

Board Meeting Minutes

Croton Free Library

February 9, 2026

Minutes of the Board Meeting of the Croton Free Library, held on Monday, February 9, 2026 at The Croton Free Library, Creative Space, 171 Cleveland Drive, Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520.

PRESENT

Library Board of Trustees:

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

Library Director: Jesse Bourdon

GUESTS

Maria Slippen, village trustee

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:32pm.

APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY LIBRARY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Margaret Mahoney to approve [minutes of the January 12, 2026 Board Meeting](#), which were distributed in advance. Mayla Hsu seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY LIBRARY BOARD WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Leslie Ellis to approve the [minutes of the January 15, 2026 Board Work Session](#), which were distributed in advance. Barry Feinberg seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved with the following abstentions: Bethany Basile.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Collection Statistics and Patron Services

Children's attendance was still down this past month. Flor Bromley has been out this month; we have had less programming. This combined with the colder outside temperatures may explain the dip in attendance.

We are no longer using Amazon for orders. We have a new vendor providing our orders, as a replacement for Baker & Taylor.

Online checkout limits are currently at three; the number is supposed to be six. With these changes and changes to Kanopy, we are seeing less online checkouts. We expect these numbers to rise in the future.

Jeanette Gingold Donation

We had over 10 donors; the total amount neared \$2,500 in Jeanette Gingold's honor.

Tax Levy (2 of 2) received

Our second payment of the tax levy for the school district has come through.

A suggestion was made by Marianne Merola to update the Board's Master calendar to show when the Library received both of our tax levy payments.

NYPHV funding for another year

New York Presbyterian Hudson Valley has given our Library \$1,000. We will create some programming, which will be co-sponsored by NY Presbyterian Hudson Valley.

Restricted Outreach

Jesse has worked with *Creating Our World* to assess the restricted donations. Communications have been started with families who are linked to these restricted donations to see how they may be used going forward to maximize their efficacy for our library's current needs.

TREASURER'S AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Overall expenses were at 56% of budget in December, in line with the halfway mark of the year. We have spent \$38,000 more in expenses from this time last year (which is within normal fluctuations). Fundraising is up 125% from this point in year last year.

A suggestion was made by Barry Feinberg to note expenses related to fundraising in the reporting.

Check Register Approval

The monthly check register for December 2025 was presented at the Finance Committee meeting.

The check register had 4 unmarked direct deposits which were ADP payroll. The remaining were consecutive with large checks over \$10K going to Changing Our World (\$20k) and a \$5k payment to PRM for Ottinger Room lighting this month.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER MONTHLY CHECK REGISTER

A motion was made by the Finance Committee to approve the December 2025 Monthly Check Register. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Fundraising Committee

Annual Appeal

Our annual appeal "end date" was listed as January 31st, 2026, though we will note any donations that are given until this summer as donations made to the 2025/2026 appeal.

As of February 5th, 2026 our annual appeal has raised \$32,165. We received a total of 255 donations, with an average donation of \$126.00.

Our annual appeal has continued to grow steadily on an annual basis.

Long-Range Planning Committee

The Long-Range Planning committee attended the NYS Library Trustee Handbook Book Club Open Meetings Law zoom on January 27. **The committee will create a document around Open Meetings Law, which will sit in our drive for reference.**

It was noted that all meetings should be easily accessible for the public; consideration should be given to hosting our monthly board meetings back in the Ottinger Room.

The next committee meeting will be February 23, at 7pm via zoom.

Arts Committee

John Cote will be doing an artists talk on February 22 at 2pm. This talk was arranged by Gwen Glazer.

Our new art show will be installed March 2nd. The topic is women artists in Croton. The show will be curated by local group Croton Council on the Arts. The reception will take place on March 7th.

Buildings and Grounds Committee

The committee did not meet this month.

Safety Committee

The committee did not meet this month. In lieu of meeting, Justin Johnson and Jesse Bourdon started a list of items relating to safety.

New Trustee Selection and Training

The committee did not meet this month.

Ad Hoc Committees

Google Suite

Kate Fabian has begun meeting with chairs of each committee to progress on updating on the Board's master calendar. **Once the calendar is finalized, we will aim to train all board members so they understand how to use the master calendar.**

Directors Report

Susan Ranis and Justin Johnson met to review our old documents to prepare for our annual director's report process. **Updated documents will be emailed to the board within another week or two.**

OLD BUSINESS

Review of Board Master Calendar items for February

- Ad Hoc Committee:
 - Distribute director review forms to the board Feb 1 to be completed and returned by Feb 15
 - Review and revise Board Evaluation if necessary
 - Compile results from Director reviews

- Board:
 - Reminder that officers serve for one year (according to the bylaws) and if anyone is interested in one of the officer positions, they should make it known to the Chair of the New Trustee Selection Committee by the April board meeting
 - Board Preliminary budget discussion

- New Trustee Selection and Training:
 - Close Application for new trustees
 - Communicate with Trustee candidates and schedule interviews

Review of action items from last meeting

The board reviewed the full list of action items from previous board meetings. Remaining comments on action items include:

1. Jesse and Adam will work together regarding finding a pro-bono partnership with lawyers regarding our current legal needs. In Process

2. The Finance Committee will be communicating with Margaret regarding the Long Range Committee future policy around stock gifts. In Process. We need a brokerage account first.

3. Missing Forms:
 - a. Whistleblower/Conflict of Interest: Leslie
 - b. Training Attestations (2hrs each): Leslie

4. An ad hoc Director Review committee will meet to address the director review rubric. Susan Ranis, Justin Johnson, Kate Fabian, and Leslie Ellis will meet.

5. Set an annual joint meeting with Hendrick Hudson library to share best common practices for Association Libraries. *Jesse has reached out to Jill at Hendrick Hudson. In Process.*

NEW BUSINESS

Annual Meeting

We will set the annual meeting on Thursday evening, April 30th at 7pm.

Renovation Project Manager

The board will start focusing on the process of hiring a project manager. It was advised that Ethan Lewis and Meredith Hertlein may be able to assist with finding candidates for this position. **Adam Decker will reach out to both Ethan and Meredith.**

Tax Cap Override Resolution

Whereas, the adoption of the 2026-2027 budget for the Croton Free Library may require a tax levy increase that exceeds the tax cap imposed by state law as outlined in General Municipal law Section 3-c adopted in 2011; and Whereas, General Municipal Law Section 3-c expressly permits the library board to override the tax levy limit by a resolution approved by a vote of sixty percent of qualified board members. Therefore be it Resolved, that the Board of Trustees of the Croton Free Library voted and approved to exceed the tax levy limit for the 2026-2027 fiscal year by at least the sixty percent of the board of trustees as required by state law on February 9, 2026.

MOTION TO APPROVE A TAX CAP OVERRIDE RESOLUTION

A motion was made by Mayla Hsu to approve the tax cap override resolution above. Justin Johnson seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

***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.*

Eliza Silverglade and Gwen Glazer were commended for their work on the Food Pantry at the Croton Free Library.

The high quality of our book bundles were also commended; the Croton Free Library staff does a wonderful job creating personalized bundles for each interested patron.

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 8:58pm.

Respectfully submitted by Laura Jaeger, secretary