

Demarest Free Public Library
Board of Library Trustees Meeting Agenda
June 16th, 2025

1. Call to order at 7:01 pm

Secretary Shimokawa read the following:

This is a regular meeting of the Demarest Library Board of Trustees. The date, time and location of this meeting has been advertised in the Official Newspaper of the Borough, filed with the Borough Clerk and posted on the Municipal Bulletin Board. All notices of the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act for this meeting have been fulfilled.

2. Roll Call

Present: P. Desai; H. Shimokawa; L. Carson; A. Keysar; E. Kass; D. Hayden;
Dan Marks (Mayor and Council Liaison)
Absent: L. Ma; A. Sandoval

3. Approval of the Agenda

Motion to approve the Agenda made by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by E. Kass.
All present vote YES.
Agenda is approved.

4. Approval of the Minutes of the May 19th, 2025 meeting

Motion to approve the May 19th, 2025 meeting minutes made by H. Shimokawa;
Seconded by L. Carson.
All present vote YES.
Minutes are approved.

5. VoIP Presentation by Geo Von Griffin

- Presented the inaugural Social Post in the “Day in the Life” series that introduces the community to the Library Staff and their daily tasks and expertise. The series will live on the Library’s Facebook and Instagram accounts and is being created by the new Library Programming Associate.
- VoIP is a cloud-based phone system. The platform will be accessible as an APP on all computer and staff phones.
- This platform provides the staff with access to Voicemail, multiple lines and a call tree for patron services to go direct.
- The library will maintain a copper line for the elevator.
- Quotes from Konica Minolta and AACom NJ were presented to the board for review. The staff recommends AACom NJ as they are a local provider which can also manage building video and security services should the library wish to consolidate in the future. AACom NJ is also the same vendor used by the Borough which gives the library access to preferred pricing.

- The library's current phone line contract is with Verizon. Verizon is charging an early termination penalty per line (3). However, in the absence of a written contract, P. Desai will try to negotiate the termination.
- The Board inquired if SMS is also available on this platform.

6. Treasurer's Report

Motion to approve the Bill List made by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by D. Hayden.

All present vote YES.

Bill List is approved.

7. Director's Report

General Updates

- Friends of the Library Donation update: Tile Fundraiser was a huge success. 50 Tiles were purchased, and the tiles are currently being fired and glazed at The Art School. Demarest resident, Andrew Woods, has volunteered to help the library with the installation of the tiles in the Children's Room. The fundraiser was so successful that the Friends are planning another activation in the Fall.
- The Friends of the Library recently donated Demarest Library logo sweatshirts and bags for the staff which has fostered team spirit and pride. They will also be sponsoring the ice cream truck for the Summer Reading Kickoff.

Programming & Outreach

- New Programming & Outreach Associate has already established a new lineup of adult programs spanning yoga, cookbook club, movie matinee and author talk. She has also launched an Adult Summer Reading Program and secured donations from several new vendors and local businesses.
- The Chess Club is on break for July and will resume in August.
- The library was proud to collaborate with the Demarest Nature Center and the Garden Club to host a 2-part planter box planting session. It was a great example of the library's ongoing efforts to partner with local organizations and strengthen the library's role and presence in the community. Children's Programming Library will be planning a story time with both the Demarest Nature Center and the Swim Club. The Swim Club will be offering Day passes to all Storytime attendees.
- P. Desai also thanked L. Carson for her support in helping to provide a space at County Road School for the Music program so it can continue over the summer.
- The library has been able to collaborate with many local organizations to partner on providing programming to the community.

Staff Updates

- P. Desai will be attending the ALA Annual conference this month in Philadelphia.
- P. Desai also attended a presentation by the NJ State Library on the topic of Advocacy & You which included guidance on the library's role if ICE visits the premises.

8. President's Report

- President Nankani had a midyear check-in with the Director during which they discussed how best to approach the Strategic Plan moving forward. They would like to manage this in-house instead of hiring a third party. This would include small focus groups that will solicit feedback and suggestions, a community-wide survey and internal committee to inform the development of the next 3-year Strategic Plan for the library. P. Desai will be exploring options with other BCCLS Directors on how to run this plan internally. P. Desai will be coming back to the board after the ALA conference with a recommendation on how the library can formulate a plan for how the focus groups will be designed and the approach to developing the plan for the Strategic Plan formation.
- S. Nankani asked the board for referrals and recommendations for volunteers to help the library team run the focus groups for this effort.
- S. Nankani also highlighted how great the recent newsletter, that was just mailed to all Demarest residents, looked and read.
- D. Marks and A. Keysar represented the Library Board with the Friends of the Library in the Memorial Day Parade. D. Marks shared that the Council is discussing how to increase the Memorial Day programming to encourage increased attendance.
- S. Nankani also mentioned that the staff is working on many new initiatives like the Day In The Life series to promote the library and to increase engagement on the library's social channels. It is a great effort to help educate the community on what the library is working on and who is behind all the services and programming that the library provides to the community.
- S. Nankani also attended the intergenerational Book Club that is run by TAB. The attendance was great, and it is being facilitated by a HS Sophomore. The discussion and session were terrific. They are planning another one in August.
- S. Nankani will be facilitating a Tech & Family Discussion on Monday, June 30th at 6:30pm with two other Demarest parents. This series will run monthly through the rest of the year..

9. Old Business

a) Furniture & Blinds update

- An order for the furniture has been placed. Delivery is expected in August.
- Blinds have been installed throughout the building.
- S. Nankani asked about a tree that needs to be pruned. P. Desai will reach out to Jason Gangi from DPW to inquire about the appropriate Tree trimming & removal company.

b) Mayor & Council Meeting- Director's Presentation

- P. Desai asked D. Marks if there is a day that can be confirmed for the Director's Presentation. P. Desai requested to present the Mayor & Council on the library's success, statistics and a summary of the Strategic Plan in September.

10. New Business

a) VoIP Phone Service Quotes

- The board suggested that P. Desai continue the negotiations with AACom NJ.
- P. Desai will refine the contract, determine the Verizon cost to terminate the existing contract and review the final cost with the board.

H. Shimokawa made a motion to approve AACom NJ as the vendor for the VoIP services;
Seconded by D. Hayden.

All present vote YES.

The Vendor is approved.

11. Meeting open for public comment

Motion to open the meeting to the public made by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by L. Carson.

The meeting is open to the public. No public was present.

Motion to close the meeting by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by D. Hayden.

Meeting is adjourned at 8:20 pm.

12. Adjournment – Next Board Meeting Monday, July 14th at 6:45pm.