

Town of Esopus Library
November Board of Trustees Meeting
Wednesday, November 19, 2025

Agenda

Call to order	Larry Decker
Approval of October 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:

2025-57 – Payment of October Claims

TOWN OF ESOPUS LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
October 29, 2025

Board Members Present: Don Carragher, Elaine Rylance, Martha Farrell, Laura Petit, Sharon Briden, Larry Decker, Jamila Khan, Cynthia Capraro and Allen Olsen (arrived during Director's Report)
Board Members Excused:
Board Members Absent:
Staff Present: Jesse Chance, Mary Garraty

Public:

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 September monthly Board Meeting held on October 1, 2025 was submitted and open for review. A motion to accept the minutes of the September monthly Board meeting held on October 1, 2025 was made by Martha Farrell and seconded by Elaine Rylance.

AYE: 8; NO: 0; ABSTAIN: 0

Board Members Excused:

Board Members Absent: Allen Olsen

III. Presidents Word – Larry Decker

IV. Public Comment - None

V. TREASURER'S REPORT/FINANCE – Allen Olsen

Jamila reviewed the Finance Committee Meeting minutes in Allen's absence this time and presented the following resolutions:

- **Resolution #53 of 2025 (Payment of September Claims):** The Board of Trustees of the Town of Esopus Library accepts and approves the payment of claims from September 1, 2025 to September 30, 2025 for items in the amount of \$13,087.78. A motion to accept the resolution was made by Don Carragher and seconded by Martha Farrell.
AYES: 8; NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0
Board Members Excused:
Board Members Absent: Allen Olsen

- **Resolution #54 of 2025 (Lukatis Donation):** The Board of Trustees of the Town of Esopus Library accepts the quarterly share of income in the amount of \$710.37 from the Lukatis Trust into the operating funds for the library. A motion to accept the resolution was made by Elaine Rylance and seconded by Cindy Capraro.
AYES: 8; NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0
Board Members Excused:
Board Members Absent: Allen Olsen
- **Resolution #55 of 2025 (Ascienzo Family Foundation Donation):** The Board of Trustees of the Town of Esopus Library accepts this monetary donation of \$7500.00 from the Ascienzo Family Foundation and approves the designation of funds as stated within the resolution. A motion to accept the resolution as amended was made by Martha Farrell and seconded by Don Carragher.
AYES: 8; NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0
Board Members Excused:
Board Members Absent: Allen Olsen

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 hot water heater is still a problem. Carl Bell has estimated \$1600 for repairs in addition to the \$900 already spent. WZ Accountants will not renew our contract/account next year. We will be searching for a bookkeeper in light of this news. The giant pumpkin outside of the building was won by a patron of the library and they donated it. The Esopus Holiday Parade is scheduled for December 6th. All other programming is going great!

VII. FRIENDS – Elaine Rylance

Friends is trying to help purchase new chairs for the Community Room. The turtle has won as the official mascot of the Town of Esopus Library. There is talk of a plant sale in the spring of next year. Friends is seeking a continuous flow of donations. They are looking to buy a new cart for \$450 to bring the books downstairs.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Buildings and Grounds – Laura Petit
Written report was submitted. Laura reviewed the meeting minutes. The Committee reviewed master plans for the grounds. Buildings and Grounds Committee will discuss a Gift Policy with Governance and Personnel Committee.
- Governance and Personnel – Martha Farrell
Written report submitted. Martha Farrell reviewed the meeting minutes and presented the following resolution:

- **Resolution #56 of 2025 (the Law Enforcement Inquiry Policy Update):** The Board of Trustees of the Town of Esopus Library accepts the changes to the Law Enforcement Inquiry Policy. A motion to accept the resolution was made by Jamila Khan and seconded by Laura Petit.
 AYES: 9; NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0
 Board Members Excused:
 Board Members Absent:
- Sustainability, Research and Development – Sharon Briden
 Written report was submitted. Sharon reviewed the committee meeting minutes. The Committee would like to have food from the Community Garden help the community. Don had a conversation with Natalie Lincoln from Pat Ryan's office regarding Safe Streets grant opportunities. We need to discuss this opportunity with the Town of Esopus. The Committee is working on obtaining a cistern to help water the garden. A Welcome Wagon idea is being discussed for those folks that are new in town. There is a Tow of Esopus budget meeting Thursday night at 7pm
 The Town came by to try and vacuum out the silt in the pond and they could not do it. An excavator is needed to do the work.

X. Trustee Training

Jamila noted that on November 18th there is a training session scheduled. Jamila will send a link to it in order for folks to sign up. It runs from 5:00 - 6:30 pm

XI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business or discussion, Don Carragher made a motion to adjourn and it was seconded by Jamila Khan. The meeting was adjourned at 6:43 p.m.

AYES: 9; NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0

Board Members Excused:

Board Members Absent:

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

Director's Report November 2025

If it feels like you just read a report from me a couple of weeks ago, that's because you did. With the holiday season approaching, our November and December meetings had to be shifted to slightly earlier in the month. As a result, there hasn't been a great deal of new activity since we last met—but that's not a bad thing. It's a brief, welcome pause between the steady hum of fall projects and the flurry of preparations for winter and the new year. The groundwork we've laid over the past few months—both in programming and in facility improvements—is setting us up for a strong finish to 2025 and an even more dynamic start to 2026.

Ongoing and/or Completed Business:

Solar Power Array Upgrade Project: We are still waiting on Craig Hightower of New Energy Solutions to begin the bidding process. As previously reported, they are busy until the middle of November.

Hot Water Heater Issues: We are now expecting estimates from Lowe Plumbing. One to repair existing and another estimate for replacing our seemingly extra complicated water heater with a simpler residential unit.

Continuing Education, Community Outreach & Library Advocacy:

New York Library Association annual conference: On November 6th and 7th I attended the NYLA Conference and Tradeshow in Saratoga Springs. This year's theme was Actionable Advocacy and the keynote speaker was Micaela Blei, award winning storyteller and educator who you may have heard once or twice on NPR's Moth Radio Hour. The thinking behind asking a storyteller to present is based on the idea that one of the most effective ways to advocate for your library is to tell stories about how your library has helped people. I arrived fifteen minutes early to hear Micaela tell some stories and found that all of my colleagues had had the same idea and the auditorium was packed to the gills. I wound up listening from the hallway where it turns out the seating was much more comfortable. I paid close attention to most of the seating there actually because we still need to pick replacement chairs if the Friends of the Library's campaign to buy new ones raises enough money. The varieties of stacking chairs I saw in Saratoga were no better than what we have already though.

After the keynote speaker it was time to wander among the vendors, see what there was to see, and network with colleagues from all over the state. Of course I saw lots

of staff and directors for UCLA and MHLS libraries, but there were architects and vendors I've worked with in the past, professors I know from U. Albany, and the former director of Albany Public Library who was my mentor in grad school. Rebekkah Smith Aldrich introduced me to her counterpart in the North Country Library System and Robert Drake, technology director for the Nassau Library System and former MHLS employee introduced me to several Long Island directors. It is hard to quantify how beneficial these encounters are, but I for one came away with my spirits renewed. Somehow rubbing elbows with so many librarians at the same time goes a long way toward combatting burnout (for me at least).

I attended two workshops Thursday afternoon and three on Friday.

Many Hands: HR in Small Libraries 11/6 @ 1:45

Let's Use Library Life Stories to Promote Ourselves 11/6 @ 4PM

Library of Things: Budget Friendly to Big Time 11/7 @ 8:30AM

Seeds of Collaboration: Growing a Partnership 11/7 @ 11AM

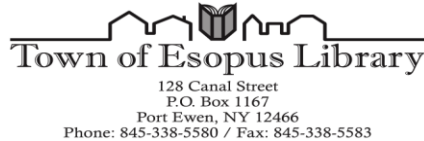
Small Spaces, Big Opportunities: Reorganizing to Increase Circulation 11/7 @ 2:15PM

Without fail, each talk left me feeling very proud of the Mid-Hudson Library System. Each of the workshops was useful and had some nuggets of wisdom for me to take away, but listening to some of the stories from the hinterlands (so to speak) made it clear that Esopus Library is light years ahead of many libraries in NY in many ways. I heard tales of woe based on not having the right policies in place; not building relationships with schools and local organizations; unmaintained buildings and grounds; dysfunctional Boards of Trustees; and bitter disagreements with Friends groups. We have a good thing going here and we are doing good work and it is so very nice to be reminded of this in a tangible way. I walked away with a new perspective on employee evaluations and new ideas on how to display parts of the collections for better circulation numbers. Some of the stuff I saw included in Thing Libraries not only gave me ideas about items we can be offering to loan but also future partnerships. All in all it was a very rejuvenating experience that renewed my confidence in my ability to lead Esopus Library into a bright future.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jesse Chance, 11/11/25

PS: Please don't forget about Bagels in the Basement on 11/20 and the Esopus Holiday Parade on 12/6...



Children's Programming Report - November 2025

October Round up

The latter half of October was filled with Halloween themed programs! We started with Potions! Which mostly turned into a very fun and messy slime program. Participants were tasked with being spooky scientists and making their best potions. This program had 26 participants. The Nutty Scientists came to visit and put on a spectacular Glow-in-the-Dark show for 13 participants. During the week leading up to Halloween we also hosted Kingston Pediatric Dentistry for a dental hygiene storytime with 16 attendees. This included a model of a mouth for brushing practice and an extremely oversized toothbrush that all the kids loved to try and hold. On Halloween Eve I host a Halloween themed Afternoon Storytime with a fun pumpkin craft component with 19 attendees. This program was followed in the afternoon by Candy Sushi Making which was a very sugar filled blast. This program had 21 attendees.

Throughout the month of October, in collaboration with the Robert Graves Elementary School and their school librarian Connie Spoth (also head of our Friends group!) we hosted a pumpkin scavenger hunt. Elementary students were tasked with finding four paper pumpkins dressed up like popular children's book characters in their school library and then five more in our children's room. We had 59 students participate! I was really impressed by how many new faces came into the library for this program and am very excited to work with Connie more on initiatives that bring our local students to the library and the library to those students and their families.

November so Far

Thus far November has been rather subdued in terms of programs since I was out on vacation for the first 11 days. While I was away Terry Watson continued to run her Music and Movement class with 17 participants. This program will run for two more meetings and we hope to then start it back up in the spring. With only one morning storytime this week, on Wed. 11/12, we had a small group of three children who were wonderful participants and braved the cold to feed the still very hungry fish!

November Cont.

Upcoming in November I will host the second meeting of our Young Readers Book Club which will meet on Friday, November 13th. Tween Book Club will also meet later this month on Thursday, November 20th - our core group of four tweens remains strong and excited to talk about books each month which is so much fun. Our second of our three part kids and families yoga series will meet on Friday, November 21st. And then rounding out our month of activities

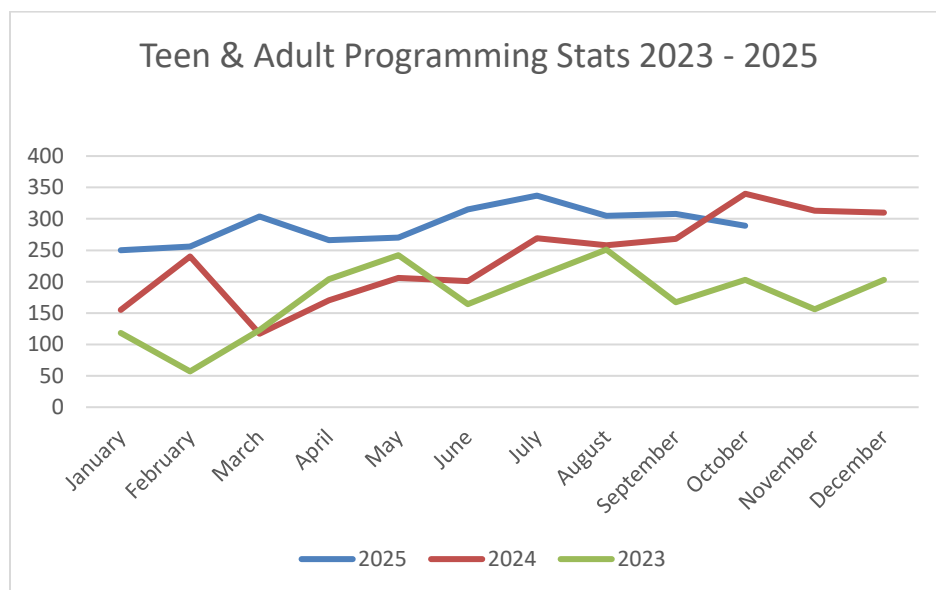
we will have a Pizza and Paint event on Saturday, November 22nd which I am sure will be as creative as it is cheesy!

Warm Regards,
Charlotte, Children's Programmer



Programming & Engagement Manager's Report – November

	Final October Numbers	October Numbers To-Date (10/14)
Teen	90 (7 programs)	42 (2 programs)
Adult	199 (21 programs)	104 (8 programs)



For those who like charts as much as I do (that's everyone, right?), the above might be interesting; 2023 was the time that preceded my tenure at the Library and programming seemed to experience dramatic peaks and valleys following major events. I joined the library in April 2024 and growth was steadier through that period; however, we seem to be reaching our capacity limit around 300 patrons a month. Interestingly, development in one programming area – say, an increase in teen programming - often seems to cause a dip in others. This indicates to me that our staff and space has little slack for sometimes-needed experimentation and growth. If we're to meet the needs of *all* of our patrons, we need to be able to carve out space and time for them. I'm hopeful that the outdoor programmatic capacity grant will help this spring, but other measures – block scheduling of programs, continued creative use of space – may also be needed.

Adult Programming

- **Movement Series Chair Yoga with Kathy S.** recently concluded; as per usual, demand for more chair yoga was immediate. **QiGong with Charlotte G.** begins next week with already-healthy enrollment.

- **Book Clubs** Third time's the charm? Our **Rainbow Book Club** (formerly the **In the Fam Book Club**) is now the **OutBook Book Club**, following some patron confusion – they thought their grandkids might enjoy reading *Giovanni's Room* on account of their liking rainbows. Oops. This book club continues to be a highlight for me. One member shared today that she's been passing on our reading list to an out of state cousin because, "It's been like learning about an entire world and culture right next to ours." Meanwhile, I continue to be tempted to add more book clubs; one of naturalist non-fiction might be cool and "The John Burroughs Book Club" would be a natural fit for a name, tying in to our own history and relationship with the Burroughs estate. But when?! Again, our tightly packed schedule presents issues.
- **Classes, Performances, and Workshops** Nancy Castaldo, a local author, visits us this month to discuss her new adult title, **Squirrel**, a history of this common backyard critter. We'll also be visited soon by **Holly Shelowitz**, returning to the Library after a long absence, for a workshop on **Nourishing Soups**. We're able to host this because our teen **Rainbow Club** is going on a brief winter hiatus. Noticing a theme?

Teen Programming

- **Ongoing Groups** Our **Dungeons & Dragons & Pizza** group has now been torn asunder into a tween group under the existing name and a teen-led initiative (meeting simultaneously in the teen room) for other roleplaying games under the name **Teen Dungeons & Dice & Pizza**. Tuesdays are basically dice takeover here at the Library. Meanwhile, we've had three visits with the Ulster BOCES life skills class, signing up 21 new patrons for cards and loaning them items on diverse topics such as trains, maps, weather, trucks, and flags. I saw one teen who claimed to hate books last week leave today with a Brian Sanderson doorstopper tucked under his arm. Heartwarming!
- **Classes, Performances, and Workshops** The **All-Out Open Mic** hosts its first headlining slam poet this month with **Kat Anderson**. I continue to receive reports that this is the best open mic around. Who knew?! Early next month we'll also host another cozy felting workshop with **Jocelyn Krodman**, which welcomes teens through adults.

Respectfully submitted,

Fox North

Town of Esopus Library
Buildings and Grounds Committee Meeting
Monday, November 3, 2025 – 4:00 p.m.

Present: Sharon Briden, Don Carraghe, rAlan Olson, Laura Petit Also Present: Library Director Jesse Chance

Call to Order:The meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m.

Director's Report

Hot Water Heater: Director Jesse Chance reported that the hot water heater continues to malfunction following the initial repair, which included installation of an expansion tank and pressure valve.

A second estimate for additional repair work is projected to cost approximately \$700–\$800. The committee discussed whether replacing the unit entirely might be a more appropriate solution at this point.

Upcoming Events:

Staff Appreciation Bagel Meeting: Scheduled for November 20, 2025. Committee members were invited to attend. Winter Wonderland Parade: The library plans to participate in the December 6, 2025 parade.

Master Building Plan

Laura Petit reported that discussions have begun regarding the development of a Master Building Plan, to complement the existing Master Grounds Plan.

She shared a preliminary draft outlining potential building needs, including:

- Painting the community area
- Updating staff offices
- Reviewing storage solutions
- Assessing the outside deck
- Improvements to the main library area

A revised version of the plan will be presented at a future meeting.

Other Business

Sharon Briden shared an update from the Sustainability Committee, which is developing a Welcome Wagon initiative for new residents. The welcome packets will highlight local destinations, available services, and general information about Esopus.

Don Carragher reminded members that a Library Trustee Training via Zoom will be held on November 18, 2025, from 5:00–6:30 p.m. at the library.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Town of Esopus Library

Finance Committee Meeting – November 5, 2025 @ 5:00 pm

Attending: Allen Olsen, Chair; Larry Decker; Jamila Khan; Cindy Capraro; Jesse Chance, Library Director

1. The October 2025 expenses in the amount of 19,431.38 were approved.
2. The October 2025 financials were reviewed. Several adjustments will be suggested to the accountants by Jesse.
3. The replacement or restructure of the Library's accounting work was discussed. Our accountant offered two options, and Jesse received another suggestion from a fellow Library Director. We plan to meet with some potential candidates shortly. Payroll processing will also be addressed.
4. A brief overview of the Draft 2025 Master Plan for Building Improvements was offered and discussed.
5. An update on the possibility of using MHFCU was offered.
6. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 3, 2025 at 5 pm.

Submitted by Allen Olsen

Town of Esopus Library
Governance and Personnel Committee
November 4, 2025

Present: Larry Decker, Laura Petit, Elaine Rylance, Martha Farrell

Excused: Jesse Chance

The committee met to review the Director's evaluations. Martha will write a report to distribute to the entire Board of Trustees.

Submitted,

Martha Farrell

Next meeting is scheduled for December 2, 2025 at 3:00 pm

Sustainability, Research and Development Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Tues, Nov 4 (Election Day)

Meeting Time: 4pm

Attendees: Jesse Chance, Don Carragher, Larry Decker, Martha Farrell (and Laura Petit)

Minutes:

Jesse shared results of the “Community Library Relevance Survey” (June 2025)

Total responses: 105

Key findings:

- Primary reason for visiting: borrowing books
- Private Study Spaces needed
- More Community-hosted events/community hub
- EV Station interest

As the survey didn’t ask how often they use library, a follow up survey to non-users could offer additional insights.

“Welcome Wagon” updates, next steps (gathering more info and list of relevant links)

New/potential Grant & Donor opportunities

- Ulster Savings Foundation Grant app - Due Dec 3 - use for Cistern installation (Next steps: get estimates)

Don researched the following for sidewalk assistance:

- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) - awaiting to hear when new application will be available
- Ulster County Transportation Council (UCTC) - further research is needed
- Safe Street (SS4A) Grants: This would need to be a “letter of support” from library to the Town of Esopus

Laura suggested - Greenway Grants as option for trails

“Thank You” Donor Recognition Event

Sustainability

- Sustainable Library Certification Program - Green Business Partnership elements can be applied.
- Martha recommended: Minimizing printing of Board Meeting docs and Handbook updates (Jesse sent email for preferences)
- Shredding opportunities

Next Sustainability, Research and Development Committee Meeting: December 2nd at 4pm

Submitted by: Sharon Briden