

**Somers Library Board of Trustees  
PO Box 443  
Somers, New York 10589**

**MEETING MINUTES  
July 16, 2025**

President Rios called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The Trustees present were Nola Blair, Allison Colella, Susan Dillon, Sheelagh Kaplan, Kala Marsh, Christine Rios, Brian Schnapper, Barbara Tepper and Rebecca Wintle.

Resident Chris Novell, staff member Terre Thomas, Library Director Jessica Veissy and resident Mary Jane Volfson were also present.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

A motion was made by Mrs. Tepper and seconded by Ms. Blair to approve the minutes of the June 18, 2025 as submitted. All were in favor.

**Announcements and Correspondences**

Two compliments were in the suggestion box, "The library is amazing!"

The Bubble Bus brought almost 400 patrons to the Summer Reading Kick-Off party, breaking last year's record of 275.

The circulation desk handled over 239 phone calls in June, in addition to their circulation duties. The circulation desk is buzzing with activity.

The 50 American Museum of Natural History passes have been claimed for the year. The library will be looking into purchasing another round of 50 passes, if possible, and hopefully more in 2026.

The library will take part in a Diaper Drive for "The Sharing Shelf" through WLS from September 1<sup>st</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup>.

From Christina Johnson, Library Clerk: A patron visited for the first time and exclaimed that the library is beautiful.

Assemblyman Matt Slater's team has announced a press release regarding the Bullet Aid funding that will be allocated to the Somers Library, Mahopac Library, Reed Library, and the Mahopac School District. Carol Reif from Halston Media has received the press release, and there should be an article in The Somers Record soon. This announcement is also posted on Assemblyman Slater's website.

Earlier today, while Ms. Veissy was preparing for the Board meeting, a patron stopped her to say how much they loved the library and its collection.

Mrs. Tepper announced that a friend of hers registered to play canasta and loved it. She also expressed how much she loves the library and the collections.

**Public Comment**

Resident Chris Novell addressed the Board. She spends a lot of time at the library and appreciates the programs offered. Quite a few years ago, Ted Talks were available and Mrs. Novell would love to see them offered again. She also suggested offering Moth Story Hour, and to add to that it would be nice if the audience had a chance to share a story they had with the group about perhaps a hobby.

Mrs. Novell also thought it would be nice to have Soft Structures, conversations about non-fiction books. Finally, she suggested that there also might be a bulletin board in the lobby for folks to post an index card expressing wanting to meet up with someone to discuss a common topic. Mrs. Novell was thanked for her suggestions.

Mrs. Volfson is very active at the library, especially with her children and has expressed an interest in serving as a Trustee if and when a vacancy becomes available. Mrs. Volfson was thanked for her interest.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Ms. Blair prepared and presented the Treasurer's Report which was reviewed and discussed.

Ms. Blair made a motion to approve the Abstract of Audited Vouchers #7, dated July 16, 2025 in the amount of \$52,007.68, which included voucher numbers 114985 to 115005. The motion was seconded by Mr. Schnapper. All were in favor.

The contractual amount spent this past month was \$52,007.68, including \$225.00 from the Gift Fund. The largest expenditures were: Westchester Library System (bi-yearly library system membership) \$35,426.13, Sebco Books (books) \$3,161.50 and Baker & Taylor Books (books) \$2,911.42. Payroll and benefits were \$71,270.83. Total library spending for all accounts was \$123,278.51.

### **Library Director's Report**

Somers Day Camp has begun. Alan Briones will be doing story time on Mondays and crafts on Wednesdays with the Kindergarten group. The other groups will be able to come in and enjoy the program room, teen room and conference room. Use of the lower floor was eliminated this year. The library staff is looking forward to the camper's visits and hope that they'll visit once the school year begins too.

Budget preparations for 2026 will begin in August. Preliminary meetings with Supervisor Scorrano should start by the end of August as well. Having a budget committee was very helpful last year and Ms. Veissy hopes that will happen again this year.

There have been numerous patrons, along with staff, who have inquired about the possibility of having a live stream of the bird feeder on the library website. Unfortunately, according to the company, they have not set up the option to embed a link to websites. It can be viewed live from the app. The library will continue to share videos and photos of the wildlife visitors on the social media pages.

Life Scout Aidan Kimmel has put the finishing touches on the sign for the pollinator garden. It should be installed soon and will be announced on the library website and social media pages. The library is very grateful to Aidan, his parents, and his troop for their assistance with both the front and back gardens, a long-overdue project for the library. They look absolutely wonderful.

As part of the efforts to enhance various aspects of the library, the staff and Ms. Veissy reviewed the monthly newsletter and explored ways to improve it. Ms. Veissy also wants to ensure that the annual statistics and achievements are available on the website for patrons to access each year. Ms. Veissy came across the Nyack Library's Annual Report, which is informative, straightforward, and visually appealing. It showcases pictures of various activities and areas within the library. Their report will be used as inspiration to present the annual figures and also as a source of creative ideas for the monthly newsletter. The goal is to be more concise and incorporate more visual elements and color.

3,467 patrons visited the library in May.

## **Buildings and Grounds**

The annual fire inspection, conducted by Rich Servello, Chief Fire Inspector for Somers, took place on Wednesday, June 4<sup>th</sup>. The entire building passed inspection however, two holes found in the wall and ceiling on the lower level have to be patched. Ms. Veissy will be collaborating with Marty Stole to complete that work.

The annual fire system inspection by Doyle Security took place on Friday, July 11<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Veissy is frustrated as each year when they come, something they are doing to the system causes other issues. She refused to pay the service visit and wants the issues corrected.

The emergency exist railings haven't arrived yet, but the sidewalks are complete and look great.

## **Grant Review**

Ms. Veissy reached out to Assemblyman Matt Slater's office to inquire about the estimated timeline for when this year's Bullet Aid funding will be disbursed. She hopes to hear back soon. There is a possibility that the funding will be included in the 2026 budget.

## **Personnel**

Marie Nania has received her Civil Service grade and is now ranked on the Librarian I list. However, due to her position on the list, the list will have to be canvassed so the Civil Service's "Rule of Three" is followed. Ms. Veissy is optimistic about the process and anticipates having Ms. Nania on board by August. Ms. Veissy is genuinely excited to welcome her to the team, and is confident she will be a fantastic addition to the Children's Room. Ms. Nania's skills and passion will undoubtedly enrich the services and delight the young patrons.

Alan Briones will be applying for the Librarian II exam over the summer. Contingent on the civil service exam results, this would make him eligible for the Head of Children's position. Mr. Briones has been responsible for the Children's Room since June 2024 and has done an outstanding job.

## **Professional Development**

Staff development for the entire staff will resume in the fall of 2025. However, they continue to pursue professional development by taking courses on their own.

## **Monthly Statistics for June**

New Library Cards – 61 (48 adults, 9 juveniles, 3 teen and 1 courtesy)

ILL Items Received – 1,272

ILL Items Supplied – 940

Monthly Circulation – 12,655

Computer Usage – 93

Door Count – 3,467

WiFi Usage Connections – 751

Reference – 1,090 (Adult/YA) and 186 (Children)

Programs/Attendance – Adult 35/530, Teens 10/53 and Children 19/1,035

## **Staff Meeting**

The next staff meeting will be held at the end of August to prepare for Fall 2025. The reference staff and Ms. Veissy will also meet in early August to begin discussions for the Book Sale, Kindness Week, and Halloween activities.

## **Friends of the Somers Library**

Ms. Blair reported that the Friends have modified their brochure, took photos at the Bubble Bus and posted them on their website. They are also planning for a fundraiser with a children's author.

## **Monthly Meeting with Town Update**

Mrs. Rios reported that the last meeting was a discussion about union negotiations.

## **Old Business**

### **Teen Room Renovation Update**

The Town Board has approved the add-ons for the teen room renovation and Supervisor Scorrano signed the paperwork. At the request of Bob Galbaski from Lothrop Associates a meeting was held with Ms. Anastasi, Ms. Thomas and Ms. Veissy to discuss soundproofing, lighting, as well as ceiling and floor coloring. The options available were shared with the Trustees. A review as well as a discussion took place and items selected. Ms. Veissy will report back to Mr. Galbaski. As Mr. Schnapper does some of this as his profession, he is happy to be part of a meeting when all is finalized.

### **HVAC Update**

Unfortunately, no bids for an HVAC design for the library were received. A local engineer was consulted and revised the scope of work. Supervisor Scorrano, Building Inspector Tom Tooma and Mrs. Schirmer met to review and discuss. Permission is being requested of the Town Board at their meeting on August 14<sup>th</sup> to rebid this project.

## **New Business**

### **Onboarding for New Employees: Background Check, Pre-Employment Physical and Pre-Employment Drug Test**

Ms. Veissy was informed by the Supervisor's office that the library will now be responsible for mandatory background checks as well as optional pre-employment physicals and pre-employment drug tests. A motion was made by Mrs. Tepper and seconded by Mrs. Rios not to require pre-employment physicals and drug tests. All were in favor.

### **Addition to Collection Development Policy: Local Author Book Addendum**

Ms. Veissy provided the Trustees with a draft of Local Author Book Addendum and pointed out a few minor changes. A motion was made by Mrs. Dillon and seconded by Mrs. Rios to accept the policy as corrected. All were in favor. Ms. Veissy will email everyone the final copy.

### **Collecting of Unemployment**

At the request of the Finance Department, approval is needed to pay a former employee collecting unemployment out of the Unemployment Reserve. A motion was made by Mr. Schnapper and seconded by Mrs. Colella to use the Unemployment Reserve for unemployment payments made to a former employee. All were in favor.

At 8:30 p.m., the Board went into Executive Session to discuss union contract negotiations. They came out of Executive Session at 8:40 p.m. and the meeting was closed.

The Board will meet next on Wednesday, August 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the library.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Schirmer, Secretary  
Somers Library Board of Trustees

cc: Library Board of Trustees  
Town Board  
Town Clerk  
Finance Department – Carolyn Brush and Bob Kehoe