

**MINUTES
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
THE SMITHTOWN LIBRARY
August 20, 2025**

A regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of The Smithtown Library was held at the Kings Park building, Kings Park, New York, on the 20th day of August, 2025. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm with the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

The following Library Trustees were present: Brianna Baker-Stines, Mildred Bernstein, Barbara Deal, Annette Galarza, Howard Knispel and Theresa Stabile. Trustee Christopher Sarvis was absent with prior notice.

Also present were Library Director Robert Lusak, Assistant Library Director Eileen Caulfield, Clerk Lauren Gunderson, Treasurer Kevin Miller and Secretary Linda Taurassi. Assistant Library Director Patricia Thomson was absent with prior notice.

Library Board President Annette Galarza acted as Chairperson of the meeting.

READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Library Board President Annette Galarza moved to approve the adoption of the following resolution:

- a. *RESOLVED, that the REGULAR meeting minutes of July 15, 2025 and the SPECIAL meeting minutes of August 6, 2025 be approved as presented:*

The motion was seconded by Trustee Howard Knispel and adopted 6-0 by the following roll call vote:

FOR—Baker-Stines, Bernstein, Deal, Galarza, Knispel, Stabile AGAINST—none

REPORTS OF OFFICERS, BOARDS, STANDING COMMITTEES & DIRECTOR'S REPORT

2. The BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE report was presented by Budget and Finance Committee Liaison Howard Knispel, who moved to approve the adoption of resolution "a":

- a. **TREASURER'S REPORT**

RESOLVED, that the TREASURER'S REPORT for the month ended July 31, 2025 be approved for filing (copy of report appended to the original of these minutes).

The motion was seconded by Trustee Mildred Bernstein and adopted 6-0 by the following roll call vote:

FOR—Baker-Stines, Bernstein, Deal, Galarza, Knispel, Stabile AGAINST—none

b. WARRANTS

Budget and Finance Committee Liaison Howard Knispel moved to approve the adoption of resolution “b”:

RESOLVED, that the following WARRANTS be approved for payment:

i. Warrant #25 - August (“L” fund) PREPAYS	\$ 67,317.90
ii. Warrant #25 - August (“L” fund) WARRANT	\$ 468,521.61
iii. Warrant #25 - August (“M” fund) WARRANT	\$ 295,480.12
iv. Warrant #25 - August (PAYROLL #15 – 7/18/25)	\$ 266,667.33
v. Warrant #25 - August (PAYROLL #16 – 8/01/25)	\$ 265,679.21
vi. Warrant #25 – August (PAYROLL #17 – 8/15/25)	\$ 266,648.47

The motion was seconded by Trustee Barbara Deal and adopted 6-0 after discussion by the following roll call vote:

FOR—Baker-Stines, Bernstein, Deal, Galarza, Knispel, Stabile AGAINST—none

c. FUND TRANSFERS AND REPAYMENTS

Budget and Finance Committee Liaison Howard Knispel moved to approve the adoption of resolution “c. i.”:

i. Transfer of Flood-Related Expenses from the General Fund to the Special Revenue Fund

WHEREAS, The Smithtown Library has incurred expenses related to flood response, recovery, and mitigation; and

WHEREAS, such expenses were initially paid from the General Fund; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate and in accordance with sound fiscal management practices to reallocate such flood-related expenditures from the General Fund to the Special Revenue Fund;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of the Smithtown Library as follows:

The Business Manager is hereby authorized to transfer all eligible flood-related expenses incurred from the General Fund to the Special Revenue Fund.

The motion was seconded by Trustee Mildred Bernstein and adopted 6-0 by the following roll call vote:

FOR—Baker-Stines, Bernstein, Deal, Galarza, Knispel, Stabile AGAINST—none

Budget and Finance Committee Liaison Howard Knispel moved to approve the adoption of resolution “c. ii.”:

ii. Repayment Between Funds

The Business Manager is hereby authorized to make repayment of \$373,358.31 from the “M” Fund to the “L” Fund, restoring previously reallocated funds for flood-related expenses.

The motion was seconded by Trustee Theresa Stabile and adopted 6-0 after discussion by the following roll call vote:

FOR—Baker-Stines, Bernstein, Deal, Galarza, Knispel, Stabile AGAINST—none

3. The PERSONNEL COMMITTEE report was presented by Personnel Committee Liaison Barbara Deal, who moved to approve the adoption of resolution “a”:

a. *PERSONNEL CHANGES*

RESOLVED, that the following PERSONNEL changes be approved as presented:

Promotional Appointments:

- i. *Permanent full-time promotional appointment of **James Hansen** to the position of Librarian II, Reference Department, Smithtown building, at an annual base rate of pay of \$100,757.00, subject to a 12-week probationary period, effective August 21, 2025 (to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Chris Bell, effective 3/1/25).*
- ii. *Permanent full-time promotional appointment of **Nanci Helmle** to the position of Librarian II, Senior Services, Reference Department, Commack building, at an annual base rate of pay of \$91,794.00, subject to a 12-week probationary period, effective August 21, 2025 (to fill the vacancy created by the reassignment of Jessica Weber to head of Reference, Kings Park building).*

Part-time Appointments:

- iii. *Part-time appointment of **Lisa Cavallaro** to the position of Library Clerk, Circulation Department, Nesconset building, at an hourly rate of pay of \$20.17, not to exceed 17.5 hours per week, effective August 23, 2025 (to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Erin Matura, effective 11/9/24).*
- iv. *Release of **Eliana Uvenio** from a Page position into a part-time position of Library Clerk, Circulation Department, Kings Park building, at an hourly rate of pay of \$20.17, not to exceed 17.5 hours per week, effective August 25, 2025 (to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Caitlin Robinson, effective 5/17/25).*

“Page” Part-time Appointments:

- v. *Part-time appointment of **Matthew Laub** to the position of Page, Smithtown building, at an hourly rate of pay of \$16.50, effective August 26, 2025 (to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Danica Condon, effective 8/14/25).*
- vi. *Part-time appointment of **Ava LoMonaco** to the position of Page, Smithtown building, at an hourly rate of pay of \$16.50, effective August 21, 2025 (to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Tiernan O'Rourke, effective 8/14/25).*
- vii. *Part-time appointment of **Sophie Lin** to the position of Page, Kings Park building, at an hourly rate of pay of \$16.50, effective September 10, 2025 (to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Isabel Lin, effective 8/7/25).*

Call-In Appointments:

- viii. *Temporary appointment of **James Apel** to the position of Custodial Worker I on a call-in basis, at an hourly rate of pay of \$22.18, effective August 21, 2025.*

- ix. Temporary appointment of **Matthew DiPietro** to the position of Custodial Worker I on a call-in basis, at an hourly rate of pay of \$22.18, effective September 2, 2025.

Resignations:

- x. Resignation of **Isabel Lin**, Page, Kings Park building, effective August 7, 2025.
- xi. Resignation of **Tiernan O'Rourke**, Page, Smithtown building, effective August 14, 2025.

Leave Request:

- xii. Leave of absence without pay for **Employee #1245**, effective August 11, 2025 through August 24, 2025; September 5, 2025 through September 28, 2025.

Retirements:

- xiii. Retirement of **Jasper Berti**, Custodial Worker I, effective August 13, 2025 (last day of employment – August 12, 2025).
- xiv. Retirement of **Mary Anne Stevens**, Library Clerk, Nesconset building, effective August 16, 2025 (last day of employment – August 15, 2025).

The motion was seconded by Trustee Brianna Baker-Stines and adopted 6-0 after discussion by the following roll call vote:

FOR—Baker-Stines, Bernstein, Deal, Galarza, Knispel, Stabile AGAINST—none

b. MEETING ATTENDANCE REQUESTS:

Personnel Committee Liaison Barbara Deal moved to approve the adoption of resolution “b”:

RESOLVED, that the following meeting attendance requests set forth hereinafter are hereby approved:

- i. That Library Director **Robert Lusak**, be authorized to attend the “NYLA 2025 Conference and Tradeshow” sponsored by the New York Library Association, to be held in Saratoga Springs, NY, from November 5, 2025 through November 8, 2025, with reimbursement for reasonable expenses incurred with the display of certified receipts.
- ii. That Librarian II **Christine Alexander**, be authorized to attend on paid release time, the “NYLA 2025 Conference and Tradeshow”, sponsored by the New York Library Association, to be held in Saratoga Springs, NY, from November 6, 2025 through November 7, 2025, with reimbursement for reasonable expenses incurred with the display of certified receipts, not to exceed \$122 for registration, \$180 for lodging and \$100 maximum per day for meals. (Christine will be a presenter at the conference with a reduced registration fee.)

- iii. *That Librarian I, Children's Services **Brieanne Kocka**, Children's Department, Commack building, be authorized to attend "Lit Fest 2025", sponsored by the Nassau Library System, to be held at the Nassau Library System, Uniondale, NY, on September 12, 2025, with reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses not to exceed \$95.00.*
- iv. *That Librarian III **Amanda Lentino** and Librarian III **Colleen Navins**, be authorized to attend on paid release time, the "NYLA 2025 Conference and Tradeshow", sponsored by the New York Library Association, to be held in Saratoga Springs, NY, from November 5, 2025 through November 8, 2025, with reimbursement for reasonable expenses incurred with the display of certified receipts, not to exceed \$300 per registration, \$611 for lodging and \$100 per person maximum per day for meals. (Travel and lodging will be shared to save on costs).*

The motion was seconded by Trustee Brianna Baker-Stines and adopted 6-0 after discussion by the following roll call vote:

FOR—Baker-Stines, Bernstein, Deal, Galarza, Knispel, Stabile AGAINST—none

c. RETIREMENT – Resolution of Appreciation – **Mary Anne Stevens**

Personnel Committee Liaison Barbara Deal moved to approve the adoption of resolution "c":

WHEREAS, Mary Anne Stevens has announced her retirement as of August 16, 2025; and

WHEREAS, Mary Anne began her tenure with the Smithtown Library as a Page at the Commack Building on November 4, 1992; and

WHEREAS, she became a part-time Library Clerk in the Commack Circulation Department on September 21, 1994 and then was appointed to full-time on September 28, 2002, and

WHEREAS, in June 2006 she was reassigned to the Nesconset Building and while there she was nominated by her colleagues and was the recipient of the 2009 Excellence in Library Service Award, given by The Suffolk County Library Association and its Executive Members; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that The Smithtown Library does hereby express its appreciation to Mary Anne Stevens for her thirty-three years of dedicated service and contributions to the Library and the community it represents; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of The Smithtown Library extends to Mary Anne Stevens their best wishes for many years of health and happiness during her retirement.

The motion was seconded by Trustee Mildred Bernstein and adopted 6-0 by the following roll call vote:

FOR—Baker-Stines, Bernstein, Deal, Galarza, Knispel, Stabile AGAINST—none

4. The BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE report was presented by Buildings and Grounds Committee Liaison Theresa Stabile, who moved to approve the adoption of resolution “a”:

a. AMENDMENT TO SMITHTOWN BUILDING PROJECT OVERSIGHT AND MANAGEMENT:

WHEREAS, at the December 17, 2024 Board of Trustees meeting, the Library Director was authorized to enter into a contract agreement with SCC Construction Management Group to oversee professional services related to the August 19, 2024 flood at the Smithtown Building; and

WHEREAS, the current agreement outlines a phased fee structure for the Project, including a Pre-Construction Phase and a Construction Phase; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to revise the timeline and associated fees to more accurately reflect the current Project schedule and scope;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the fee structure is amended as follows:

Pre-construction Phase: *an increase from eight (8) months to ten (10) months, at a rate of \$6,500 per month, for a total of \$52,000 (reflecting the addition of July and August 2025).*

Construction Phase: *a reduction from twelve (12) months to ten (10) months at a rate of \$19,500 per month, for a total of \$195,000 (reflecting a reduction from 12 to 10 months).*

*The total proposed fee is **reduced by \$26,000** from the original proposal.*

The motion was seconded by Trustee Brianna Baker-Stines and adopted 6-0 after discussion by the following roll call vote:

FOR—Baker-Stines, Bernstein, Deal, Galarza, Knispel, Stabile AGAINST—none

b. CONTRACT AGREEMENT - Island Elevator

Buildings and Grounds Committee Liaison Theresa Stabile moved to approve the adoption of resolution “b”:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of The Smithtown Library does hereby authorize the Library Director to renew a contract agreement with Island Elevator (NYS Contract PS70072SB – Award 23271, Contract Period July 20, 2023 -- July 19, 2028) for the period October 1, 2025 through September 30, 2026 for the third renewal of a five-year optional ordering period, for the purpose of the elevator preventative maintenance/service agreement, for the Smithtown, Commack, Kings Park and Nesconset buildings; the total annual cost for basic inspection services covered under the 2025-2026 term shall not exceed \$11,000.00 (note: as needed, "per-call" service calls outside of normal business hours, "due to" issues and other services outside of the preventative maintenance/service agreement, and additional NYS Required Periodic Inspection & Testing may incur an additional expense). Subsequent renewals for a period of one year at the cost projected will be considered (pending Board approval and funding) at the annual anniversary date.

The motion was seconded by Trustee Barbara Deal and adopted 6-0 after discussion by the following roll call vote:

FOR—Baker-Stines, Bernstein, Deal, Galarza, Knispel, Stabile AGAINST—none

Buildings and Grounds Committee Liaison Theresa Stabile moved to approve the adoption of the following resolution:

- c. AUTHORIZATION OF CHANGE ORDERS FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES CONTRACTOR-Fidele Construction, Inc.

WHEREAS, the Board previously authorized the retention of Fidele Construction, Inc. for Phase Two of the Emergency Building Restoration Project for the Smithtown building, for \$1,357,900.00, which included both temporary and permanent restoration work; and

WHEREAS, during the implementation of said work, it has been determined that additional mitigation measures are required to preserve and protect the physical plant and to address unforeseen conditions resulting from the emergency flooding event; and

WHEREAS, the value of these required change orders totals \$39,899.00, and such amount exceeds the currently authorized contract sum; and

WHEREAS, the Board desires to maintain accountability and transparency in its emergency contracting by formally approving such change orders;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board hereby authorizes the execution of change orders to the Phase Two contract with Fidele Construction, Inc., in an amount not to exceed \$39,899.00, bringing the total authorized contract amount to \$1,397,799.00, for the completion of additional mitigation measures necessary to preserve the Smithtown building facility.

The motion was seconded by Trustee Howard Knispel and adopted 6-0 after discussion by the following roll call vote:

FOR—Baker-Stines, Bernstein, Deal, Galarza, Knispel, Stabile AGAINST—none

5. The COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE report was presented by Communications Committee Liaison Mildred Bernstein, who moved to approve the adoption of resolution “a”:

- a. Anonymous Donation

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of The Smithtown Library does hereby graciously accept, and is thankful for, the donation of an out-of-state anonymous individual who requested directions to his hotel, and

WHEREAS, said individual proceeded to donate \$200.00 cash in appreciation of the assistance received, now be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that said donation is to be used as necessary at the Library’s discretion.

The motion was seconded by Trustee Barbara Deal and adopted 6-0 by the following roll call vote:

FOR—Baker-Stines, Bernstein, Deal, Galarza, Knispel, Stabile AGAINST—none

6. The STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

In the absence of Assistant Library Director Patricia Thomson Personnel Assistant Lori Mauceri reported that the committee had met last week to discuss the long-range plan. A draft document of the goals and actions has been circulated and is currently in the process of being refined. The committee will be meeting in the next month and will be finalizing the details.

7. DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Robert Lusak, Library Director

The Library Director's report had been submitted previously to the Library Board (copy of report appended to the original of these minutes). The Library Director provided the following updates on the Smithtown Building Project:

- Smithtown building elevator progress – the elevator should be reopened soon – awaiting a part from Schindler Elevator
- August 12, 2025 – Town Board approved the issuance of the bonds
- Project team meeting last week – finalized minor modifications to site plan which will be submitted to the Village of the Branch shortly
- September 4, 2025 – The Smithtown Building Project will go out to bid
- September 30, 2025 – public meeting/bid opening - deadline for public bids – 12:00 noon – Nesconset
- Special Library Board meeting, date TBD - Library Board to review project team recommendations and approve award
- Bid award will be issued after the Town of Smithtown has received bond proceeds
- June 1, 2026 – anticipated project completion

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

NEW BUSINESS

8. REPEALED POLICY - **Anti-Nepotism Policy** [Policy 500-60] (1ST reading)

Library Board President Annette Galarza moved to waive the reading of the repealed ANTI-NEPOTISM POLICY [Policy 500-60]. The motion was seconded by Trustee Howard Knispel and adopted 6-0 by the following roll call vote:

FOR—Baker-Stines, Bernstein, Deal, Galarza, Knispel, Stabile AGAINST—none

The policy will be reviewed and voted on at the September regular board meeting.

The employment of 'relatives' of staff, administration, or Board members can cause various problems including, but not limited to, charges of favoritism, conflicts of interest, family discord, scheduling conflicts, internal library operations dysfunction, public resentment and a myriad of other deleterious impacts upon the mission and operation of The Smithtown Library. Accordingly, the Board of Trustees has determined it to be in the best interests of the Library to establish a policy which clearly provides and promulgates the intent of the Board to avoid all adverse impacts that can emanate from the hiring of relatives of those individuals associated with the Library.

For the purposes of this Policy the term "relative" shall include relationships established by blood, marriage or legal action, such as: a spouse, mother, father, son, daughter, sister, brother, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, stepparent, stepchild, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, grandparent, grandson, granddaughter or cousin. The term also includes domestic partners (a person with whom the employee's life is interdependent and who shares a common residence) and, a daughter or son of an employee's domestic partner.

No relative of the Board of Trustees, Library Director or current employees shall be employed by The Smithtown Library.

It is recognized that "relatives" are currently employed by the Library; as to those relationships the Library will endeavor to the degree permissible to avoid the compromising of supervisory authority by way of effecting personnel transfers that will avoid the supervision of one relative over another. Any employee presently employed will not be subject to dismissal based upon this Policy's requirements.

It is the responsibility of every employee to identify to the Library Director any potential or existing personal relationships which fall within the ambit of this Policy.

9. **NEW POLICY - Anti-Nepotism Policy** [Policy 500-60] (1ST reading)

Library Board President Annette Galarza moved to waive the reading of the new ANTI-NEPOTISM POLICY [Policy 500-60]. The motion was seconded by Trustee Brianna Baker-Stines and adopted 6-0 by the following roll call vote:

FOR—Baker-Stines, Bernstein, Deal, Galarza, Knispel, Stabile AGAINST—none

The Smithtown Library adopts an anti-nepotism policy in order to avoid conflicts of interest, perceived conflicts of interest, supervisory dislocations, the impairment of staff morale, the preserving of institutional integrity and the accountability to the public supporting the Library.

An applicant for employment will not be considered for a position when a member of the applicant's immediate family is either the Library Director or a member of the Library Board of Trustees.

For the purposes of this Policy the term "immediate family" shall include relationships established by blood, marriage or legal action, such as a: spouse, mother, father, son, daughter, sister, brother, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, stepparent, stepchild, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, grandparent, grandson, or granddaughter. The term also includes domestic partners (a person with whom the employee's life is interdependent and who shares a common residence) and a daughter or son of an employee's domestic partner.

10. At 7:32 pm Library Board President Annette Galarza moved to enter executive session pursuant to Article 7, Section 105 (F) of the Public Officer's Law to discuss the employment history of a particular corporation or matters leading to the appointment or removal of a particular corporation. The motion was seconded by Trustee Howard Knispel and adopted 6-0 by the following roll call vote:

FOR—Baker-Stines, Bernstein, Deal, Galarza, Knispel, Stabile AGAINST—none

The following Library Trustees were present and participating in executive session: Brianna Baker-Stines, Mildred Bernstein, Barbara Deal, Annette Galarza, Howard Knispel and Theresa Stabile.

Also in attendance were Library Director Robert Lusak, Assistant Library Director Eileen Caulfield, Business Manager Jennifer Piano, Treasurer Kevin Miller, Personnel Assistant Lori Mauceri, Librarian IV Julie DeLaney, Librarian IV Jessica Quenzer, Librarian IV Sheila Worlow and Secretary Linda Taurassi.

11. At 8:04 pm Library Board President Annette Galarza made a motion to reconvene in open public session. The motion was seconded by Trustee Brianna Baker-Stines and adopted 6-0 by the following roll call vote:

FOR—Baker-Stines, Bernstein, Deal, Galarza, Knispel, Stabile AGAINST—none

12. Library Board President Annette Galarza noted that a "special" meeting for the 2026 Library Budget Hearing was scheduled to be held Tuesday, September 9, 2025 at 6:00 pm at the Nesconset building; the next "regular" meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled to be held Tuesday, September 16, 2025 at 6:30 pm at the Kings Park building.

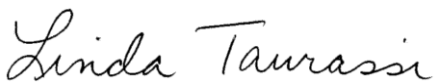
13. There being no further business, Library Board President Annette Galarza moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:06 pm. The motion was seconded by Trustee Barbara Deal and adopted 6-0 by the following roll call vote:

FOR—Baker-Stines, Bernstein, Deal, Galarza, Knispel, Stabile AGAINST—none

Minutes approved this 16th day of September, 2025.



Annette Galarza, President
Smithtown Library Board of Trustees



Linda Taurassi
Secretary to the Board of Trustees