

Almond Library Board of Trustees Meeting for May 2025

Thursday, 29 May 2025

FINAL APPROVED MINUTES

Present: Elva Owlet, President; Linda Staiger, Vice President; Lee Berry, Financial Officer; Cole DiGerlando, Secretary; Bec Cronk, Director of Programs; Connor Dirlam, Director of Internal Operations; Amber DiGerlando, Friend; Melanie Miller, Alfred BoB Director; Allison Snyder, President of Alfred BoB Board; Mary Kay Dwyer, new Board member; Jim Wokersien, guest

Meeting called to order at 6:42 pm

Minutes from April Meeting; *Linda moved to accept; Lee seconded; approved unanimously*

Swearing in of a new Board member: Mary Kay Dwyer. Welcome!

Library Vote Update

Allison Snyder and Melanie Miller from Alfred BoB are visiting tonight to share about the upcoming vote. The library district will have a separate election on Monday, June 30. Mel shared about backend work: absentee and mail-in vote, both available at Alfred BoB. Vote will occur in Alfred-Almond Auditorium from 10 am to 7 pm; she borrowed the ballot format from Watkins' Glen since they just did a vote; she is planning to run off 200 copies. Day of the vote we'll need to greet people; a week before, contact Allegany County Board of Elections for a list of registered voters, which will be checked at the door by a volunteer. Elva and 2 volunteers will count the votes, certify it. WG gave vote certification; Elva has one from the school as well. Info goes to the school district so that taxes can be collected.

Mel has had a number of conversations with Brian, and he has a very positive attitude towards it, and we may find that we get a higher approval rate. Brian said the votes usually are approved at 70+%. Elva said to bring the absentee ballots and they are stored until after the voting is over, they get counted at the end. Any without a signed envelope are thrown out, the rest are opened and mixed in with the others from the day so that all ballots are entirely anonymous. Allison will read the proposal and then open the polls; at the end, she will announce the end of the day and close the polls. Applications for absentee or early, mail-in due by June 29; if mailing, BoB are telling folks to mail in by June 23; need to be postmarked by June 30. Applications are at Alfred BoB; public hearing on June 13 at 6:30 pm. Allison and Melanie will be present for the public hearing.

We'll be splitting the costs of all the publicity. Needs to have a copy of the 2026 budget proposal from Almond. Lee will stop by tomorrow. Elva asked if Mel was contacting the Steuben County Elections. She said she would check on that. Linda asked about the percentage of approved voters in libraries that had to have separate votes from school districts. Brian said that many

libraries are moving away from being in conjunction with schools. Wellsville had an issue as well, but they were able to catch it in time, so were still able to have their vote on the right day.

Accolades to Connor for finding the error. Corning SD just had their budget voted down. Amber asked as the friend since Alfred doesn't have a friend, are there any folks to work with her to outreach with the community to try to get people interested in the vote and working on it; Mel said she is confident to just move forward with the model that WG has used—website is up to date, signs are out; applications are at the library. Allison said that they have considered starting a friends group, but everyone who has expressed interest has ended up on the board. Mel thinks this shouldn't be used as an opportunity for outreach. We'll see how this vote goes and then later decide whether we will go back to being attached to the school district. Alfred BoB has a Board meeting on June 10, so will know then if other board members will be coming to the public hearing.

Director's Reports

Connors' (see attached [numbers](#) and [report](#)):

Connor presented Philip's letter of intent and application to serve on the Board. Address change form needed to be signed, which Elva did. Connor will deliver to the post office tomorrow so it will be official, which is now 7676 Main Street.

Connor had a breakdown of the different types of books that have been purchased. Final column is the average price per text. Graphic novels have been really popular, especially with middle grade readers. Lots of teens looking for LGBTQ+ graphic novels, so may well be adding more. A number of adults have asked for adult graphic novels as well. Adrian has been able to take on a lot of weeding and shelving, so Connor had a chance to clear out some old computer files. Linda asked if it could be a project to "reintroduce" some older books to the community. Connor and Bec said most of the adult patrons don't go into the stacks. Cole mentioned that Steele had a cart with "last chance books" for patrons before they would be weeded. Many of the patrons don't explore new authors but instead go with their regulars. Amber suggested the "if you liked ____, you might be interested in ____" as a possibility. Bec said that STLS has those kinds of recommendations. Cole mentioned that student presentations on the website could be shared at a future board meeting, and will meet with Connor to discuss. Elva asked about the job description update.

Mary Kay motioned to accept; Linda seconded; all approved.

Bec's ([see attached](#))

- June display is Pride theme
- Floral arrangement program up early in the month
- Eli Knapp will be doing a bird event on June 28; has written several books; is a professor at Houghton.
- STLS Make Your Mark collaboration across the system; people can design a bookmark; starts June 1, and the contest runs through July 31; four winners will have their

bookmarks mass produced across the system. Five categories total—anyone can enter in their age category as well as the community category. Connor and Bec will pick the best and send in to STLS, and the final will be a community vote.

- Almost 20 people signed up for the mushroom walk, but Sam can only take 10, so getting another person to take the other 10.
- Spring coloring contest for judging. Three age categories with winners in each category. Voting completed during the meeting; Bec will notify the winners of the different age categories.
- Connor and Bec are setting a schedule to discuss any issues, right before meetings.
- Will be closed for Juneteenth (June 19) and July 4th.
- Asked about whether we wanted to have a float for community day; also asked about what we might want to raffle. Mary Kay suggested Bills tickets; Lee suggested lottery tickets (Bec will look into it); Strawberry Festival will be June 23, which is usually when the item goes on display; Amber pointed out that can't use tax funds to purchase something for fundraising, including staff time. Linda said she could look into trying to procure tickets by donation, which would be a tax write-off.
- Will be running a community survey, post-summer reading, corresponds to community day; Connor and Bec will ask some questions, and is soliciting for any additional questions Board members would like to ask. First Saturday after Labor Day, September 6, is Community Day.

Motion to approve made by Cole, seconded by Mary; all approved

Bookkeeper's Report ([Monthly Budget](#); [Financial Stmt](#))

- Lee is confused about the budget and timing of the vote; discussion ensued. Lee determined to consult with Melanie from Alfred.
- Elva learned that the best time to switch bookkeepers would be Dec. 31.
- Last audit was in 2021, so we might want to get moving on one. Wellsville Library provided information on what we'll need to have an audit. Elva has this.

Motion to approve made by Linda, seconded by Cole; all approved

Friends Report:

- Amber went to Spring CE, spoke to libraries that do or don't have a Friends group, and Brian, about whether the Friends group needs to be a 501(c)3, which it doesn't need to be. The Friends representative has a seat on the Board, without a vote, much like the Directors. Linda brought up an issue related to the term "Friends of the Library", which has one definition to be a 501(c)3, and the second term would be a group of volunteers, a list of people who would be willing to help out so tasks didn't fall on the same people. The confusion and animosity relates to the dissolving of the club. Amber read from the Trustees Handbook about what the purpose of the Friends group is, and since it has a legal definition in New York, the board currently includes a seat for the Friends. She has been talking to people about getting out the vote, and has found that many people are interested in supporting the library, with the vote. Don't need to be a 501(c)3 to have a paid membership for the Friends group, because the money goes as a donation to the library.

Old Business

Construction Grant: Elva has called Dan to try to get an estimate for the base of the sign; we have learned that we can't include landscaping in the grant; driveway can only be paved to be included in the grant, no gravel; Bec has reached out to companies to get a quote on fixing the front railings and concrete steps; Aid grant has to be for stuff that is permanent.

Tax Document—990 vote to approve (*Motion to accept that we allow Elva to pay the \$41 for the 990, Linda moved, Mary seconded*)

Cole made a motion to pay the \$402 to STLS to add an account for Workflows to the laptop for downstairs, Lee seconded, all approved.

New Business

Cole made a motion to pay for half of the expenses to Alfred BoB to cover the publicity and advertising for the library vote, Lee seconded, all approved.

Tabling the conversation about sealing the bricks until the June meeting.

June meeting to be held on June 26 at 6:30 pm

Cole made motion to adjourn; Mary seconded; all approved ended at 9:15 pm