

**Roeliff Jansen Community Library
Board of Trustee Meeting Minutes
February 17th, 2026**

Present:

Eileen Ahern
Chris Atkins
Barbara Barrantes
Marian Dodds – Secretary
Beth Gordon
Marylin Gross
Betsy Myers – Vice President
Ronnie McTiernan
Pat Placona – President
Steve Smith
Meg Wormley – Treasurer

Absent:

Joan Wallstein

Also Present:

Tammy Gaskell – Library Director
Joyce Crow – Friends of RJCL
Kim Hausner
Rita Jakubowski – Finance Committee
Joe Baker – Berkshire Taconic Foundation*

*In a presentation preceding the February 2026 Trustee’s meeting, Joe Baker, VP, Finance & Administration of Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation, discussed the quarterly/year end reports. Minutes were not taken during the presentation. The secretary notes that in addition to discussing funds and investments, Joe Baker also prompted Trustees to state the financial goals of the library. Various Trustees mentioned the goal of stability for the library. Fundraising income can vary, so stable investments are important. Sustaining the library while also having flexibility to access funds as needs arise was also expressed as part of the library’s goals.

The Board of Trustees meeting was called to order at 6:06 pm by Pat Placona.

Review and Approval of Minutes

Betsy Myers made a motion to approve the minutes. Barbara Barrentes seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Treasurer's Report

Meg Wormley gave the treasurer's report for January 2026.

- Actual/Budget reports will be available when bookkeeper, Leah Harde, has completed set-up of QuickBooks Online.
- January income included a \$2000 donation from the town of Taghkanic, a \$5000 program grant from the Herman Goldman Foundation, and a \$3500 grant for the Evelyn Bordewick Charitable Foundation. Also received were \$16,845 from Annual Appeal donations and \$1625 from Business Partner donations. In addition to general monthly expenses, \$2391 were paid for deposits on "Party at the Pavilion" tents and food, plus \$1225 for slow plowing.
- Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation Agency Fund – presentation by Joe Baker preceded February 2026 board meeting. See quarterly/year end reports from Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation emailed to Trustees.
- **Finance Committee Recommendations**
 - 1) Transfer \$62,284 from operating account to Maintenance and Repair account so that can be used for repair and construction costs including final bills for construction of the pavilion.
 - 2) Move additional \$12,636 to the Maintenance and Repair account so that after all pavilion construction bills are paid, the balance will be \$50,000, per board policy to start each year with \$50,000 in the Maintenance and Repair account.
 - 3) The agency fund includes the \$25,908 balance of the Reinhard bequest. Board policy is to transfer \$7,000 of the remaining balance to the operating fund. The operating fund currently has surplus funds, so the Finance Committee recommends that \$7,000 of the surplus funds cover the Reinhard bequest.

Meg Wormley requested a motion to approve the Finance Committee's recommendations. Chris Atkins made a motion to approve the three recommendations of the Finance Committee. Marilyn Gross seconded the motion. All were in favor.

- Meg Wormley requested a motion to approve the Warrant Report. Beth Gordon made a motion to approve the Warrant Report. Steve Smith seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Director's Report

Tammy Gaskell presented the director's report.

- **Conflict of Interest Policy**

Trustees are required to complete Conflict of Interest Disclosure form. Policy was reviewed, and forms were submitted by several trustees.

Steve Smith made a motion to approve that the Conflict of Interest Policy was reviewed. Meg Wormley seconded the motion. All were in favor.

- **Trustee Training and Sexual Harassment Training**

Trustee Education Policy and Sexual Harassment Training expectations were reviewed. New York State requires a minimum of two hours of trustee education, which are required annually in addition to training regarding a harassment-free workplace. Eileen Ahearn, as a new Trustee, noted prompt response from MHLs regarding communication in process of establishing a password to access training.

Ronnie McTiernan made a motion to approve that the Trustee Training Policy was reviewed. Marylin Gross seconded the motion. All were in favor.

- **Facility Plan**

The Site Facility Plan lists maintenance and replacement schedules and maintenance contracts. Priorities for 2026 include roof and ceiling repair, landscaping around pavilion, repairs to Geothermal System, replacement of one heat pump and parking lot striping.

Meg Wormly made a motion to approve the Facility Plan. Steve Smith seconded the motion. All were in favor.

- **Vaccination Policy**

There was discussion on the options of repealing or modifying the existing vaccination policy. It was concluded that repealing the current policy and replacing it with a statement of recommendation would be appropriate.

Betsy Myers made a motion to approve repealing the existing vaccination policy and developing a statement of recommendations. Meg Wormly seconded the motion. All were in favor.

- **Historical newspapers database**

Tammy Gaskell is pursuing a grant to support the preservation of hard copies of the Columbia Paper up to 2025. The hope is to put these issues on microfilm. The county is also considering a project of a county-wide database.

- **Outdoor Furniture**

As the cost of furniture for the pavilion is generously offered by the Friends group, Tammy Gaskell generated some suggestions. Tables, benches, folding chairs with a cart for storage, folding tables with a cart for storage, and some comfortable seating for general use by staff have been suggested with an approximate cost of \$10,000.

Joyce Crow shared discussion among the Friends group to consider 60-inch round tables. These tables seat 8, take up less space, and offer better social atmosphere.

As the decision process is ongoing, the Friends have the topic on their March agenda. Tammy Gaskell indicated that the first concert in the pavilion is in May and wants to have the folding chairs by then. Toward this goal, Tammy will order a small number of folding chairs to try them out before ordering the full 100 folding chairs.

- **Building Inspection**

Building Inspection to be scheduled with current Code Enforcement Officer of the Town of Copake. There is a \$100 fee.

- **Library Staff**

Our bookkeeper, Leah Harde, is leaving. There are interviews for the position this Friday.

Xondra O'Connell, one of our Children's and Youth Services Associates, has given notice of February 28th as her last day.

- **Loaning Paintings for Exhibit**

The Kinderhook and Columbia County Historical Society is planning an exhibit of scenes of Columbia County. They are requesting loan of nine paintings from the library for this exhibition. It is planned for June 2026-December 2026. They handle pick up and transportation details and expenses. Trustees support the loaning of these paintings for this purpose. Questions were asked regarding insurance. Tammy will follow up with clarifying information.

Friend's Report

Joyce Crow presented the Friends report

- January income was less than \$500, attributed to adverse weather conditions and closing the Bookshop
- There is \$16,000 in the bank and the Friends can cover the cost of the pavilion furniture.
- The Friends request to put in permanent signs directing patrons to the Bookshop. They have in mind a style from Next Gen Signs which are installed with metal posts into the ground. They would like to put one on the far side of the Bookshop driveway and one in front of the shrub in front of the library. The Trustees respond favorably to the idea. Joyce Crow will find out more about installation details.

- Friends will be having their membership drive in March.

Committee Reports

Nominating – Marian Dodds – no report.

Pat Placona shared that she and Marian Dodds are planning to meet with Colleen Lutz, Ancram Town Supervisor, to discuss potential suggestions of Ancram residents for the library board. Veronica McTiernan added that volunteers for the Roe Jan Ramble have some people from Ancram and will provide that list for reference as well.

Development – Betsy Myers gave the development Committee report.

- The Business Partners Appeal has received \$7498 plus a \$3000 pledge not yet received.
- The Annual Appeal has received \$98,896.
- Party at the Pavillion, July 2026 – planning to mail “save-the-date” card is at Quick-Print. Food trucks, tent, tables, chairs, golf carts and volunteers are set. Time will be 6:30 PM to 9:00 PM with the live auction to end at 8:15.
- National Library Week is April 19 – 25. Letter to be mailed before Annual Report.
- Play Reading by Gus Hagerty -September 12.
Eileen Ahern and Chris Atkins handling ticket sales.

Human Resources – Steve Smith – no report.

Buildings and Grounds – Beth Gordon gave the Buildings and Grounds Committee report.

- A description of the Buildings and Grounds Committee has been developed as follows:

The Buildings and Grounds (B&G) Committee is a volunteer group that performs an essential part of the maintenance and upkeep of the Roe Jan Community Library (RJCL). Members of the B&G volunteer committee will collaborate on an *as needed* basis to consult and advise with routine repairs, troubleshoot or help with problem solving and determining when to call professional contractors for major, specialized repairs. At times, a committee member may be called upon to assist with minor maintenance and repair-as indicated by the Library Director. Committee members may be called upon to meet with the Library Director to review upcoming or ongoing M&R issues or projects at a convenient time for all members of the committee.

Maintenance and repairs (M&R) may consist of the following examples but not limited to: Plumbing, electrical, HVAC and structural issues (painting, carpentry) and the exterior of the property.

The Buildings and Grounds committee shall report to the Board President of the RJCL and work with the Library Director on maintenance and repairs issues.

414 Committee – Steve Smith gave the 414 Committee report.

- Steve Smith made a motion to pursue an Ancram 414 initiative to appear on the 2026 General Election ballot. Marylin Gross seconded the motion. The Board unanimously voted in favor.
- In order to meet the requirements of the tax cap law prior to adopting the Library's 2027 budget, the Board must vote on and pass the resolution:

Whereas, the adoption of the 2027 budget for the Roeliff Jansen Community Library may require a tax levy increase that exceeds the tax cap imposed by state law as outlined in General Municipal Law Section 3-c adopted in 2011; and

Whereas, General Municipal Law Section 3-c expressly permits the library board to override the tax levy limit by a resolution approved by a vote of sixty percent of qualified board members; now therefore be it

Resolved, that the Board of Trustees of the Roeliff Jansen Community Library voted and approved to exceed the tax levy limit for 2027 by at least the sixty percent of the board of trustees as required by state law on February 17, 2026

Chris Atkins made a motion to approve the Tax Cap Override as per the resolution. Marylin Gross seconded the motion. The Board unanimously voted in favor.

Old Business

- Roof: There is another leak in the foyer.
Based on Warren Temple Smith, the roofer (J. Elsoffer), will follow up.

New Business

none

Eileen Ahearn made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Marian Dodds seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm.

Respectfully Submitted
Marian Dodds, Secretary