

ELIZABETH B. PERT LIBRARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Regular Meeting Minutes

December 18, 2025 | 6:30 PM

Elizabeth B. Pert Library / Valois-Logan-Hector Fire Hall

Executive Session

An executive session was held at 6:00 PM for employee evaluations and document signing with a notary.

Executive Session Action:

The notary signed off on the following officer transition, effective January 1, 2026:

- Amy Beckhorn appointed as Treasurer
- Nancy Davis, current Treasurer, will transition off of the Executive Board and to a Trustee At-Large position on the general Board.

Call to Order

The regular meeting was called to order at 6:40 PM by Bobbie Beckhorn, Board President.

Roll Call

Board Members Present:

- Bobbie Beckhorn
- Nancy Davis
- Kylie Rodrigues
- Tom Phillips

Board Members Absent:

- Ella Preston
- Tim Anderson

Staff Present:

- Amanda Zell, Library Director
- Cathy Barnes, Assistant Library Director

Public Present:

- Jen Fazzary, representative for the Hector Playground Project
- Amy Beckhorn

Welcome

All public attendees were welcomed.

Presentation: Hector Playground Project

Presenter: Jen Fazzary

Jen Fazzary presented information regarding the Hector Playground Project (HPP), which is a capital project of the Hector Foundation. She shared that the community has wanted a playground for some time, including interest from the library.

Jen reported that \$99,000 has currently been raised from the community toward building a new playground. This total includes a \$25,000 match from Shea's Play Fund, which helped grow overall fundraising. In addition, Wendell Weeks, former CEO of Corning Inc., and Kim Frock offered another \$25,000 matching donation. Their match was tied to a Giving Tuesday challenge: receiving 25 donations of \$25 or more within 24 hours. The Hector Playground Project exceeded that goal, receiving 84 donations totaling approximately \$10,000 in one day. Wendell Weeks and Kim Frock will be providing their matching funds in January 2026.

Jen noted that fundraising for the Hector Playground Project will pause from March through May 2026 so the Hector Foundation can focus on fundraising for the Hector Family A-Fair.

Jen shared that she would like to conduct a January and February drive, and specifically proposed a January Library Drive. The goal would be to obtain 31 new library card registrations in January. If that goal is met, the library would donate \$20,000 that it currently has set aside for a playground. If the goal is not met, there would be no expectation of a donation.

Jen explained that she would reach out to WENY and 607 News Now to highlight the library and the drive.

Jen emphasized her desire to see a unified playground effort and noted she is intentionally trying different ways to engage the community beyond financial donations. She expressed strong support for the library and its role as a community hub.

Jen explained that the Hector Playground Project website includes designated donor tiers, and that a \$20,000 donation qualifies for naming a piece of playground equipment. She offered to put everything in writing to document that the library would be able to name a play structure. Jen clarified that the library would not be able to cut a check directly to a playground equipment company, as all funds must go through the Hector Foundation.

The overall project goal is \$350,000–\$400,000, with a target to break ground in Summer 2026. Schamel Brothers will oversee the build. The plan is to construct the playground in phases:

- Phase 1: Summer 2026
- Phase 2: Summer 2027

- Phase 3 (if needed): Summer 2028

Jen shared that she is working on securing donations of fencing and concrete, and that donated funds would primarily go toward playground equipment and base materials, including poured-in-place surfacing. A half basketball court is also part of the plan.

Jen stated that she would need an answer soon in order to move forward with planning for January 2026.

Additions to the Agenda

Secretary's Report

Minutes from November 2025 will be reviewed at the January 2026 meeting.

Treasurer's Report

November 2025 Summary:

- Donations: \$200
- Books added: \$205.44
- Adult Programs: \$665.95 (Yoga, Wreath Class – ARTS Grant \$400)
- Available balance: \$62,175.61 + (\$100,497-2026 tax payment)

Voting for Payments:

- Shelter Point Insurance: \$389.88
 - Motion: Kylie Rodrigues | Second: Bobbie Beckhorn
- Hartford Insurance (Workers' Compensation): \$466
 - Motion: Tom Phillips | Second: Bobbie Beckhorn
- VLH Lease: \$1
 - Motion: Kylie Rodrigues | Second: Bobbie Beckhorn

All three payments were unanimously approved.

Chemung Canal requested a new account number for the Elizabeth B. Pert Library account under the VLH Association EIN. Paperwork was signed at the meeting.

Year-End 501(c)(3) Report

Presented by Tom Phillips.

Tom distributed a month-by-month financial summary for 2025 and reported that the two 6-month CDs will be combined into one CD in 2026.

Account Balances:

- CCTC Checking: \$24,464.57
- 6-Month CD: \$32,070.13
- 6-Month CD: \$7,600.72
- Visions Savings: \$68,754.47

2025 Totals:

- Expenses: \$6,579.84
- Income: \$10,000 (gift)

2025 Audit Subcommittee

Two volunteers are required to audit the Treasurer's books once available in mid-January. Amy Beckhorn and Kylie Rodrigues agreed to serve on the audit subcommittee.

Director(s) Report

Amanda Zell – Library Director

Amanda reported strong attendance across multiple programs including Dungeons & Dragons, Musical Bingo, and Yoga. New bookshelves were installed by Bob Hanson, and a READ poster has been ordered. Over \$500 has been spent on new adult books, and children's books have been ordered but not yet processed. Some purchases were made in response to patron requests. The library also purchased the complete collection of a local Elmira author, Caitlyn Brooke.

Program updates included:

- Wreath Making Workshop: 35 attendees; Cathy is applying for a grant to host the program twice per year. For 2025 the grant from the Southern Tier ARTS Council paid \$400 of the class and the Library used programming funds to pay the additional \$100.
- Movie Program: Low attendance; a second movie is scheduled for December 23 at 2:30 PM during winter break.
- Merry Un-Birthday Party: 11 attendees.
- Dungeons & Dragons: 5 attendees; program will be paused until spring.
- Bells and Motley Program: Collaborative program with Watkins Glen Library; 28 attendees.
- Musical Bingo: 18 attendees; plans include Love Song Bingo in February and future Disney Bingo programs.
- Children's Christmas Party: 74 attendees total, including 36 children. The library will provide advertising, snacks, and activities for 2026.
- Yoga Program: Averaged 20 attendees per session; total cost to the library paid from programming funds was \$625.

Additional updates:

- The VLH Fire Company will celebrate its 75th anniversary in 2026 and is interested in collaborating.
- Office for the Aging meals will potentially be moving to the fire hall on January 8, aligning well with Thursday library hours.
- Over 15 volunteer hours were recorded in November.
- A volunteer meeting is scheduled for January 14 at 1:00 PM.
- Board assistance was requested for staff coverage on several January and February dates.

Cathy Barnes – Assistant Library Director

Cathy reported she is working on loading first-quarter events to social media, the newsletter, and the website, as well as creating flyers. She submitted a grant application to the Southern Tier Arts Council requesting \$1,500 to support three workshops: a spring wreath class, summer tie-dyeing, and a winter wreath class.

Old Business

- **Letter to Town Board:** Approval of officers requested; letter attached.
- **Shelving:** Installation complete and already in use. Taller shelving will replace shorter shelving in the back area. Large-print books will be moved to the front for easier access.
- **Grants:** United Way of Schuyler County grant has not yet been started; deadline is January 2026. Cathy and Amanda will work on the application.
- **Logo and Signage:** Cathy presented logo and sign design concepts. Bobbie expressed preference for no wood-grain in the design. Cathy will contact Hazlitt's Winery and Montour Falls Library regarding sign makers.
- **Policies:** Board requested consistent font and distribution to all trustees. Policies will be posted on the website.
 - Whistleblower Policy
 - Materials Selection and Reconsideration of Materials Policy
 - Evaluation of Library Director and Assistant Library Director
 - **Motion:** Nancy Davis | **Second:** Tom Phillips | Unanimous Voted Approval
- **Board Officer Insurance:** Perry & Carroll has not yet obtained a quote. Tom Phillips suggested exploring Chubb Insurance. Kylie Rodrigues will follow up.

New Business

- **Winter Closings:** Bobbie requested a policy stating that when Watkins Glen School District closes due to weather, the library will also close. Amanda will notify Cathy if weather prevents travel and is working on an emergency phone tree.
- **Fundraising 2026:**
 - Rummage Sale: June 4–6, 2026
 - Book Sale / Hector Family A-Fair: July 24–25, 2026
 - Craft Fair may not be held in 2026
 - Between the Lakes Book Sale: Tentatively late September
- **Heating System:** Status update requested.

- **Hector Family A-Fair:** Scheduled for July 25, 2026. Programming ideas discussed, possibly tied to the Summer Reading dinosaur theme.
- **Summer Reading Program:** Amanda and Cathy will plan and keep the Board informed. Tracking will be done via paper and pen. End-of-program party planned for August. Four local libraries will collaborate.
- **Virtual Meeting Options:** Board members will bring ideas to the next meeting; staff will research equipment and pricing.

Playground Project Discussion

The Board revisited prior votes declining use of VLH Association funds. Trustees discussed the feasibility of meeting the library card goal and the value of participating in a community-wide project. Several trustees supported participation with stipulations:

- Funds must be used only for playground equipment
- Funds must be returned if the playground is not constructed
- Public communication must clarify funds are donated, not tax dollars

No vote was taken.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.