCH.**

3/28 – County engaging Engineering Firm.

7/25 – May go into 2025

**\*LIBRARIES FIRE ALARM PANEL UPGRADES AT KBJ, WOODLAWN AND GLENVILLE.**

3/28 – County scheduling walk throughs for estimates

7/25 – Glenville and Woodlawn should be completed by end of 24. KBJ into 2025.

**\*BRANCH LIBRARY INTERIOR IMPROVEMENTS AT GLENVILLE, SCOTIA, NISKAYUNA, BORNT AND ROTTERDAM.**

4/25 – starting in June through the fall

7/25 – Design completed at finalized at Glenville, Scotia and Niskayuna. Glenville and Scotia completed by end of year. Niskayuna in 2025.

**\*BRANCH LIBRARY PARKING LOT SEALANT AT QUAKER.**

7/25 – completed by the end of August.

**\*KBJ ELEVATOR UPGRADES**

3/28 – Project to begin the end of May

7/25 – Parts for elevator delayed. No estimate when it will begin. Project takes 3 months to complete.

**\*KBJ 2ND FLOOR STAFF BATHROOMS RENOVATION**

3/38 – Measurements taken for the design phase

4/25 Design completed for Staff bathrooms, kitchen and rest area.

7/25 – waiting for asbestos results. May be done by end of year.

**\*KBJ COOLING TOWER REPLACEMENT**

4/25 – a winter project

7/25 – Bids due in August. Completion by end of the year.

**\*ALL LIBRARIES INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS.**

4/25 An IT project will be completed over 24 year.

7/25 – On hold.

**\*MONT PLEASANT EXTERIOR AND PARKING LOT IMPROVEMENTS.**

3/28 – Discussion with Family Dollar taking place

4/25 – Family Dollar contract held up in bureaucracy of FD – on hold.

7/25 – Design in progress. A 2025 Project.

**\*QUAKER EXTERIOR SIDING RENOVATION.**

4/25 – Siding and windows will be replaced on the entire building.

7/25 – work is on going now. Should be completed by the end of July.

**\*SCOTIA EXTERIOR REPAIRS AND PAINT ON PORCH.**

3/28 – County obtaining estimates.

4/25 – Scheduled for spring

7/25 – a change – porch will be repaired before work begins. On hold.

**\*LIBRARY FURNITURE REPLACEMENT AT KBJ AND BORNT.**

4/25 – A tour of the libraries is being scheduled with SCI (library furniture company).

7/25 – tour expected within the next few weeks.

**\*MULTI FACETED, MULTI PHASED RENOVATION FOR 2ND FLOOR CONTINUES WITH COUNTY.**

4/25 – On hold for now.