

Board Meeting Minutes Croton Free Library March 9, 2026

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

PRESENT

Library Board of Trustees:

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

Library Director: Jesse Bourdon

ABSENT

Susan Ranis, *President* (29)
Barry Feinberg (28)
Marianne Merola (27)

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY LIBRARY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Leslie Ellis to approve minutes of the February 9, 2026 Board Meeting, which were distributed in advance. Kate Fabian seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY LIBRARY BOARD WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Justin Johnson to approve the minutes of the February 19, 2026 Board Work Session, which were distributed in advance. Kate Fabian seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved with the following abstentions: Mayla Hsu.

2026-27 Budget Approval

Library Director Jesse Bourdon presented the 2026-2027 budget, which had been emailed to the board prior to the monthly meeting.

Some changes include leveling the salaries of our staff so they are in-line with market values, removing the need to use fundraising money for normal operating expenses, further investment in content, taking into account rising costs of many of our repeating expenses (such as health insurance and utilities), and taking on debt for an upcoming major renovation and necessary long-term infrastructure upgrades.

With these adjustments, our proposed budget is still well-under budgets of several other local libraries.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE 2026-2027 Budget

A motion was made by Bethany Basile to approve the 2026-2027 Budget. Kate Fabian seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Access to Green Bins

We had paused taking donations for the Book & Bake Sale as the recent snowfall blocked access to our book donation bins. We paid to have snow removed so we could reopen donations. The cost for this snow removal should more than be outweighed by the benefits we will receive by being able to receive donations for our Spring sale.

Repair Café Success

Sherry Horowitz was integral in working with Gwen Glazer to get our volunteers to the library to coordinate this repair cafe. It was a huge success. We hope to add this event on a repeating basis going forward.

United Healthcare Eligibility Audit complete

Our eligibility audit is complete so we have ensured coverage for our full-time employees for the coming year.

Hoopla Update

WLS is reevaluating checkouts for Hoopla (adjusting from 6 checkouts per person to 3 checkouts). There are set limits for the entire WSL community, and once these daily limits are reached, nobody else can checkout materials. Adjusted/additional Hoopla checkouts allotted for the Croton Free Library would cost \$1,400 per month. This is a problem nation-wide; Hoopla continues to raise prices for their services. Other libraries are also dropping their relationships with the Hoopla database.

2025 Annual Report Approval

This annual report is required by the state. This report used to be an online module hosted by Baker & Taylor. Since Baker & Taylor is no longer in business, it is facilitated through WLS.

Jesse emailed the report to the board in advance of the monthly meeting. A note was made by Mayla Hsu that we should pull some of the statistics from this report as shareable facts. This report can be found in the board of trustees section of our website; it can be found in the repository of related documents.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE 2025 Annual Report

A motion was made by Leslie Ellis to approve the 2025 Annual Report. Adam Decker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

TREASURER'S AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Check Register Approval

The monthly check register for January 2026 was presented at the Finance Committee meeting.

- Overall expenses were at 55% of budget in Jan, in line with this time of year.
- We have spent \$42,000 more in expenses from this time last year (which is within normal fluctuations)
- The check register had 4 unmarked direct deposits which were ADP payroll. The remaining were consecutive with large checks included another \$5,600 payment to PRM for Ottinger Lighting this month (last month -4,859.26)

MOTION TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 2026 MONTHLY CHECK REGISTER

A motion was made by the Finance Committee to approve the January 2026 Monthly Check Register. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Fundraising Committee

Annual Appeal

As of March 4th, 2026 our annual appeal has raised \$33,565. We have received a total of 258 donations, with an average donation of \$130.10. This is the highest average donation since we have been tracking the annual appeal. 49% of our donors gave \$100 or more.

Spring 2026 Book & Bake Sale

Our Spring 2026 Book & Bake sale will be held the weekend of May 2-3. Our sign-up genius will be made live mid-March, approximately 6 weeks before the sale.

The sale will proceed as usual, with the addition of a table at which board members will speak with the public about our upcoming budget vote and renovation plans.

Our goal is also to have renovation renderings placed on the walls during the sale for people to view.

Long-Range Planning Committee

The meeting scheduled for February 23 was cancelled. The next meeting will take Monday, March 16, at 7 pm, in the Ottinger Room. We will be reviewing the Open Meetings Law guidance document drafted by Adam and the Long-range Planning Committee calendar within the Master Calendar.

Arts Committee

January - February artist, John Cote, took his work down two days early because of weather concerns. His exhibition was very successful. He sold seven paintings, which resulted in a \$2,110 donation to the library.

March - April exhibit, *Croton's Creative Women*, was installed on March 2 and the reception was held on Saturday, March 7.

The Arts Committee has received two official exhibit applications and a few verbal inquiries about exhibiting. We are scheduled through the end of 2026. We are not scheduling exhibitions in 2027 while we assess upcoming changes to our space.

Buildings and Grounds Committee

The committee did not meet this month.

Safety Committee

The committee did not meet this month.

New Trustee Selection and Training

The committee did not meet this month. The next meeting will take place Wednesday, March 25th at 7:30pm.

Ad Hoc Committees

Google Suite (Master Calendar)

Review of the master calendar with each committee chair is complete.

Review of the master calendar with the Board president to be scheduled.

Directors Review

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 March****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. 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.*
4. 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. - *In Process*
5. The Long Range Planning committee will create a document around Open Meetings Law, which will sit in our drive for reference. - *In Process*
6. Once the board master calendar is finalized, we will aim to train all board members so they understand how to use it. - *In Process*
7. Updated documents relating to the Director's review will be emailed to the board within another week or two. - *In Process*
8. Adam Decker will reach out to both Ethan and Meredith re: the board process of hiring a project manager. - *In Process. Ethan has replied to Adam.*

NEW BUSINESS**Postcard invite to annual appeal donors**

Jesse is going to mock-up a postcard advertising our preview meeting with Paul Mays on April 6th and also our annual meeting on April 30th. This will be mailed out by a service.

MOTION TO APPROVE SPENDING UP TO \$1,000 FOR POSTCARD PRINTING, TARGETING ANNUAL APPEAL DONORS TO INVITE THEM TO THE PAUL MAYS PREVIEW.

A motion was made by Justin Johnson to approve spending up to \$1,000 for postcard printing targeting annual appeal donors. The postcard will invite recipients to the Paul Mays Preview April 6th and the annual meeting April 30th. Bethany Basile seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Changing Our World / Capital Campaign

A discussion was held among board members regarding our current contract with *Changing Our World* and our capital campaign process. There are several concerns we would like to address before moving forward to extend our current contract.

Bethany Basile will be joining the weekly meeting with *Changing Our World* this week to help express these concerns and ask questions on behalf of the board. Bethany will report back to the board at our next working session Thursday, March 19th at 7:30p.

***PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Bethany Basile and seconded by Leslie Ellis to adjourn the meeting. This motion being unanimously approved, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm.

Respectfully submitted by Laura Jaeger, secretary