

Board Meeting Minutes

Croton Free Library

May 12, 2025

Minutes of the May 2025 Board Meeting of the Croton Free Library, held on Monday, May 12, 2025 at The Croton Free Library, Ottinger Room, 171 Cleveland Drive, Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520.

PRESENT

Library Board of Trustees:

Susan Ranis, *President* (29)
Justin Johnson, *Vice-President* (28)
Barry Feinberg, *Treasurer* (28)
Bethany Basile (27)
Adam Decker (28)
Leslie Ellis (29)
Kate Fabian (28)
Mayla Hsu (26)
Laura Jaeger (26)
Margaret Mahoney (26)
Marianne Merola (27)

Library Director: Jesse Bourdon

Guests:

ABSENT

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:31pm.

APPROVAL OF APRIL 2025 BOARD MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Marianne Merola to approve [minutes of the April 2025 Board Meeting](#) held on April 7, 2025, which were distributed in advance. Margaret Mahoney seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved with one abstention: Laura Jaeger.

APPROVAL OF 2025 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Kate Fabian to approve [minutes of the 2025 Annual Meeting](#) held on April 24, 2025, which were distributed in advance. Laura Jaeger seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Collection Statistics and Patron Services

The digital checkouts continue to rise. The numbers for the library look healthy, with high visitor counts. We continue to weed the collection as part of the library's process to filter through our active collection.

“Library of Things”

The soft release of this new program will be June 1, 2025. All “things” are being added to the catalogue so they can be searched for.

These items will be stored in lockers in the creative space. An inventory list will be available and a reference librarian will retrieve the item for interested patrons. Jesse Bourdon presented this project to the Board of Education, and the board had a very positive reaction to this new project. Special thanks to Gwen Glazer for spearheading this project, and local artist Dylan O’Keefe, who created our banner for this project. This program was completed due in part to a grant from Dana Levenberg.

Intagly Partnership

Intagly is a 3D-printing start-up. This software creates a volunteer support site for communities that are interested in the process of printing with 3D printers. The Intagly website filters the requests for printing from their portal, sorts the projects, makes sure they are appropriate projects, and then pairs printing projects with 3D printer resources and delivers the projects to our library.

All uploading is done through an Intagly link from our website, which comes at no cost to our library. We can assist users in how to use Intagly’s website, but that would be the extent of our working with users. This is a service and we would simply be a pick-up location.

This system was a huge success in the LA Library system, and we believe it is an interesting low-risk offering for our library. Ideally this new partnership will start in June along with the start of the Library of Things.

The board noted if this program is successful, it might be a fundraising opportunity to charge a small fee for each pick-up associated with an Intagly order.

Changing our World status update

We are about to enter our 3rd month of working with *Changing our World*. We have just sent out emails to select community members to begin conversations with Cassandra. To come up with this list of community members, we did a screening process based on certain metrics. So far we have had a few positive responses to these emails with some people willing to meet with Cassandra. Within a month we should have a better sense of the scope for our fundraising efforts.

Susan will take photos of our Summerfest booth to share with Cassandra from Changing our World for reference for June 2026 opportunities.

Summerfest Reservation Confirmed

The library has confirmed a booth at the Sunday, June 1st Summerfest event downtown in Croton. The hours of the booth are 1pm-6pm.

We need to decide who will be manning the booth at the event (two people at a time), as well as what we will be doing at the booth. Ideas include temporary tattoos, a children's book giveaway, and a flyer about the "Library of Things". **Laura Jaeger volunteered to email the board the sign-up list of volunteer timing and items to bring.**

Bike Share Discussion (B&G Meeting)

Project Mover, a bike share program, along with Len Simon and Bryan Healy, will be joining the next Buildings and Grounds meeting to discuss the Bike Share placement at the library. This meeting will take place on Thursday, May 15th at 7pm. A special zoom link will be sent out for this meeting. The board's admin calendar has been updated with the new meeting link.

The library would like to hear more about the liability of having this bike rack and storage before we commit to having this bike storage on the library's property. **All board members are invited to attend.**

New Employee: Amy Kendel, Matt Mendelsohn (returning)

One of our weekend reference employees has left the library. We completed a search for a new employee, and asked internally within the library system for local reference staff librarians that may be interested in picking up weekend hours at our Croton Free Library.

MOTION TO APPROVE HIRING AMY KENDEL AND MATT MENDELSON AS WEEKEND REFERENCE LIBRARIANS

A motion was made by Kate Fabian to hire Amy Kendel as a new library employee and rehire Matt Mendelsohn - both to fill the role of weekend reference librarians. Marianne Merola seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Programming Requests

It has been noted that we are receiving programming requests that are of a repetitive and more forceful nature. The library will continue to support the idea that our programming remains independent. Programming suggestions can be submitted via a link on our website. Any requests for actions or commentary made directly to board members should be taken to Jesse Bourdon, as the library director.

TREASURER'S AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

The monthly check register for April was presented at the Finance Committee meeting. A few items will need to be amended on the register, but none that would preclude us approving this check register. Please note our first payment of \$18,000 to *Changing Our World* is accounted for on this past month's check register.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE MONTHLY CHECK REGISTER

A motion was made by Barry Feinberg to approve the April 2025 Monthly Check Register. Bethany Basile seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Overall our year-to-date expenses have come in at approximately \$913k. We have \$117k of income over these expenses, which will need to carry payments over the final 2 months of the financial year, as no further income is expected. We tend to have expenses of approximately \$100k per month. This \$117k may not cover the final two months of the financial year. If needed, we may need to remove some of the money from our accounts to cover costs.

Budget Approval

One final change will be made to the budget - we will add the general donation indicator on the 2025-2026 budget line so the total from the fundraising committee equals \$30k.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE BUDGET

A motion was made by Barry Feinberg to approve the operating budget for the next fiscal year 2025-2026. Bethany Basile seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

A suggestion was made by Adam Decker that we consider going above the 2% suggested tax cap for the library funding. This can be added to a further discussion regarding the next budget for 2026-2027. If we do push the percentage, it is suggested it is pushed a significant amount. A small change is not helpful; any updated request needs to be significant and take into account many years of possible inflation.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Fundraising Committee

The Fundraising Committee met on May 5, 2025 to prepare for our Spring Book & Bake sale, which will take place the weekend of May 17-18. Set-up will take place on Friday, May 16th from 8a-4p.

We have been able to round up more baked good donations than in the last many sales. Thank you to everyone who reached out to your friends and neighbors to ask for donated treats. We could use more helpers on Friday, May 16th for set-up, as well as one or two more people on Saturday and Sunday during the sale.

Our committee has noted that Croton's Hoedown event will occur Saturday May 17th from 12-6:30p. Our committee is hoping that the coinciding of both our sale and this event will not cause us to lose patrons/fundraising.

The Fundraising Committee's interview with Art was published in the Gazette's April 25th edition. This article will also be featured in the library's next edition of *Shelf Life*.

We have also written a Letter to the Editor regarding the Book & Bake Sale and the May 20th budget vote, which appeared in the May 9th edition.

Please take a lawn sign TONIGHT if you don't have one, and place it on your lawn when you get home. (If you have a friend who has a house with lots of foot traffic, take an extra sign, and ask them if you can place one on their lawn too.)

Jesse Bourdon has announced that we are now getting constant donations to the library. We have raised approximately \$1k more this past month, through Paypal donations link. This also includes recurring donations, and donations made in memory of someone who has passed away. **Jesse Bourdon will continue to update the Fundraising donations spreadsheet. Laura Jaeger will check the spreadsheet every two weeks and send handwritten thank you notes when applicable.**

Long-Range Planning Committee

The committee is finishing up the Financial Policy, which will be sent to the finance policy for review before being presented to the board.

Arts Committee

The committee did not meet this month.

Buildings and Grounds Committee

The next meeting will occur on Thursday, May 15th, 2025 at 7pm. More details can be found above in the Directors Report under “Bike Share Discussion (B&G Meeting)”.

We do not yet have an update on the Ottinger Room lightning, but the preliminary cost estimates are coming in as more expensive than previously planned.

Safety Committee

The committee did not meet this month.

OLD BUSINESS

Joint Board Meeting – July 14 at John C. Hart Library

This is not an official board meeting; board members attendance is welcome but not mandatory. The goal is the mingling of local library board members. John C Hart (Yorktown) and Hendrick Hudson (Cortlandt Manor) are the other libraries attending. Karen Zevin represents all of these libraries; and it was mentioned previously that Karen should be invited to this joint board meeting. Jesse Bourdon will check other Library directors before reaching out to Karen.

Review of action items from last meeting

The board reviewed the full list of action items from April’s board meeting. Remaining Comments on action items include:

1. Jesse will reach out to some local library directors to ask if they have a lawyer on retainer, and if so, what their fees have been. In progress; Jesse has created a questionnaire.
2. Committee leaders should review the [Master Calendar for Library Board](#) document and add any additional committee-related items as they see fit. In progress

3. Jesse Bourdon will provide an update to the board once we have a proposal for new lighting for the Ottinger room. In process
4. Jesse will reach out to lawyers Casey Wayman from Whiteman Osterman & Hanna. In process
5. We are asking all board members that have final historical documents on their personal computers to upload these into our google drive (and then remove them from personal computers). Kate will send out the link to this folder: "Individual Trustee Materials". Each Board member has their own folder. Please upload these documents, renaming them for clarity purposes. Email Kate when you have uploaded documents. Kate Fabian will help board members with this process, which we know will be a lengthy endeavor. In progress
6. The Finance Committee will work on a process to make comparison of growth in investment outcome more clearly tracked and will adjust the reporting. Questions should be prepared in advance for the next Finance Committee meeting.
7. Buildings and Grounds Committee will discuss the Information Kiosk repairs/beautification. The lease for this Kiosk is up in 2026. At our next meeting we should discuss whether we should release this space. We do not intend on committing to making repairs to this kiosk, which is not in great shape.

NEW BUSINESS

Trustee Training Committee

Marianne Marola suggested that this committee begin to meet again to prepare for January, 2025. Susan, Adam, Marianne, and Mayla are the current committee members. **Marianne will reach out to all current committee members.**

New Committee Assignments

All board members are asked to think about their current committee assignments. We will review assignments for the next year at the June Board meeting.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE BOARD ROLES FOR THE UPCOMING 2025-2026 YEAR

PRESIDENT

A motion was made by Adam Decker that Susan Ranis remain as the Croton Free Library Board President for the 2025-2026 year. Margaret Mahoney seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

VICE-PRESIDENT

A motion was made by Susan Ranis that Justin Johnson remain as the Croton Free Library Board Vice-President for the 2025-2026 year. Leslie Ellis seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

TREASURER

A motion was made by Susan Ranis to vote Bethany Basile as the Croton Free Library Board Treasurer for the 2025-2026 year. Leslie Ellis seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

SECRETARY

A motion was made by Laura Jaeger that she remain as the Croton Free Library Board Secretary for the 2025-2026 year. Kate Fabian seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Director Evaluations

Susan has emailed out a google form for Director evaluations. **All board members are asked to reply on the form by Monday, May 26, 2025.**

B&B Lawn Signs

Please take a lawn sign and place it out tonight or tomorrow early morning.

***PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Members of the public may address the Board of Trustees only during the Public Comment portion of the board meeting and must identify themselves by name when they begin to speak. Comments are limited to no more than three minutes per person. The number of public comments per board meeting may be limited due to time constraints.*

There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Justin Johnson and seconded by Leslie Ellis to adjourn the meeting. This motion being unanimously approved, the meeting was adjourned at **9:12pm**.

Respectfully submitted by Laura Jaeger, secretary