

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

MEETING MINUTES
October 15, 2025

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

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

Sheelagh Kaplan and Rebecca Wintle were absent with prior notice.

Susan Dillon Zoomed into the meeting.

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 Mr. Schnapper to approve the minutes of the September 17, 2025 as submitted. All were in favor.

Announcements and Correspondences

A patron mentioned that the restrooms are not in great condition on mornings after the cleaning company isn't scheduled to come.

Circulation fielded 276+ calls for September, and 42 email addresses were added to Constant Contact for library notifications.

There is a new schedule for morning tot programs, and attendance has greatly improved, staying steady at high numbers.

Over 200 people attended Ghostbusters Day, and more than 80 attended the Stargazing Party with Westchester Astronomers. Library program attendance seems to be at an all-time high thanks to the wonderful staff!

Patron and former Library Board Trustee Don Penzine sent a wonderful thank-you email to Ms. Veissy and Anne Dehn for finding the plaque with the original members of the 1982 Library Board, including himself. Ms. Veissy cannot take any credit as Ms. Dehn found the plaque in the conference room. It seems to have been removed from the walls with many others, possibly due to a former project around the library. These plaques need a new home or to be displayed. In addition, Ms. Veissy and some of the staff will be working with Town Historian Doris Jane Smith to do a story about the history of the library.

The library received a very generous donation of \$5,000.00 from the Ambellan Charitable Foundation. These funds will be used to replace the informational TVs located behind the circulation desk and outside of the program room as well as helping our new Children's Librarian, Marie Nania, begin her robotics and STEM courses.

The library received a generous donation of \$150.00 from a wonderful library supporter that enjoys coming to the library and participating in programs.

Public Comment

Resident Mary Jane Volfson who is interested in a Library Board of Trustee position when one becomes available attended the meeting. She has expressed her interest to the Town Supervisor and met with the Town Board. Mrs. Volfson works for JP Morgan Chase and suggested the library consider a Giving Tuesday campaign.

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 #10, dated October 15, 2025 in the amount of \$15,577.49, which included voucher numbers 115725 to 115745. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Dillon. All were in favor.

The contractual amount spent this past month was \$15,577.49, including \$650.00 from the Gift Fund. The largest expenditures were: Amazon (office supplies) \$3,625.86, Baker & Taylor Books (books) \$1,492.75, and Bond, Schoeneck & King, PLLC (union negotiations legal fees) \$1,287.00. Payroll and benefits were \$72,989.10. Total library spending for all accounts was \$88,566.59.

Library Director's Report

The Diaper Drive has come to a close, and it appears to have been a great success. The next collection drive will be Toys for Tots. The boxes will be located in the front vestibule of the library, and the drive will run until December.

The Somers Library and WLS table is now on display at the local PCSB in Town. It's a wonderful way to share with the community what they can get with the most important card in their wallets, a library card. Of course, residents can always visit the library for more information or to sign up for a library card. A heartfelt thank you to Peter Riffel and the PCSB Somers branch.

The staff has begun taking in a large number of books. Ms. Dehn has been sorting the donations by genre as they arrive. Bulk donation days will be announced on November 1st as there is a limited amount of storage space. The library asks that the public excuse the appearance of the program room, as it will serve as the central location for storage. A schedule for volunteers and staff needed will be going out by the third week of October.

3,572 patrons visit the library in August.

Buildings and Grounds

A few additional issues with the HVAC system have been encountered, including the heat and air conditioning running simultaneously, as well as a malfunctioning motor in one of the boilers. Sueco has been extremely responsive in diagnosing and addressing these problems. They recently installed a new thermostat for the main area of the building to better regulate that portion of the system, which Ms. Veissy is hopeful will resolve many of the previous concerns. Sueco will return to repair the second boiler soon, but the library is fully prepared for the colder weather with the other boiler functioning properly.

JP McHale successfully eliminated the swarm of yellowjackets within a day and a half. By late afternoon after their treatment, there was a significant difference in the area. The technician mentioned that there has been a significant increase in yellowjackets this season, and they have been very busy responding to calls.

Over the past two to three years, the library has seen a significant increase in visits, and Ms. Veissy noticed that the carpeting is showing considerable wear, more so than in previous years. This is particularly noticeable in the reading room and in the areas in front of and behind the reference desk.

Recently, Ms. Veissy tripped behind the reference desk while approaching staff, which highlights the safety concern and she believes strongly that this issue needs to be addressed very soon.

Grant Review

The bullet aid money is expected to arrive soon. Ms. Veissy will begin exploring different companies to replace the chairs in the library, and if funds remain, she will also consider replacing some of the tables.

Personnel

Alan Briones is on the promotional Librarian II list. Ms. Veissy has requested the certification list, and he should be able to be appointed very soon. Mr. Briones has already done a wonderful job as Head of Children's.

Professional Development

Ms. Veissy is pleased to share a new partnership with the Somers Volunteer Fire Department's 2nd Assistant Chief, Jeff Hopper. This past summer, Mr. Hopper and a few colleagues came to the library for Community Reader Day with the Kindergarten Camp groups, showing the kids their gear and answering questions. Following that visit, Ms. Veissy reached out to Mr. Hopper about hosting a fire safety drill or an information session for the staff, and he graciously agreed. Ms. Veissy is coordinating an afternoon in November to close the library early for staff development, which will include fire safety training, team-building activities, and other professional development opportunities. Ms. Veissy is looking forward to sharing the outcome of this endeavor.

Monthly Statistics for September

New Library Cards – 71 (60 adults, 6 juveniles, 4 teen and 1 courtesy)

ILL Items Received – 1,574

ILL Items Supplied – 1,025

Monthly Circulation – 13,448

Computer Usage – 106

Door Count – 3,572

WiFi Usage Connections – 815

Reference – 1,076 (Adult/YA) and 113 (Children)

Programs/Attendance – Adult 51/456, Teens 16/270 and Children 20/1,075

Staff Meeting

The staff meeting had to be rescheduled to Wednesday, October 1st. Topics covered included upcoming events/programming including the book sale, Civil Service as well as building updates, and communication/help and support within staff

Friends of the Somers Library

Ms. Blair reported that the Friends have been working on programs being offered at the library, the next Etsy sale, and the book store. Their banner was hung up at the library.

Monthly Meeting with Town Update

Mr. Schnapper reported that the last meeting was held in September 22nd which included a general and ongoing conversation about union negotiations, maintenance of the building and the teen room renovation. The October meeting was cancelled due to the Jewish holidays.

Old Business

Teen Room Renovation Update

The project proposal was tweaked slightly. This morning a piece of the wall had to be cut so the beam could be checked. The next step should be the receipt of the bid specifications. Mrs. Rios extended special thanks to Mr. Schnapper for his assistance with this renovation project.

HVAC Update

At their August meeting, the Town Board approved soliciting RFP's for an HVAC design for the library. The updated scope of work was received and RFP packages were mailed out today with a due date of October 6th. Nine proposals were received and are in the process of being reviewed so a recommendation can be made to the Town Board at their November 6th meeting.

2026 Proposed Budget

The individual contractual lines for the proposed 2026 proposed budget were reviewed and discussed. Ms. Veissy has had conversations with the Parks and Recreation Superintendent and the Senior Citizen Director about speaking to the Town Board during budget hearings about the Town hiring a cleaning/custodial person.

New Business

Nominating Committee

Kala Marsh was appointed to serve as the Nominating Committee.

Trustee Term Expirations

Mrs. Dillon, Mrs. Kaplan, Mrs. Marsh and Mrs. Tepper's terms expire at the end of the year. The Supervisor's office will send letters regarding these term expirations.

At 8:05 p.m., the Board went into Executive Session to discuss union contract negotiations. They came out of Executive Session at 8:55 p.m. and the meeting was closed.

The Board will meet next on Wednesday, November 19th 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