

**MEETING OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**Pound Ridge Library District**  
**Location: 271 Westchester Ave, Pound Ridge, NY**  
**November 17, 2025**

President Richard Esman called the meeting to order at 7:33 PM. He welcomed staff, trustees, and guests.

**Present:** Anne Benefico, Robert Bellhouse, Richard Esman, Lexie Gallo-Cook, Richard Levan, Christina Sass-Lehner, Valerie Shiba-Silverman, Jenna Wise

**Absent:** Marvin Markowitz (excused)

A quorum was present throughout the meeting.

*Ms. Benefico made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 22, 2025, meeting; Mr. Levan seconded; all in favor.*

The next Board of Trustees Meeting will take place at the library on **Monday December 22, 2025**. Ms. Wise suggested we start early, about 6:45 PM, and gather for a holiday party and invite staff and members of the Library Foundation.

**Financials** – The Profit and Loss Statement and the Balance Sheet prepared by Mr. Michael Lewis were included in the Google Drive and the Trustees' folders. Total Assets as of October 31, 2025, are \$1, 909,175.19.

**Treasurer's Report** – Mr. Bellhouse prepared a business snapshot with graphs comparing 2024 Income and 2024 Expenses to 2025, month by month. The Trustees received this in the Google Drive. The Treasurer's Report was included in the Meeting Folder and the accounts are as follows:

**Chase Bank:**

Checking 43, 536.68; Savings 249,753.40

3-month CD 353,990.00 (maturing November 29, 2025)

CD 200,000 (matured October 28, 2025)

**Key Bank:**

Checking 5,000; Savings 242,067.67

**Westchester Financial Advisors:**

Wood Capital 274,526.80

Wood Maintenance 283,402.08

Wood General 224,234.54

Mr. Bellhouse will be having a telephone meeting with Westchester Financial Advisors on November 18. There is a \$10,000 Bond maturing.

**Building and Grounds Report – Bonnie Schwartz**

Ms. Schwartz prepared a detailed report which was included in Google Docs. She presented the highlights at the meeting:

- Leak in flat part of roof over the Fiction Room. Perry's Roofing fixed it as well as did some flashing. Perry's Roofing estimated that the flat roof is good for another 5 years.
- Replacement of the Heating and A/C System in the Reading Room. The system is old and parts are obsolete. Ms. Schwartz presented a history of the system and explained it is a separate unit from the rest of the library. She obtained three bids for a new HVAC system, which will include heat pumps, and answered questions from the trustees regarding labor costs, warranty, and when the work could take place. Mr. Esman asked Ms. Coulter about any possible Grants to fund the project; there are none in the near future. Based on Ms. Schwartz's recommendation, the Board decided to go with White Plains Heating and Air Conditioning Service, Inc. who has previous experience working on our HVAC system at the library. The estimate is for \$13,500.00, but Ms. Schwartz suggested we approve \$15,000.00 in case of any unforeseen expenses. *Ms. Benefico made a motion to approve \$15,000.00 for White Plains Heating and Air Conditioning Service to replace the HVAC System in the Reading Room; Ms. Wise seconded; all in favor.*
- Ms. Schwartz made a recommendation to the Board that they budget money in 2026 for repairs to the fence that faces the road, which is rotting. And also, repairs to the stone wall near the library sign, which is crumbling.

**Warrants:** Warrants were presented and trustee questions were answered by Ms. Coulter. *Mr. Levan made a motion to approve the warrants in the amount of \$44,161.42; Ms. Benefico seconded; all in favor.* Mr. Bellhouse will transfer funds on November 18 from Chase Savings Account to Chase Checking Account to cover the warrants.

## **Committee Updates**

**Finance** - Mr. Bellhouse plans to spend time reviewing the 2025 budget in anticipation of expenses in 2026.

**Technology** – Ms. Wise will be meeting with Ms. Coulter to discuss the possibility of a new website and new library branding.

**Governance/Legal** – *Mr. Levan made a motion for an Executive Session; Ms. Benefico seconded; all in favor.*

**Public Relations** – Ms. Wise. No update.

**Program Development** - Ms. Shiba-Silverman met with Ms. Coulter to discuss community and children's engagement. They are considering a program in which children recommend books to each other. A child would be selected to hold the position of "junior librarian."

**Human Resources** – *Ms. Benefico made a motion for an Executive Session; Mr. Levan seconded; all in favor.*

**Long Range Planning** - Mr. Bellhouse. No update.

**Parking Improvement** – Mr. Esman reported a parking lot incident that took place on November 11, Veteran's Day. It was a school holiday and it was during a popular program and the lot was not monitored closely where overflow parking takes place. Vehicles were obstructing safe passage to our neighbors' driveways. The police were called, and Jim Perry, Building Inspector, also arrived at the library threatening to close it down for the day. Ms. Coulter was able to resolve the issue. Ms. Esman continued with a brief history of the parking situation which has been an ongoing issue and the Library Board has been working with engineers, attorneys, traffic experts and the Planning Board for 10+ years, with no solution to increasing the number of spaces. It has especially been an issue these past few years due to the successful and popular programs the library offers, as well as the interior renovation of the library and adding a sensory room. Mr. Esman, who was also called in that day, went on to explain that Mr. Michael Peirce, a neighbor affected by this problem, was marking lines for parking overflow spaces on the dirt road that serves as an entrance to our neighbors' driveways. Mr. Esman also spoke with Mr. Perry. Conversation on November 11 and at the Board Meeting encompassed the following: possibly create 10-12 perpendicular parking spaces on both sides of the road assuring that the roadway is 25 feet wide; tree and vegetation removal; grading; gravelling; hiring a land use attorney; hiring an engineer; clear marking of parking spaces; pedestrian safety; noise; lighting; signage; privacy screening; hiring someone to direct traffic on days with popular programs; lack of sidewalks; conducting a site walk; going in front of the planning board. Mr. Esman opened up the meeting to public comments since our neighbors were in attendance at the meeting and they voiced their concerns. Mr. Esman received a quote for the work that would be needed; and will be requesting additional quotes. He and the Parking Lot Committee will report again next month.

**Director's Report – Ms. Coulter - none**

## **8:23 PM New Business**

Discussion about continuing our meetings on Zoom. Tonight's meeting is not on Zoom. Vote deferred until next month once we listen to the meeting recording and determine how effective the audio system is.

Mr. Michael Peirce presented a letter about his uncle Peter Peirce, and the history of the early days of the library. Peter Peirce was an influential part of the library from its inception. He had a home on the property which has since been moved to the property behind the library. Peter Peirce also served as the first Library Board President.

## **8:33 PM Public Meeting Adjourned**

## **8:39 PM Executive Session Commenced**

## **9:12 PM Executive Session Adjourned**

**9:12 PM Public Meeting Reopened** *Ms. Benefico made a motion to approve the recommendation by the HR Committee concerning Ms. Coulter's 12 unused vacation days in 2025; Mr. Levan seconded; all in favor.* Ms. Coulter will be paid for 3 days, she will take 4 days before the end of 2025 and she will be permitted to carry over 5 days into 2026 which must be taken by June 30, 2026.

## **9:13 PM Public Meeting Adjourned**