

Town of Esopus Library  
February Board of Trustees Meeting  
Wednesday, February 25, 2026

**Agenda**

Call to order	Larry Decker
Approval of December Board Meeting Minutes	
Public Comment (2 minutes each)	Public
Treasurer's Report/Finance Committee	Allen Olsen
Director's Report	Jesse Chance
Friends	Elaine Rylance

Committees

1. Buildings and Grounds – Laura Petit
2. Governance and Personnel – Martha Farrell
3. Sustainability, Research and Development – Sharon Briden
4. Trustee Training Committee – Don Carragher

Adjournment

---

Resolutions:

- 2026-09 – Payment of January Claims  
2026-10 – Tuition Reimbursement for C. Svetkey  
2026-11 – Acceptance of Town of Esopus Appropriation Funds

TOWN OF ESOPUS LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES  
January 28, 2026

Board Members Present: Don Carragher, Elaine Rylance, Sharon Briden, Larry Decker, Jamila Khan and Allen Olsen

Board Members Excused: Cynthia Capraro, Laura Petit, Martha Farrell

Board Members Absent:

Staff Present: Jesse Chance, Mary Garraty

Public: none

#### I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Town of Esopus Library Board of Trustees was called to order by President, Larry Decker at 6:00 p.m.

#### II. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Written minutes for the December monthly Board Meeting held on December 17, 2025 was submitted and open for review. A motion to accept the minutes of the December monthly Board meeting held on December 17, 2025, was made by Elaine Rylance and seconded by Jamila Khan.

AYE: 6; NO: 0; ABSTAIN: 0

Board Members Excused: Cynthia Capraro, Laura Petit, Martha Farrell

Board Members Absent:

#### III. Presidents Word – Larry Decker

No additional comments at this time.

#### IV. Public Comment - None

#### V. TREASURER'S REPORT/FINANCE – Allen Olsen

Allen Olsen reviewed the Finance Committee Meeting minutes and presented the resolutions listed below.

- **Resolution #01 of 2026 (Payment of December Claims):** The Board of Trustees of the Town of Esopus Library accepts and approves the payment of claims from December 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025 for items in the amount of \$53,301.34. A motion to accept the resolution, as amended, was made by Jamila Khan and seconded by Elaine Rylance. AYES: 6; NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0

Board Members Excused: Cynthia Capraro, Laura Petit, Martha Farrell  
Board Members Absent:

- **Resolution #02 of 2026 (Acceptance of PILOT Payment):** The Board of Trustees of the Town of Esopus Library accepts these funds from the Town of Esopus and will deposit the monies into the Town of Esopus Library's 2026 Operating Fund. A motion to accept the resolution, as amended, was made by Jamila Khan and seconded by Don Carragher. AYES: 6; NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0  
Board Members Excused: Cynthia Capraro, Laura Petit, Martha Farrell  
Board Members Absent:

There was a discussion regarding how the PILOT payment came about and how it is calculated.

- **Resolution #03 of 2026 (Acceptance of 2026 Foundation Annual Contribution):** The Board of Trustees of the Town of Esopus Library accepts this donation from the Foundation and approves the addition to the General Fund of the 2026 Operating Budget. A motion to accept the resolution, as amended, was made by Allen Olsen and seconded by Jamila Khan. AYES: 6; NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0  
Board Members Excused: Cynthia Capraro, Laura Petit, Martha Farrell  
Board Members Absent:
- **Resolution #07 of 2026 (Authorization of Hot Water Heater Repairs)** The Board of Trustees of the Town of Esopus Library accepts and approves the repair work to the hot water heater be done by KGN Electric and Building Pros LLC and Lowes Home Improvement for an amount to not exceed \$5000.00. A motion to accept the resolution, as amended, was made by Allen Olsen and seconded by Don Carragher. AYES: 6; NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0  
Board Members Excused: Cynthia Capraro, Laura Petit, Martha Farrell  
Board Members Absent: 0
- **Resolution #08 of 2026 (Lukatis Donation):** The Board of Trustees of the Town of Esopus Library accepts the quarterly share of income in the amount of \$1,232.68 from the Lukatis Trust into the 2026 operating funds for the library. A motion to accept the resolution was made by Allen Olsen and seconded by Jamila Khan. AYES: 6; NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0  
Board Members Excused: Cynthia Capraro, Laura Petit, Martha Farrell  
Board Members Absent:

## VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Jesse Chance

Written reports were submitted from the Director, the Adult and Teen Programmer and the Children's Programmer. Jesse reviewed the Director's report. The Director and Don Carragher

met with Craig Hightower and his associate, Karen, for a Project Manager meeting. Craig proposed a change to the electrical sign using solar instead of instead wiring. We just received the electrical bill for the sign and it would be best to keep the sign separate so that we don't need to recalculate all of our electrical bills. Advocacy Day is Tuesday, 2/3/26. This is a great event to show your support for the library.

#### VII. FRIENDS – Elaine Rylance

The craft and fabric sale is scheduled for April 25<sup>th</sup>. Plants will also be included for sale. Some of the area libraries are interested in obtaining what is left over after the sale.

Fox has started a puzzle exchange program. We are still pondering what to do about the chairs in the Community room. We might add cushions to the existing chairs rather than buying new ones.

#### VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Buildings and Grounds – Laura Petit  
Buildings and Grounds did not meet in January.
  
- Governance and Personnel – Martha Farrell --  
Written report submitted. Laura Petit ran the committee meeting in Martha's absence. Elaine Rylance reviewed the meeting minutes in Laura and Martha's absence and presented the following resolutions:
  - **Resolution #04 of 2026 (2026 Holiday Closings):** The Board of Trustees of the Town of Esopus Library accepts the schedule of holiday closings for the year of 2026. A motion to accept the resolution, as amended, was made by Jamila Khan and seconded by Don Carragher. The Resolution was amended a second time to remove Veteran's Day. Another motion to accept the resolution as amended was made by Don Carragher and seconded by Jamila Khan.  
AYES: 6; NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0  
Board Members Excused: Cynthia Capraro, Laura Petit, Martha Farrell  
Board Members Absent:  
  
There was a discussion regarding whether to close on New Years Eve Day.
  
  - **Resolution #05 of 2026 (Update to Bylaws):** The Board of Trustees of the Town of Esopus Library accepts the amended Bylaws. A motion to accept the resolution, as amended, was made by Allen Olsen and seconded by Don Carragher.  
AYES: 6; NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0  
Board Members Excused:  
Board Members Absent:

- **Resolution #06 of 2026 (Personnel Actions - All Employees):** The Board of Trustees of the Town of Esopus Library agrees to the personnel action's resolution. A motion to accept the resolution was made by Don Carragher and seconded by Jamila Khan.  
AYES: 6; NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0  
Board Members Excused: Cynthia Capraro, Laura Petit, Martha Farrell  
Board Members Absent:
  
- Sustainability, Research and Development – Sharon Briden  
Sustainability, Research and Development did not meet in January.

#### IX. Trustee Training

There was an open meeting training session. Jamil Khan, Larry Decker, Sharon Briden and Cindy Capraro attended.

#### X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business or discussion, Elaine Rylance made a motion to adjourn and it was seconded by Don Carragher. The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

AYES: 6; NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0

Board Members Excused: Cynthia Capraro, Laura Petit, Martha Farrell

Board Members Absent:

Prepared by M. Garraty, Secretary to the Town of Esopus Library Board of Trustees

## Director's Report – February 2026

This far 2026 has been a year of steady progress, strategic planning, and meaningful follow-through. We've been advancing major capital projects like the solar array upgrade, showing up visibly for library advocacy, painting and rearranging and better utilizing our existing assets, and we continue to build both the physical and institutional strength of Esopus Library. The work detailed below reflects a balance of long-range planning and day-to-day problem solving — both of which are essential as we position the Library for sustainability, compliance, and continued growth in 2026.

### *Ongoing and/or Completed Business*

**Solar Power Array Upgrade Project:** *New Energy Project Management* has forwarded a draft RFP (request for proposals) to me for consideration and it is formatted correctly and describes the project accurately. I must answer the following questions before approving the RFP for distribution and posting on NY State Contract bidding websites:

1. *Insurance Requirements: Please see Section 8 in the RFP draft. Let me know if you require any coverage beyond the standard Workers' Compensation and Disability Benefits.*
2. *Timing: How much time do you need between the bid due date and the contract award? We require one week to review submissions and provide recommendations. Beyond that, how much time do you anticipate needing for a final decision?*
3. *Payment Milestones: We would like to confirm the Library's preferred payment structure. We typically see 30% at contract signing, 40% at major equipment order, and 30% at completion. Please let us know if you are comfortable with this or if you prefer a different arrangement.*
4. *Dismantling Scope: To avoid premature removal of reusable footings or racking, we are suggesting that Respondents determine the extent of dismantling required. The current wording in the RFP is as follows:*

*"The Respondent shall assume that the existing ground-mounted array foundations and racking will remain in place and available for reuse. The existing solar modules will be removed prior to construction. Any modifications required to the existing racking or foundations to accommodate the new system shall be identified and included in the Respondent's proposal."*

The only question I need help with is the insurance question and I've sent emails to MHLS, the Department of Library Development, and our insurance broker and should have an answer very soon. Once we have a satisfactory RFP, the bidding must stay open for 28 days.

**Hot Water Heater Issues:** I had really thought this issue would be resolved by now but it turns out that we are not eligible for the deals that Lowe's Home Improvement offers because the Library is considered a commercial account. The electrical work is done. I am now seeking estimates from area plumbers for the installation of a 40 gallon electrical water heater that is not 3 phase. I have one from Carl Bell Plumbing and await one from Hot Water Solutions.

**Bookkeeper:** Our new bookkeeper got started on President's Day with me here to assist. We were able to upload the 2026 budget and print a few checks that had been vouched. The next Budget vs. Actual financial report will look very much like it used to next month. However, Lorelei and I will

be working together to edit the line titles in QuickBooks so that each line of the budget is called what it actually is rather than an alpha-numeric designation. Thus far the transition from WZ Accountants to an in-house bookkeeper has been slow but smooth.

**Advocacy Day in Albany:** Our illustrious Board President Larry Decker, Board Members Don Carragher and Sharon Briden, and our Programming and Engagement Manager Fox North all joined me in Albany on February 3<sup>rd</sup> for a day of solidarity and speaking up for libraries at the Legislative Office Building. Not only was it fun and revitalizing, but the fact that five people from Esopus Library showed up did not go unnoticed. Our representative Sarahana Shrestha was duly impressed that her husband's running partner was there, and Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, Executive Director of MHLS, sent words of praise and gratitude. As I said in the email I sent about this, *Advocacy is simply an extension of the work we do every day — in our programs, in our stewardship of public funds, in the welcoming spaces we create, and in the partnerships we build. When we show up together, people notice. I am grateful for each of you. Let's build on this momentum and continue demonstrating that even a small library can have a strong, clear, and confident voice.*

**Painting Party:** As I'm sure most have seen by now, we were successful at repainting the community room on 2/7 and 2/8. I utilized some more of the tradesman skills I've acquired over the years and did all the prep and got about 75% of the cutting done on 2/6 and the morning of 2/7. Don Carragher, Elaine & Dave Rylance, and my friend Marla Fasano joined me for that Saturday afternoon after the library closed and we got a lot more cutting done and Don and Dave rolled out all of the gallery walls. On that Sunday there were 5 volunteers signed up, but only the high school honor society kid actually showed up. Sean Henn and I put on our super-painter suits and got it done in record time.

**Resource Sharing Standards Violation:** MHLS and the Resource Sharing Advisory Committee have officially reprimanded Esopus Library for not spending our fair share on purchasing e-books and audiobooks for Libby in 2025. Our fair share is based on the demands of our patrons and the Resource Sharing Standards are part of our contract with MHLS and cannot be ignored. To ensure that we get in compliance with the standards, I have placed stricter borrowing limits on Hoopla (2 titles per month instead of 5) and removed the option of borrowing movies and tv shows since Kanopy gives our patrons access to those already. This and a few small cuts elsewhere in the collection development budget will keep our spending on Hoopla to under \$4,000 for the year and allow me to expand the Libby budget to \$10,000 for the year.

### *Continuing Education, Community Outreach & Library Advocacy*

**Ulster County Library Association Meeting:** This past Tuesday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, Esopus Library hosted a monthly meeting of UCLA in our freshly painted community room. Only 10 of the 22 Ulster County directors came to the meeting in-person, but all had envious things to say about our wonderful community space.

**dPlan for Libraries:** With the new requirement for all libraries to have a Disaster Preparedness Plan on the horizon due to the changes in NYS Commissioner Education's Regulations, it is great

that, thanks to grant funds for The Library of Local Project, MHLS has secured free, 12-month accounts for dPlan for all member libraries. [dPlan](#) is a comprehensive online tool for emergency planning and response for libraries. It provides us with a guided risk assessment so we know what we are planning for, resources for response and recovery to help us build our plan, the ability to create a "pocket plan," a quick resource to use in the midst of a disastrous event, and more. This resource should help build our capacity to create a strong plan that truly serves us should disaster strike.

Over the next few months I will be working with staff to gather all of the elements required for a good Disaster Preparedness Plan and I will introduce the B&G Committee as well as the R,S&D committee to dPlan so that we can all contribute to future readiness. A Disaster Preparedness Plan should not be confused with an Emergency Preparedness Plan (which we have). The former has long term implications and the bigger picture in mind while the latter plan is more for immediate actions.

## *Upcoming*

### **Annual State Report:** new information

- Reports will be filed online via Counting Opinions LibPAS data management program.
  - Access information and login credentials are expected to be emailed soon.
  - NOTE: There will be some amount of re-numbering due to questions added, removed, or re-ordered since the 2024 Annual Report. Not all instances of re-numbering are noted in this outline.
  - Members will need to submit their reports by March 20th.
- Still waiting for:
  - The instructions for completing the report
  - The final question numbers

**Annual Report to the Community:** In light of the fact that the State Report is so late this year, I have decided to begin work on this before that one is done. I usually wait for the State report to be done to include data and statistics from there. We will access that data through other means and get this done soon.

**Community Garden Expansion:** We are waiting to hear the responses to two grant applications we have out seeking funding for this and the rain cistern installation. The cost of this particular project should not be very high though and the growing number of community members who want to participate in this is making expansion urgent.

**Fenced in Outdoor Programming area:** Thanks to a generous grant from the Ascienzo Family Foundation, we have \$7,500 to complete this project and it would be desirable to get the work done before we are too deep in the growing season to get some educational planting done.

**Rain Cistern and Water Distribution System:** This project will be a little more expensive than expanding the community garden. It consists of:

- Digging a shallow circular trench
- Pouring cement for a 4 inch pad
- Placing the tank that Don Carragher donated on the pad
- Digging a trench to run pvc piping from the tank to the garden
- Installing a small electric pump (also donated by Don) and plumbing the tank
- Hiring someone to adapt the gutters on both sides of building to drain into the tank

**More Native and Pollinator Friendly Plant installations:** specimens and placement TBD

**Respectfully Submitted,  
Jesse Chance, 2/18/2026**



## **Children's Programming Report - February 2026**

### January Review

January came to a nice close with a total of 21 programs attended by 254 people. We had some particularly lovely Lego Club meetings to kick off this year with lots of imaginative and collaborative building. We often have the same kids returning each week which creates a great buzz of familiarity and teamwork in our community room on Wednesday afternoons. Storytimes, which are now almost exclusively held in our children's room, have been filled with songs and stories and now feature colorful scarves which often cause all the children to go missing during peek-a-boo.

### February So Far

February, like January before it, has focused heavily on building up and on children's recurring programs. Continuing to meet weekly are: storytime (Tuesday AM, Wednesday AM, and Thursday PM), Lego Club, and Toddler Playgroup. The Young Readers Book Club, Tween Book Club, and our new once monthly Chess Club will have all met in February as well. It has been really special to get to use the children's room more and more for programming and has not only created a space that is useful for programming but also a space that families can easily browse in and spend time in. Holding programs in the same space as our children's collection has also helped to introduce more families to more of the great books we house for children of all ages.

### In the Future

Like most everyone, I am very excited for longer, warmer days ahead. With Spring just in view I am looking forward to a bunch of fun programs in March! These will include a visit from licensed therapy dog Annie, on Saturday, March 7th. Annie will be on hand to be a calming presence and provide encouragement to kids who might be new to reading or want to build up their confidence. Beginning on Tuesday, March 10th and continuing on the second and fourth Tuesdays, Music and Movement with Terry Watson will return and get our youngest friends moving and grooving in the community room. Later in the month I hope to host a Pi Day Pie Program but am still rolling out the dough on those plans. Another special program I have planned is in celebration of The Very Hungry Caterpillar on Friday, March 20th and will feature stories, games, crafts, and snacks. Even though the snow has not yet melted, I am already beginning to think about summer reading and how we can unearth lots of stories here at the library.

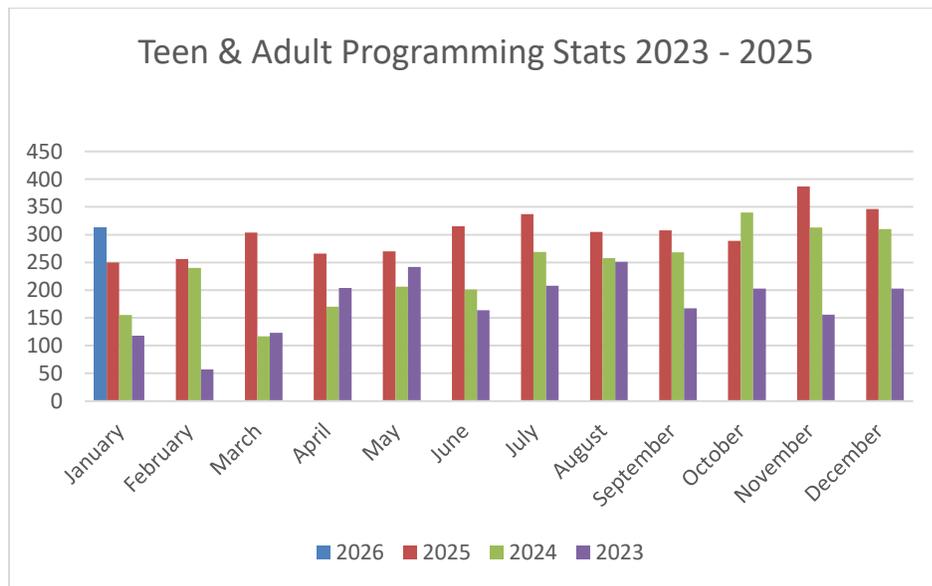
Warmly,  
Charlotte, Children's Programmer



Town of Esopus Library

## Programming & Engagement Manager’s Report – February

	Final January Numbers	January Numbers To-Date (1/15)
Teen	104 (8 programs)	78 (4 programs)
Adult	209 (20 programs)	169 (18 programs)



We’re now onto our fourth year of meaningful data for adult and teen programming at the Town of Esopus Library. As you can see, January is typically a slower month here at the Library – but this does not seem to be the case for January ’26, with our increased teen programming continuing to provide a nice attendance bump to add to our regularly robust adult programming.

### Adult Programming

- Offering three movement classes – **QiGong with Charlotte G., Chair Yoga with Kathy S. and Lindy Hop with Tony S.** – has helped to bolster slower winter attendance, with all solidly attended. **QiGong** is taking a pause for February but will pick up again through March, running through mid-April. Though Tony’s **Lindy Hop** class has also been spotted at other local libraries, he offered it there as a one-off elsewhere but a series here. Reducing competition and cannibalization of cross-

- library programming has been one of my goals for 2026, and slightly tweaking offered programs for our own audience seems to be one way to get patrons *here* rather than to other libraries, even when programming is otherwise similar. Still, expect to see fewer repeats of programs patrons can access elsewhere in the community this year. My goal is to offer unique experiences you can't find anywhere but Esopus (with some exceptions made for must-haves like **Chair Yoga!**)
- Though I took a slight pause on special classes this month, due to traditionally low January numbers, we started our year-round **Gardening with Lynda Keyes** series this month with a workshop on **Garden Planning**. This was cross-promoted with a circulation display that also advertised our new **Seed Library**. This turned out to be a smashing success, with the circulation desk post-workshop unusually busy for a Saturday. In just a few weeks, we've already had 14 seed library sign-ups – or 140 seed packets distributed

### Teen Programming

- **Teen Dungeons & Dice & Pizza** has provided a nice, if small, group of regular teens to the library; our tweens have split off into their own group, often (but not always) meeting simultaneously and continuing to be led by a volunteer, Gamemaster Mary. I'm grateful to her commitment to our young patrons! Meeting in the teen room has been a joy for both groups, who are very happy to enjoy the luxury of pizza on a table.
- Our **Ulster BOCES partnership** continues to grow a population of passionate young readers; we've signed up 25 new cardholders and each week a rotating assortment of students visit, with fascinating questions on reader's advisory and more. It's a really meaningful hour of teen librarianship, if you don't mind getting your taste in records insulted.
- Our **All-Out Open Mic** also continues to thrive, though I've found that the patron base has skewed slightly older if I'm not careful to deliberately cater to younger folks by also offering younger performers. Expect to see a few more 20-somethings on the calendar soon.

Respectfully submitted,

Fox North

Town of Esopus Library  
Building & Grounds Committee Meeting Minutes  
Monday, February 9, 4:00 p.m.

Attendance: Laura Petit, Allen Olsen, Sharon Briden, Don Carragher, Jesse Chance, Library Director

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

#### Solar Array Update

Jesse Chance provided an update on the solar array project. He reported that the project is expected to break ground in April of this year.

#### Hot Water Heater Replacement

Jesse discussed the ongoing challenge of replacing the hot water heater. Although the electrical work has been completed, Lowe's advised that they are not performing commercial installations. As a result, an alternative plan must be developed to purchase the hot water heater for installation by Carl Bell.

#### Geothermal Heat Pump

Jesse recommended replacing one of the geothermal heat pumps, noting that it is approximately 17 years old and that one unit has already been replaced. The cost of a new pump would be approximately \$4,000. The existing unit would be retained as a spare for potential future use.

#### Utility Sink and Workstation

The committee discussed installing a utility sink. Costs may be higher than initially anticipated because the Building & Grounds Committee would like a workstation with cabinets for additional storage.

Sharon Briden stated she is considering writing a grant to support the project. Allen Olsen suggested contacting Hudson Valley Credit Union for potential community grant funding opportunities.

#### Community Garden Grant Funding

Laura Petit updated the committee on a food insecurity grant submitted to the Community Foundation of Hudson Valley. The proposal requested \$6,000, including \$2,300 designated for expansion of the community garden. The project was funded at \$2,000.

The Esopus Community Foundation Board agreed to split its received funding and will provide the library with \$1,000 toward the community garden expansion project.

#### Central Hudson LED Signage Billing Issue

Jesse updated the committee regarding a past-due bill from Central Hudson related to the LED signage along 9W. He reported making several phone calls but was unable to resolve the issue. Central Hudson has not issued bills for the past three years.

Laura offered to connect Jesse with a contact in Central Hudson's marketing department. Don Carragher stated he would bring the matter to Town Hall on Wednesday, February 11, during Congressman Ryan's CARES Van visit for review.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

## Town of Esopus Library

Finance Committee Meeting – February 12, 2026 @ 5pm

Attendees: Larry Decker, Jamila Khan, Allen Olsen and  
Jesse Chance

1. Approve January 2026 payments of \$19,427.11  
(\$19,736.11 – \$309.00)
2. Review January 2026 financials and 2026 Budget
3. Report from Director
4. Other issues of interest to the Committee

## Sustainability, Research and Development Committee

Date: Tues, February 10, 2026

Meeting Time: 4pm

Attendees: Jesse Chance, Don Carragher, Larry Decker and Sharon Briden

Absent: Martha Farrell

### Minutes:

#### Jesse's update:

- Discussed Central Hudson Library Sign Bill
- Don to bring up the problem with Pat Ryan's people on Wed 2/11 at Ryan CARES van event at Esopus Town Hall

#### Plan of Service - edits/revisions

- Reviewing and updating the Goals/Objectives/Strategies of the 2019 plan So far: Goals 1-3. Will continue at March committee mtg.

#### "Welcome Wagon" updates

- Don will work on consolidating information gathered so far.

#### Grants

- Bank of Green County Grant submitted 1/15 for Cistern project
- Hudson Valley Credit Union - awaiting Grant application release in Q1- will be requesting "slop sink"
- Don to work up visual
- Purpose: Replace basement water fountain and install with an Arts & Crafts cabinet & slop sink to enhance and expand art programming opportunities for our patrons. Amount to Request: \$2500.

#### Marketing Library Events

- Sharon will create a list of local media outlets that offer calendar listings to further promote events to community.

Next SRD Meeting: Tues, March 10, 2026, 4pm

Submitted by: Sharon Briden