

Fenton Free Library Board of Trustees Meeting – Tuesday, 23 September 2025

President Melissa Weber called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

Attendance: Brady Begeal, Kendra Bowman, Matthew Conlon, Mary Connors, Gretchen Grunder, Cassie Holdridge, Jonathan Hussar, Michael Mattick, Vanessa Moschak, Melissa Weber, and Leslie Weigand

1. Secretary's Report

- a. Motion requested to approve the minutes of the July 22, 2025, Board meeting. Motion: Jonathan; Second: Brady; Motion Carried.

2. Treasurer's Report

- a. Mike provided the Treasurer's Reports and the Financials reports as of July 31, 2025 and August 31, 2025.
 - a.i. Fundraising analysis is not included as Mike ran into frustrations with Aplos and ran out of time! Testing of QuickBooks as a replacement is looking better all the time!
 - a.ii. Noteworthy expenses were for summer programs and a new printer.
 - a.iii. Donations from patrons and Barnyard Buddies as well as the increase in earned interest by reclassifying investment accounts were the main sources of extra income.
 - a.iii.1. Mike noted that by ensuring our investments are working for us, that continued interest income is potentially better than all of our fundraisers!
- b. The 2026 budget prepared by the Finance Committee was distributed to the Board members for review.
 - b.i. Note that the budget needed to accommodate another minimum wage increase.
 - b.ii. A small surplus from the past year was brought in to balance the budget for 2026.
 - b.iii. The request for a 2% increase will not require a super majority vote.
 - b.iv. The Board will vote to approve the 2026 budget during the October meeting in order to generate the NYS Comptroller's Tax Levy Report which is due in October.
 - b.iv.1. Mike requests assistance from Melissa (and possibly Shawn) in order to access the correct online form, etc.
- c. Motion requested to approve the July and August 2025 Debit Card Transactions and July and August 2025 Financials reports. Motion: Matt, Second: Jonathan; Motion Carried.

3. Director's Report – Leslie

- a. Overall Summer Reading registration was 250 (highest to date). Including those who participated by submitting reading logs, total attendance this summer was 482!
 - a.i. Debi will return to coordinating Summer Reading in 2026 due to Jane no longer being part of the program.
- b. The Library will be collecting items for Catherine's Cupboard Food Pantry – St. Francis of Assisi during the Great Give Back event from October 13 through October 17.
- c. The Barnes & Noble fundraiser in August made \$585.62. The next B&N

fundraiser will be Sunday, November 9. A volunteer sign-up sheet was distributed.

- d. Some discussion was given to providing mileage reimbursement to staff as an employee benefit. Mike indicated that this is standard practice. We would need to set a reimbursement rate and guidelines with a form for submittal. He has an Accountable Plan for reimbursement ready for Board approval.
- e. The Used Toy Sale will be held Friday, November 21 from 10 am – 6 pm and Saturday, November 22 from 10 am to 2 pm. Volunteers are also needed for setup on Thursday, November 21 and cleanup on Saturday around 3:00 pm. Someone with a truck or trailer would be greatly appreciated. Mike offered use of his.
- f. The Vendor Event on Saturday, October 4, also needs volunteers for cleanup starting at 2:00 pm.
- g. The annual Tree Lighting will be on Friday, December 5. Look for more information about that.
 - g.i. Leslie is planning a Pit Stop Popcorn fundraiser prior to Christmas instead of selling the cookie plates which are getting too expensive to produce.
- h. “Giving Tuesday” is the first Tuesday of December, but with short notice it seems best to postpone involvement in this until next year when the Fundraising Committee would have more time to plan.
- i. Leslie will gather interest about offering an art class to the community. She will request a proposal with information about cost and supplies from Aaron Truesdale, an art educator, who may be interested in providing instruction to a group for a fee.
- j. The Teen Program for ages 14 through 18 will begin in October. This will be led by Amy Gay whose background check has been completed. The first Advisory Board meeting was held, and interest is growing.
- k. Brady and Leslie are working on an Employee Handbook to be presented at a future meeting.

4. Building and Grounds Update

- a. The thermostat in the Barn has been installed and programmed. Staff are still adjusting the settings for optimum comfort and efficiency.

5. Grant Activities for New and Existing Programs

- a. Gretchen reviewed recent grant activity.
 - a.i. We received \$1500 from the M&T Charitable Foundation for support of the Booked/Teen program.
 - a.ii. Gretchen has requested \$1500 from the Community Foundation Library Grant (Fall '25) for the Toddler Table Modifications (ability to fold) and the Comics Plus collection development effort.
 - a.iii. Still in consideration is the best approach to request the Tioga Downs Community Foundation grant this year and to ensure our selection.
- b. Gretchen announced that she will be retiring as Grant Writer at the end of 2025. Melissa expressed our deepest gratitude for her diligent work for the betterment of our Library and community. Gretchen has raised more than \$750,000 additional monies through her pursuit of grant funds, which has provided for many new programs and enabled the construction of the Barn whose space is a wonderful asset to the Library's programs and services.

6. Old Business

- a. A draft of the Long Range Plan 2026-2030 was distributed and reviewed. Mike made a Motion to approve the Long Range Plan; Seconded by Vanessa; Motion Carried.
 - a.i. An interesting sidenote is awareness of the population decline identified in the 2020 census data.

7. New Business

- a. Leslie noted that she, Melissa, and Mary attended a NYCON Director/Board Engagement Seminar in August at the Endicott Visitor's Center.
 - a.i. As part of that involvement, Leslie will schedule a free-of-charge, one-on-one meeting with the NYCON representative to discuss specifics of our Library operation and policy directives.
 - a.ii. Some discussion acknowledged that the Board's character changes from year-to-year as members change and suggested ways to adjust accordingly.
 - a.iii. Leslie will upload the slides from the presentation to Google docs for anyone who wants to review them.
 - a.iv. Melissa suggested that one relatively easy way to improve our Board Engagement is for each Board Member to read and respond to email communications in a timely manner.
- b. Upcoming dates to note:
 - Board meeting on Monday, November 24 at 5:00 pm to accommodate Thanksgiving
 - Volunteer reception at 4:00 pm and Board meeting following at 5:00 pm during the week of December 15; day TBD. Leslie will check with staff for best day.

8. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: Matt; Second: Brady; Motion Carried. Meeting was adjourned at 6:00 PM.

9. Next Meeting

Tuesday, October 28, 2025, at 5:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Mary Connors, Secretary