

Aurora Free Library
Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting
November 20, 2025

Facilitator: David Eckhardt- President AFL Board of Trustees

Invited Trustees: Lori Knopp, Jo Gunderson May, Dennis Looney(Zoom), Lars Peterson (Zoom), Sue Dean (Zoom),Thea Miller (excused absence)

Staff: Sandy Groth

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by President, Dave Eckhardt at 5:32 pm.

2. Consent Agenda Approval: A motion was made by Dave to approve the 10/16/2025 Minutes and the 11/20/2025 Agenda and Lori seconded it. The motion was approved with a 6-0-0 vote.

3. Conflicts of Interest: There were no conflicts of interest.

4. Treasurer's Report: There was no formal report by Lori, but she did share that a CD ladder of \$110,000 from checking account funds was invested through CLNB, with terms that ranged from 13 to 24 months at 3.5 percent interest. The CDs will be designated as an unrestricted Capital Reserve Fund. We are expected to close the year within the projected operating 2025 budget, with the exception of a negative balance in the Preservation fund due to expenses from the MOH Cooling Project, which received its funding in 2024. The 2025 Annual Appeal will add to our projected budget closeout. Lori and Dave also reported that our accounting firm recently completed a formal financial review of the Library accounts and bookkeeping practices, at a cost of \$2,500. We were deemed to be in very good standing.

5. Director's Report: Sandy presented a brief report on some of our most recent events and workshops. Our Halloween Open House was a huge success and brought in 400 visitors. Several Art Workshops have taken place with good attendance, and we have another upcoming Gardening workshop on decorating with winter greens. We have received a \$2,000 FLLS Collection Development Grant which we will use to replace older copies of books and add new ones to the collections next year. We also received a Friends of the TCPL Grant, which will be used to purchase a Cricut machine and supplies (which may be used for various tasks involving stencils and lettering, T-shirts, posters, etc.) and some additional supplies for our button maker.

We will participate in *Christmas in Aurora* on December 6th by hosting a graham cracker house decorating session and a visit from Santa. Also, on October 17th, Sandy, Dave, and Jo attended the Annual FLLS meeting in Homer, which was very informative and focused on ways to reach our community's specific needs.

6. Committee Reports:

Morgan Opera House: Lars shared some upcoming events at MOH: November 30th: the Skaneateles String Quartet will perform, and December 6th: Bones East Octet will return. Cash donations to the King Ferry Food Pantry will be welcomed.

Preservation: Dave shared that we have submitted a NYS Crest Program grant application through Senator Rachel May for renovating leaded glass windows at the front entrance and in the upstairs balcony windows at an estimated cost of \$66,000.

Fundraising: Our Annual Appeal application will go out the Monday after Thanksgiving. Our Fargo Fundraiser will be on Friday, February 20th.

For every entree or salad purchased, the Fargo will donate \$5 to the Library.

Booklover's Ball: Robin Driskel, Chairperson of the Annual Booklovers' Ball, presented her reflections on the outcome of the Ball. The total income after expenses was just short of \$20,000. The attendance was 115 and the silent auction was the best ever! Although some numbers were down from previous years, the Ball was another great success. As we move forward there are many considerations to take in for other possible approaches to where, when, and what the Ball may look like to best appeal to the greater community. Robin has graciously served on the Booklover's Ball for the past 20 years and announced that she will be stepping down at this time. Much gratitude was expressed for all her dedication to this major event! Thank you, Robin!

7. Old Business: Long Term Strategic Planning for 2026-2030 will be an ongoing task as we move forward. Dennis will chair a committee to brainstorm the plans for the Library. Once again, we will ask for a \$7,500 increase in the 2026 tax levy, with a formal vote to approve in January.

8. New Business:

Dave presented the following resolutions:

"Resolved: This Resolution approves that on November 20, 2025 the Aurora Free Library Board of Trustees designates that all certificates of deposit currently on file at the Cayuga Lake National Bank be considered as an unrestricted Capital Reserve Fund that may be used by the Library for any purpose at any

time.” Dennis made a motion to approve the resolution, and seconded by Lori. The approval vote was unanimous at 6-0-0.

“Resolved: Through this Resolution on November 20, 2025, the Aurora Free Library Board of Trustees approves the use of up to \$66,000 of the Library’s Capital Reserve Fund and/or other available financial resources to meet the Library’s share of the CREST Program project *Leaded Glass Window Restoration and Renovation*. Upon project approval, this amount of the project cost will be fully reimbursed by the CREST Program when all work meets satisfactory completion.” Lori made a motion to accept and Jo seconded the motion. The approval vote was unanimous at 6-0-0.

The Board then discussed the draft of the 2026 Operating Budget, which we will vote to approve at the January meeting.

In other new business: Lori noted that an adjustment was needed to the 2025 Library Budget as we did not receive the NYS Library Construction Aid grant for restoration of the Main Street wall. To address this, Dave moved the following that was seconded by Lars:

“Resolution: This Resolution removes the \$85,425 amount as projected revenue in the 2025 Library Budget, which had been designated for the *Main Street Wall Restoration Project* but was not funded by New York State.” The approval vote was unanimous at 6-0-0.

Sue Dean announced that she will be stepping down at the close of her term next February . Thank you Sue for your six years of Trustee service!

As the last business, a tentative date for the Aurora Free Library Annual Association Meeting was set for February 12, 2026 at 5:30 pm.

9. Adjourn Meeting: A motion was made by Jo to adjourn the meeting, and Lori seconded it. The approval vote was unanimous at 6-0-0. The meeting was adjourned at 6:46 pm.

The next Trustee Meeting will be **January 15, 2026**, as no meeting is scheduled for December.