



Marcellus Free Library
ANNUAL MEETING
Meeting Minutes JANUARY 27, 2026 @ 5:45 PM

Trustees present: Dennis Robillard (President), Guy Donahoe (Vice President), Jeremy Pellizzari (Treasurer), Mary Drabot (Secretary), Kathryn Dennis, Michelle Hubbard, Hank Roane

Also present: Sophia Brandt (Director), Sara Randolph (Staff), Michele Merwarth (Friends of MFL Corresponding Secretary), Steve Kankus (Friends of MFL President), Martha Dickey (Staff), Renee Alexander (MFL Board of Trustees Candidate)

Meeting Called to Order by Dennis Robillard at 5:50 PM.

Additions/Changes to Agenda. No changes or additions

Review and Approval of Minutes from December 9, 2025. Motion to approve December minutes made by Michelle Hubbard. Seconded by Guy Donahoe. Minutes approved unanimously.

Director's [Annual Report](#) & [Annual Report Presentation](#)

Committee Reports

Friends:

- Friends membership is now 208, the first time it has exceeded 200. With about 1,400 active library users, this level of participation is especially noteworthy.
- A Friends survey completed in January received 60 responses from approximately 200 members contacted. Feedback was mostly positive, but some respondents noted they had volunteered and were not contacted. As a result, the Friends plan to recruit additional volunteers for the Olde Home Days book sale.
- The Friends are once again accepting donations for the Book Nook and the Olde Home Days sale.
- Since July 1, 34 Friends members have contributed approximately 700 volunteer hours, supporting the book sale, Book Nook, holiday open house, and groundskeeping.
- At the January meeting, the Friends filled the Vice President and Secretary positions and now have a full slate of officers and directors.
- The Board and longtime members also discussed ways to strengthen the organization, including clarifying the Friends' primary focus, adjusting board structure through a bylaw change, and reducing the workload of officer positions.



- The Friends have decided not to hold a raffle basket this year due to reduced volunteer availability. This decision will be revisited after Olde Home Days and will not affect this year's contribution to the library.
- The next Friends business meeting will be held on February 18.

Finance:

- In 2026, we signed a contract to complete Phase 2 of the Creekwalk Project. Planned improvements include outdoor gaming tables, upgrades to the outdoor stage (including a shade structure), and a musical garden. Funding will come primarily from a New York State grant and the Ast and Gammon bequests.
- The budget reflects the aging of the building and the need for significant maintenance work, which is expected to remain a higher-cost area in future budgets.
- The 2026 budget continues to align with the strategic plan adopted in 2024, including:
- Over 10% of the annual budget is allocated to new collections, resources, and public programming
- Payroll remains the largest operating expense, with an increase in 2026 due to cost-of-living adjustments (COLA)
- In 2026, we plan to continue offering multiple engaging public programs and fundraising events.
- The library remains in a strong financial position. However, with the completion of the Creekwalk Project in 2026 and major maintenance projects on the horizon (such as a roof replacement), we may need to draw from the Tompkins account in late 2026 or early 2027. This will depend on early-year budget performance, particularly payroll and personnel expenses.

Nominations Committee: Earlier in the month, the Nominations Committee and Sophia met with Renee Alexander to review her application to join the board of trustees. Renee is a dedicated patron of the library. A formal vote to onboard Renee will take place tonight.

Development: No updates but for reminder that Peter C. should be contacted soon to book Tuscarora for 2026 Gala, making sure the event is on his radar.

Buildings and Maintenance: No updates, but once weather turns milder, the discussion of roof and soffit repairs/replacement will continue.

Personnel/Policies: No new updates



New Business

- **Vote on new Board Trustee** Motion to vote on Renee Alexander to join the board made by Kathryn Dennis. Motion seconded by Mary Drabot. Motion unanimously approved.
 - Welcomed Renee to the Board of Trustees

Questions/Comments from the Public. No questions or comments from the public

Other Business. None

Adjournment. Motion to adjourn meeting made by Guy Donahoe. Motion seconded by Kathryn Dennis. Motion unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 6:29 PM.

Minutes recorded by: Mary Drabot

Next Board Meeting Date – Tuesday, March 10, 2026

DRAFT