

MEETING OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Pound Ridge Library District
Location: 271 Westchester Ave, Pound Ridge, NY
March 18, 2026

President Richard Esman called the meeting to order at 7:37 PM. He welcomed trustees, staff and guests. He also extended a warm welcome back to Trustee Marvin Markowitz.

Present: Anne Benefico, Robert Bellhouse, Richard Esman, Lexie Gallo-Cook, Richard Levan, Christina Sassi-Lehner, Marvin Markowitz, Valerie Shiba-Silverman

Absent: Jenna Wise (excused)

A quorum was present throughout the meeting.

Mr. Levan made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 18, 2026, meeting; Ms. Bellhouse seconded; all in favor.

Ms. Gallo-Cook made a motion to approve the minutes of the Special Board Meeting on February 28, 2026; Mr. Esman seconded; all in favor.

The next two meetings are scheduled for: Wednesday April 22, 2026, at 7:30 PM, and Wednesday May 27, 2026, at 7:30 PM.

Board Self-Evaluation Form: Each Trustee filled out the form and Ms. Coulter will tally and read the results at next month's meeting.

Book Drop Box in Scotts Corner: Ms. Coulter presented location options for a Book Drop as well as two pricing bids. The Briarcliff Library offered us one free of charge that they are no longer using and the Board decided that would be the best option. Ms. Coulter offered to pick it up in Briarcliff and we will also ask the community if this is a service they would use.

Buildings & Grounds

A copy of the Building and Grounds Report prepared by Ms. Schwartz was included in Google Docs prior to the meeting.

- Ms. Coulter reported that fortunately there was no flooding in the Sensory Room as a result of recent rain.
- A toilet needs replacement in one of the Rest Rooms and the Board decided to make the improvement to both Rest Rooms. The Board reviewed the pricing bids and decided to go with John Hobby Jr Plumbing and Heating. *Ms. Benefico made a motion to approve \$2,400.00 for replacement of 2 toilet bowls; Mr. Levan seconded; all in favor.*
- Ms. Coulter was made aware of water damage to one of acoustic tiles in the Schaffner Room; she will reach out to the company who installed them and look into getting it repaired or replaced.
- The Chair Lift has been repaired. Perhaps the company who repaired the chair lift will vouch for the weight test requirement which is mandated by NYS once a year.
- Mr. Bellhouse noticed that 2 trees are leaning and he would like them to be inspected.

Treasurer's Report

A copy of the Treasurer's Report was included in Google Docs. Mr. Bellhouse highlighted the following:

- A CD (\$383,139.89) matured on Feb 28, 2026 and those funds were transferred to Chase Checking Account, thus the high total in Checking: \$469,9763.09. \$300,000.00 of this will be placed in a 30 day CD to preserve liquidity pending receipt of first payment from Tax Revenue. Mr. Esman suggested that Mr. Bellhouse call the town and request the town send it as an EFT, not a check.

Warrants. *Mr. Bellhouse made a motion to approve the warrants in the amount of \$67,537.90; Ms. Shiba-Silverman seconded; all in favor.*

Committee Updates

Technology. Ms. Coulter announced that we are moving forward with Library Market for our new website and a 50% deposit is due, which we will address later in the Director's Report.

Governance/Legal. Mr. Levan discussed the Library's Disaster Preparedness Policy as required by NYS. The Committee will review the final draft and put it before the Board next month. Also discussed was a new policy for AED (Defibrillator) should we decide to purchase one for the Library, as suggested by a patron. It had been decided in last month's meeting that a policy (best practices) should precede a purchase, so Ms. Coulter and the Governance Committee presented one and the Board discussed having it reviewed by a licensed medical provider or perhaps the Pound Ridge Ambulance Corp. Further discussion will continue at next month's meeting.

Public Relations. Ms. Sassi-Lehner and the Committee continue to meet with Gina Federico regarding library rebranding.

Program Development. Ms. Shiba-Silverman and the Committee are planning for the library's 75th anniversary initiatives in 2027.

Human Resources – Ms. Benefico discussed the Health Insurance Policy renewal for Ms. Coulter and Mr. Ramsay. Ms. Coulter recommended retaining the current United Healthcare Oxford plan for the two enrolled employees. The renewal increased 13.38%. *Ms. Benefico made a motion to approve \$63,080.04 annual premium for the insurance policy; Mr. Bellhouse seconded; all in favor.*

Long Range Planning – Mr. Bellhouse proposed engaging an engineer to conduct a structural assessment of the building, and will begin to collect quotes from engineering firms to complete an appraisal of the building's infrastructure, with particular emphasis on the roof.

Parking Improvement. Mr. Esman continues data collection and has met with the Onsite Engineer as well as walking the property in preparation for an informal Planning Board presentation. Ms. Gerri Tortorella, a land use attorney, has been retained to represent the library. Mr. Levan proposed a public forum with the community and key town officials to discuss the parking concerns.

Director's Report – Jennifer Coulter

- **Parking Lot Monitoring.** Ms. Coulter reached out to three companies for bids. A new company was selected and is starting on Monday March 16. Classic Valet - \$26,50 an hour; approx. \$954.00 a week depending on scheduled programming.
- **New Website.** Library Market has been selected to re-do the website and a 50% fee is required. *Ms. Benefico made a motion to approve \$8,500.00 payable to Library Market; Mr. Bellhouse seconded; all in favor.*
- **NYS Annual Report 2025.** Ms. Coulter responded to the annual report. *Mr. Levan made a motion to approve the annual report as prepared by Ms. Coulter; Ms. Sassi-Lehner seconded; all in favor.*
- **Sexual Harassment Prevention Training.** All staff and Trustees are required to complete.
- **Seed Library.** Celebrating 5 years; Seed Sowing Workshop will take place on April 12; special recognition was given to Founding Member, Carolyn Sears, for her contributions.
- **An Eco Afternoon.** It takes place on Saturday April 25th in honor of Earth Day and Arbor Day. The Library will be participating and offering seeds from the Seed Library, compostable planters and collecting batteries.
- **AED Installation** – The Trustees are still considering the purchase of the AED, and the “best practices” document presented earlier in the meeting will be reviewed by a qualified medical professional before the Board votes on the purchase.
- **Sensory Room** – Deep cleaning has been completed, and new signage (bi-lingual) has been installed indicating no food is permitted in the room.
- **Back Drop:** A black curtain backdrop has been purchased and installed in the Schaffner Room for performances.
- **One County One Read Initiative:** Tickets can be purchased online for a presentation and author talk for the book *The Revolutionary: Samuel Adams* on Saturday April 25th at 3 pm at the Grinton I. Will Library in Yonkers.
- **18th Century Blacksmith Demonstration.** Taking place at the Pound Ridge Town Park on May 9 at 1:00 PM.
- **Summer Reading Kickoff Celebration.** Taking place on Saturday, June 27. Will include Bunny Petting Zoo, Music with Mr. Kurt and special guest readers.
- **Love Your Library License Plate.** Customized plates are available through New York State Department of Motor Vehicles at a cost of \$80.00. Money collected goes to NYS Summer Reading Program.
- **Trustee Education Requirement.** A reminder to Trustees to complete their 2 hours of required training for 2026. Ms. Coulter added a new link to a new monthly webinar which covers topics in the Trustee Handbook that trustees might be interested in to fulfill their training.

9:19 PM New Business – A patron approached Ms. Coulter and asked about the possibility of installing a plaque commemorating his wife, who was a frequent visitor to the library. As the Library has no specific policy regarding this, Ms. Coulter will request more specific information about what he has in mind, and the Board will consider the request.

9:22 PM Public Remarks

- Mr. Esman asked each person to introduce themselves. Ms. Janis Knorr mentioned that she has sent a few emails to the Trustees and she has received no response. Ms. Coulter explained that those emails go to the Board President and not the individual trustees. Mr. Esman apologized. Ms. Knorr raised concerns about lack of parking and patrons who occupy parking spaces all day without attending a program, or remain at the library several hours after the program ends. Ms. Knorr also expressed that the parking valet service will not create spaces, the attendants are just redirecting traffic or turning cars away. She also mentioned that she read on the WLS website that there are parking regulations for tax paying districts to give priority to residents and we should consider this. She praised the new signs for no food in the Sensory Room. Ms. Rena Goldman spoke about the Chair Yoga Instructor shuttling her students back and forth to Conant Hall where they are forced to park due to lack of spaces at the library. Another patron expressed concerns that programs should be scheduled further apart to avoid overlap and alleviate parking constraints. Ms. Coulter assured the group that there is 45 minutes between programs. Another attendee expressed concerns about people arriving an hour before the library opens to secure parking.
- Ms. Gallo-Cook apologized to Ms. Knorr and stated that it would never be the Board's intention to ignore an email, noting that the oversight may have occurred during an email migration.

9:41 PM Public Meeting Adjourned