

Northern New York Library Network
Board of Trustees Meeting
March 20, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 AM.

Trustees Present: Ellen Adams, Amy Bedard, Justin Cree, Emily Hastings, Cori Wilhelm, Edward Komara, Sarah Weisman, Jackie Madison, Paulette Roes, John Payne, Allison Comes and Michael Spofford, Jill Daby

Trustees Absent: Jessica Clemons

Staff Present: Meg Backus, Jennifer Thomas

Agenda

Motion 24/25 - - 28: Cori Wilhelm (Justin Cree) moved to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes

Motion 24/25 - - 29: Emily Hastings (Justin Cree) moved to approve the January 16, 2025, meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Reports

The Board reviewed and discussed the financial reports as presented by Jennifer Thomas for January and February 2025. Financial reports were received as presented for filing by the Board.

2024-2025 Meeting Dates

The board discussed moving the May meeting date from May 15 to May 8 to be in-person (Zoom link will be provided for those unable to attend in-person) prior to the Member Meeting. It was agreed to move the meeting to May 8 at SLU from 9am to 10am. Jennifer will coordinate hotel reservations for board members needing accommodation.

NNYRC Report

Minutes from February 6, 2025, NNYRC Board of Directors was included for review with the board packet. Paulette Roes provided a summary of the highlights from that meeting noting that the Simmons Group and NNY Community Foundation representatives had presented information on how they manage investment funds. She noted that the meeting had been very informative. She noted that Simmons Group presentation was very informative and thorough

answering the board's query as to why NNYRC continue to have Simmons Group manage the corporation's assets. Max DeSignore from the NNY Community Foundation provided a very general overview of the foundation and its investment process. The group did not feel he made a strong case for moving NNYRC assets. It was noted by Meg that there had been no follow-up from NNYCF regarding the request for more detailed information during the meeting.

Meg added, considering management needs, NNYCF would not allow for the type of interaction currently in place with Simmons Group. While there is direct access to the Simmons Group, NNYCF funds are managed by multiple financial advisors and the corporation would not have such access.

Meg recommended investment funds remain with Simmons Group and noted that the Ethic Account is maintained by a third party (not the Simmons Group) and these dollars might be placed with NNYCF in the future as their values and goals align those of the account.

Director's Evaluation

Meg outlined the procedure for the annual evaluation of the NNYLN Executive Director. A written account of the process was included in the board packet with an outline of topic areas. Board members will be emailed a link to complete the evaluation from Jennifer. The evaluation survey will close April 30. Board President, Ellen Adams will complete a review of the evaluations by June 30, 2025.

Executive Director's Report

Meg Backus noted her written report was included in the Board Packet. Members discussed several items. Highlights included:

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- 3 Pilot groups engaging in collaborative inquiry together on topics: Library Users in Crisis, Disaster Prep ("What pieces of a disaster plan can we organize regionally in a directory format?"), and Digitization.
- Consortial meeting held March 4, 30+ attendees (17 of 19 participating schools represented) Overdrive magazines will hopefully be added to shared account. Kanopy has a consortial option now. KBase, 13,000 videos, price based on FTE, many with public perform rights, discount provided at 20% if 5 institutions subscribe, up to 35% discount if 20+ subscribe together. Looking at making another shared pool like Overdrive with academic institutions across NY.
- Awarded 2 DEI & Belonging Grants for \$3k each: funding for an Akwesasne artist to consult on a community mural project happening at Massena Public Library (also includes adult

programs and book acquisitions) and CEFLS public library system will hold workshops for member libraries that include presentations on topics such as unconscious bias, establishing an inclusive culture, and cultural competence, and will support the development of signage that communicates an “all are welcome” message.

- 5 Engaging Communities applications received (3k-12k): 4 in Special Collections category, 1 Action.
- State report came back with questions pertaining to grants given to museum members, asking how grants related to library materials and services. A travel grant was deemed an ineligible expense for Library Aid.
- Chuck is helping our sister council WNYLRC in Buffalo recover from an IT crisis. We are contracting his time by the hour to fix their website and stabilize various services and platforms.
- Conversations about local community support amid cuts and chaos. John Brown Lives! with civic groups, other nonprofits mapping communication assets and needs. Potentially organizing rapid response email list, hub for events/announcements. Libraries could need community support for intellectual freedom, protecting patron privacy, or if funding for erate or other federal programs disappears, libraries may need local budget increases.
- Archival programming in flipped-classroom style launching in April with archivist Katelyn Legacy-Roulston.
- Amy and Meg are submitting a proposal to present a session at NYLA 2025 related to our collaborative inquiry teams. Short Program Description: In this interactive session, explore the results of a landscape analysis of continuing education in the library field and critique and co-design pathways for continuing education that center agency, problem-solving, and collaboration.
- The annual membership meeting will be May 8 at SLU in Canton, speaker Shannon Mattern, Director of Creative Research at METRO library council, on alternative forms of adult education.
- Katelyn and Amy are planning a local watch party for the NY Archives conference in June.
- Note: the changes to our CE program from one-off events to ongoing, engaged work in small groups will change our CE stats drastically. We are pursuing quality over quantity for our efforts toward professional development/learning.
- CSEA renewed the lease of 7 Commerce Ln. for an additional \$400/mo rent.
- Nominating committee pursuing Chessie Monks-Kelly of Historic Saranac Lake and Sarah Jennette of Clinton Community College for trustee seats.
- Budget Committee to meet April 29.
- Securing D&O Insurance is still in-process. Working with our broker OneGroup on a quote for \$433 from Traveler's.

Prior to adjourning the board members noted that these are confusing times. The action of the current federal administration is not easy to navigate. Federal funding being delayed or ceased entirely will affect our state and our member organizations. It was agreed that the structures in place are good and together we are stronger.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30am by Board President, Ellen Adams

Next Meeting is Thursday, May 8 2025 in-person at SLU and via Zoom at 9:00am.

Additional meeting dates for FY 2024-25

- Finance and Budget Committee, April 29, 2025 at NNYLN
- Nominating Committee, TBD
- NNYRC Board of Directors, April 17, 2025

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer M Thomas