

**Northern New York Library Network  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
September 25, 2025**

The meeting was called to order at 10:03am.

**Trustees Present:** Amy Bedard, Jessica Clemons, Allison Comes, Justin Cree, Emily Owen-Hastings, Sarah Jennette, Edward Komara, Jackie Madison, Chessie Monks-Kelly, John Payne, Paulette Roes, Michael Spofford, Cori Wilhelm

**Trustees Absent:** Sarah Weisman

**Staff Present:** Meg Backus, Jennifer Thomas

**Agenda & Minutes**

**Motion 25/26--7:** Jackie Madison (Chessie Monks-Kelly) moved to approve the agenda and the July 28, 2025, meeting minutes. Motion was amended by Jackie Madison to correct a typo in the draft minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

**Financial Reports: July and August 2025**

The Board reviewed and discussed the financial reports as presented by Jennifer Thomas. Jennifer noted the addition of the new bank accounts and a new Fund Balance Summary sheet. NNYLN received its full allocation of State funding (Basic Aid, Supplemental Aid, HLSP and MISP) in August. Financial reports were received by the board as presented for filing.

**Samaritan Medical Center 2526 Service Proposal**

Meg reminded the group that two hospital librarians (for CVPH and Samaritan) submit funding proposals to NNYLN annually. CVPH's proposal was previously submitted and approved.

Meg presented the proposal submitted by Samaritan Medical Center and recommended the board approve the entire request for \$84,920. All expenses are allocated to medical information resources and the means of accessing it—all eligible expenses for HLSP and/or MISP. The Samaritan proposal allowed room to increase the award to CVPH by \$1,345, presented in a revised summary of HLSP and MISP funding for FY 25-26.

**Motion 25/26--8:** Michael Spofford (Emily Owen-Hastings) moved to approve \$84,920 in funding to the library at Samaritan Medical Center and a total of \$46,387 to the library at CVPH as noted in the revised summary of HLSP and MISP funds for FY 25-26. The motion was unanimously approved.

### **Health Insurance Plan Change for 12.1.25**

Information on NNYLN's current health insurance plan NNYLN was compared with a High-Deductible plan with Health Reimbursement Account (HRA). The high deductible health plan would allow NNYLN to fund an HRA for employees with \$48,500 saved from the reduced premium expense, almost covering the health plan deductible for each employee. Contributions to the monthly premiums would remain the same (NNYLN covers 100% employee and 50% of dependents). Risk is controlled for both NNYLN and employees by deductibles and max out-of-pocket costs within range of what they were paying for the Platinum Standard Plan.

In the proposal to move to the Bronze 5 plan NNYLN would fully fund the employee deductibles totaling \$54,000. These funds will remain in NNYLN bank accounts until used by employees. Unused funds will be available to fund the following year's HRA deductible.

Language was also presented to update the Personnel Manual's Health Insurance policy.

**Motion 25/26--9:** Paulette Roes (Justin Cree) moved to amend the Health Insurance and Health Insurance Incentive Plan Policies as follows, and to establish a Purpose-Defined HRA fund with \$54,000 for the purpose of changing health insurance plans and supplying an amount equal to the in-network deductible for each employee plan.

#### **Health Insurance**

*All full-time and part-time permanent employees (but not hourly employees) are eligible for health insurance. The current program is a deductible HRA with coverage that includes medical, pharmacy, and dental benefits.*

*The Network health insurance contribution toward monthly premiums is 100 percent for individual employee coverage and 50 percent for dependents, as well as a Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) funded up to the plan in-network deductible for each participating employee. If an employee becomes eligible for Medicare (disability and/or age) the organization will pay individual Medicare premiums as supported through the organization's 105 plan.*

#### **Health Insurance Incentive Plan**

*The health insurance incentive is 20% of the Network's annual contribution toward a family health insurance premium and deductible as described in the Personnel Manual.*

The motion was unanimously approved.

### **Audit, OPEB Valuation from Armory Associates**

The board was presented with a letter from Dannible & McKee in connection with the audit of the consolidated financial statements of NNYLN as of and for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025 and a copy of the Professional Services Agreement with Armory Associates, LLC for OPEB valuation.

### **Executive Director's Report**

Meg Backus noted her written report was included in the Board Packet. Highlights included:

- NEH Office of Grant Management not issue award documents until possibly October with a tentative project start date of November 1, 2025. QPL will not accept the grant without reading the award agreement. Some NY institutions are declining grant awards because of stipulations related to DEAI.
- New traveling exhibit on Urban Renewal, corresponds to collections in New York Heritage
- In-house database project in progress akin to a regional asset inventory.
- Professional Development funds awarded since July 28 Board meeting:
  - \$1,400 Rayth Von Hoffmann, Canton Free Library, Association for Rural & Small Libraries conference in Albuquerque, NM
  - \$1,080 Alexander Cohen, Director Clarkson University Libraries, virtual attendance for SUNY Library Leadership and Management Certificate - three online courses
  - \$810 Jill Daby, virtual attendance at Systematic Review Services Specialization
  - \$1,295 Cori Wilhelm, Attendance at Charleston Conference 2025 in Charleston, SC
- Our flipped-classroom style training developed in-house, *Creating Access through Archival Description*, filled up (capped at 20) and is going well. Select Wednesdays, September 3 - October 8, 2025. Workshops are receiving positive feedback.
- Governor has yet to sign the Freedom to Read bill that was passed in legislature. Letters urging her to sign the bill will be going out, organized by NYLA.
- NYLA Legislative Committee agreed on its priorities for the new session.
  - State Aid for Libraries: requesting \$181.32M. 2025 funding was \$106.325M.
  - NEW: Cultural Education Fee – Increase to \$30. This fee is currently \$15 and has not been adjusted for two decades.
- Meg noted she is now serving as ESLN chair.

- Contract with external cleaning service terminated. Staff argued to divide cleaning tasks internally and use savings for cosmetic improvements to interior space.

### **Review of NYS Annual Report**

A complete copy of the NYS Annual Report was reviewed with the board. Notes discussed where numbers differed significantly from the prior fiscal year.

**Motion 25/26--10:** Michael Spofford (Allison Comes) made a motion to approve the NYS Annual Report as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

### **Conflict of Interest/Sexual Harassment Prevention Training**

Conflict of Interest statements were collected from members who had not yet had a chance to send them to Jennifer to file. Members of the Personnel Committee will complete anti-harassment training that complies with NYS requirements.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, Nov 20, 2025; via Zoom, 10:00 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55am.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer M Thomas