

Northern New York Library Network
Board of Trustees Meeting
July 28, 2025

The meeting was called to order a 1:04pm.

Trustees Present: Amy Bedard, Allison Comes, Justin Cree, Sarah Jennette, Edward Komara, Jackie Madison, Chessie Monks-Kelly, John Payne, Sarah Weisman, Cori Wilhelm

Trustees Absent: Jessica Clemons, Emily Owen-Hastings, Paulette Roes, Michael Spofford

Staff Present: Meg Backus, Jennifer Thomas

Agenda

Motion 25/26--1: Sarah Weisman (Amy Bedard) moved to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

Introductions

At the request of Executive Director, Meg Backus asked all present to introduce themselves to the group noting their organization and the amount of time they have been with the board.

Minutes

Motion 25/26--2: Jackie Madison (Cori Wilhelm) moved to approve the May 8, 2025 meeting minutes. Motion was amended by John Payne to correct one typo in the draft minutes. (The word “the” was missing a letter.) The motion carried unanimously.

Financial Reports: April, May, June 2025

The Board reviewed and discussed the financial reports as presented by Jennifer Thomas. Discussion included whether Petty Cash account is needed, and no objections were raised to maintaining it for the foreseeable future. Financial reports were received by the board as presented for filing.

2025-2026 NNYLN Officers

Motion 25/26--3: Jackie Madison (John Payne) moved to approve the following slate of NNYLN Officers effective July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026:

President: Sarah Weisman
Vice-President: Amy Bedard
Secretary: Justin Cree
Treasurer: Emily Owen-Hastings

The motion carried unanimously.

NNYRC Board of Directors

The Northern New York Resources Corporation Board of Directors oversees the assets and investment management of the corporation, ensuring sufficient funds are available to achieve its mission of supporting Northern New York Library Network. Directors oversee compliance with financial regulations and legal requirements and the preparation and filing of annual tax documents, such as the IRS Form 990. The President or designee reports on the organization's financial condition and any significant issues or developments to the full NNYLN board.

Motion 25/26--4: Sarah Weisman (Amy Bedard) moved to approve the following slate of members to the NNYRC Board of Directors for the period July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026:

President: Paulette Roes
Secretary: Cori Wilhelm
Treasurer: Emily Owen-Hastings
Members-at-large: Justin Cree and Michael Spofford

The motion was unanimously approved.

NNYLN Board Committees

Meg Backus provided an overview and brief description of the committees and the responsibilities of each noting that each committee has the power to bind the board. The decisions and actions taken by each committee are considered official and enforceable actions of the full board.

Personnel Committee

The personnel committee advises the director on matters relating to personnel policies and practices, employee relations, staffing, and organizational structure. It may field formal complaints according to personnel policies.

Motion 25/26--5: Amy Bedard (Chessie Monks-Kelly) moved to approve Jackie Madison, Chessie Monks-Kelly and Edward Komara as the Personnel Committee. In discussion the group agreed the board president will serve as an ex-officio member on each committee and other trustees offered their service to this committee. Justin Cree offered to serve as a resource to the committee due to his HR experience though also agreed to serve elsewhere. Amy Bedard (Chessie Monks-Kelly) amended the motion to approve Jackie Madison, Chessie Monks-Kelly, Edward Komara and Allison Comes to serve on the Personnel Committee. All voted in favor.

Finance Committee

The finance committee recommends the annual budget for board approval, oversees the filing of the annual IRS Form 990 and all required tax filings, and monitors financial reports to gain enough understanding to provide requested guidance or approval on finance or budget, overall ensuring NNYLN has the financial resources necessary for long-term success

Motion 25/26--6: Jackie Madison (Sarah Weisman) moved to approve John Payne, Emily Owen-Hastings and Michael Spofford to serve on the Finance/Budget Committee. The motion carried unanimously.

Grants Committee

The grants committee advises on and reviews submissions and awards funding within NNYLN's Advancing Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging grant program.

Motion 25/26--7: Justin Cree (Jackie Madison) moved to approve Justin Cree, Sarah Weisman, Chessie Monks-Kelly and Sarah Jenette to serve on the Grants Committee. The motion carried unanimously.

Director Evaluation Report

The board was presented with a summary of the trustees' evaluations of NNYLN's executive director. The board's past member and president completed a summary document for filing. Meg received praise for her abilities and the efforts she makes to engage with NNYLN members, outside agencies and the board to fulfill and support NNYLN's mission.

Executive Director's Report

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

Foundation Directory Online Tool is live for members to search for grants. It has been well-received by members. Usage reports will be generated every six months.

Work has begun with Froghouse Studio to develop our collaborative inquiry program. A Landscape Analysis is underway detailing types of continuing education (CE) currently available for library workers in northern New York, as well as examples of self-directed, participatory alternatives for Continuing Education that exist as functional precedents and noteworthy tools and resources that we may use in our project.

Three members newly joined Academic Overdrive Consortium, SUNY Plattsburgh, Clinton Community College (free with SUNY Plattsburgh), and SUNY Oswego. That's 6 of 10 of Northern academic library members participating along with 16 (and growing) other schools around NY. Magazine collection added to consortial account, adding even more value.

NNYLN convened a meeting between both public library systems to encourage greater degree of sharing and communication for all public libraries in our region. Successful, will recur in October 2025. Plan is to meet every six months.

Katelyn Legacy-Roulston begins full time on Aug 1 as Special Collections Consultant

It was noted that if the NEH Grant is awarded Katelyn's duties would be adjusted in order to align with her role relative to the grant. She would continue to work on NNYLN projects in a more limited scope.

Professional Development Awards (awardees not notified yet)

Three pursuing MLIS Degrees, awarded \$1400 each

- Octavia Walker, Hay Memorial Library Director, SU
- Megan RoyceSt. Lawrence County Center for History & Culture, UB
- Meghan Harney, Lowville Free Library Director, UB

Advocacy and Awareness: State Budget passed with \$106.325M for Library Operating Aid, an increase of 2.3% over last year's enacted budget. Passed with a "clawback" provision in Aid to Localities (the budget bill containing library funding), which gives the budget director

authority “to withhold all or some of the amounts appropriated” if a \$2B general fund imbalance is expected. No clawback is expected in FY 2025-26.

Freedom to Read bill was passed in both houses and will go to Gov for signing into law. Must sign by end of Dec 2025 to go into effect. The intent of the bill is to protect intellectual freedom in school libraries and to empower school libraries and library staff to use their expertise in curating collections that represent the diverse experiences and interests of readers.

Completed a review of banks with higher interest rates and Budget Committee approved a switch from Community Bank to Metropolitan Commercial based in Great Neck, NY. Important details include up to \$60MM guaranteed by FDIC, current APY 4.18%, no transaction fees or minimum balance requirement, robust support for online banking activities (encl summary)

NNYRC funds successfully transferred to Northern New York Community Foundation on June 2, 2025.

Presumed lightning strike at NNYLN office during storm on night of June 24. Damage to alarm panel, fire panel, circuit boards on HVAC control units, and a network switch amounted to an insurance claim of \$4,703.

Proposed 2025-2026 Meeting Dates

Proposed meeting dates were presented:

Thursday, Sept 25, 2025; In-Person at Network office? (Extended agenda?)

Thursday, Nov 20, 2025; Zoom, 10:00 a.m.

Thursday, Jan 22, 2026; Zoom, 10:00 a.m.

Thursday, Mar 19, 2026; Zoom, 10:00 a.m.

Thursday, May 14, 2026; TBD online or at Annual Member Meeting

The board confirmed the September 25, 2025 meeting will be in person at the network office with an extended meeting. Lunch will be provided. Afternoon topic will focus on NNYLN’s grant program.

Motion 25/26--6: Justin Cree (?) moved to approve the 2025-2026 meeting dates. The motion carried unanimously.

Conflict of Interest Forms

Board members were sent a .pdf of the Conflict of Interest Form and were asked to complete and email the completed form to Jennifer at Jennifer@nnyln.org.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55pm.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer M Thomas