

Demarest Free Public Library
Board of Library Trustees Meeting Minutes
July 14th, 2025

1. Call to order at 6:46 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) 7:15pm departure; L. Ma (arrival at 7:25 pm); A. Sandoval
Absent: S. Nankani

3. Approval of the Agenda

Motion to approve the Agenda made by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by L. Carson.

All present vote YES.
Agenda is approved.

4. Approval of the Minutes of the June 16th, 2025 meeting

Motion to approve the June 16th, 2025 meeting minutes made by H. Shimokawa;
Seconded by D. Hayden.

All present vote YES.
Minutes are approved.

5. Introduction of our Programming and Outreach Associate

- P. Desai introduced Riley Hacker, our programming and outreach associate
- Riley introduced herself to the board, shared her professional background and enthusiasm for joining the team.
- She also presented with board with her goals for the position: to elevate adult programming to the level of Children's Programming; reinforce the library's position as a community meeting place. Such as adult mahjong, murder-mystery night, free acting classes, etc.
- 805% increase in Social Media views; highest performing video hit 3K+ views. Profile activity is up 45% compared to January 2025.
- Staff are exploring creating a podcast for the library to help educate the community.

- Plans to create videos such as a drone library tour, light-hearted behind-the-scenes videos introducing staff and library benefits, in addition to exploring starting a podcast, etc.

6. **Treasurer's Report**

- The Capital Account has the funds for the August furniture order. L. Ma advised that the funds in the Capital Account can be invested in a 3mo fund to capitalize on an increased interest rate.

Motion to approve the investment of \$50K into a Treasury Bill made by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by L. Carson.

All present vote YES.
Motion is approved.

Motion to approve the Bill List made by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by E. Kass.

All present vote YES.
 Bill List is approved.

7. **Director's Report**

General Updates

- Owen from DPW will be reducing his schedule to 1xweek during the summer.
- Library received two 5-Star reviews on Google from Demarest residents.
- Since increasing the Library's Social Media activity, the account viewership has grown by 850% including a 28.4% increase in profile visits and significant increase in engagement with all posts.
- Wall Street & Barron's subscriptions have been renewed for 2025.
- The graduating 8th-grade class of 2025 presented the library with a donation for \$300.

Programming & Outreach

- The Crafty Mornings program is being tested.
- Summer Reading kickoff had 140 attendees and featured a unique Creatures Animal show and ice cream truck. Due to the heat wave, the location was changed to the County Road School gymnasium; we are grateful for the support of Trustee Lisa Carson.
- June and July art installations, "Nature in Color in the US" and "Europe in Black and White", featured the nature photography of Ariana Gavrilidis.

Staff Updates

- P. Desai will be on vacation from July 21st through July 29th.
- P. Desai also attended the State Library's Basics of Purchasing workshop. Later this month, she will also attend the LAMP meeting in addition to the Bylaws meeting.

Building Repairs

- The air conditioner in the new community room needed repair. Whalen & Ives came to repair it.
- A plumber and the sewage company were called to repair the Children's Room toilet. The board suggested that the notice advising against flushing wipes should be translated into multiple languages.
- Our Head of Circulation reached out to Frank DeCarlo of Tree Masters, a licensed arborist whom she knows personally. He has kindly offered to volunteer his services to trim the branches that are falling on our roof. Additionally, he volunteered to cut other dead or leaning branches around the library.

8. Old Business

a) VOIP phone update

- P. Desai is still waiting for the updated proposal from ACom NJ.

b) Building emergency repairs update (Sewer, AC & Generator)

- The generator battery needs to be replaced. This will be done during the next scheduled service. Expected invoice will be \$169.
- The air conditioner in the new community room needed repair. Whalen & Ives came to repair it.
- A plumber and the sewage company were called to repair the Children's Room toilet. The board suggested that the notice advising against flushing wipes should be translated into multiple languages.

c) Update on tree removal and Stelfox Street

- P. Desai contacted Frank DiCarlo to assist with the tree removal on Stelfox. He will be volunteering his time to address the tree trimming and any other landscaping needs.

9. New Business

a) ALA Conference update

- P. Desai shared highlights from the ALA Conference.
- By 2027, the Demarest Public Library website needs to be ADA compliant. P. Desai and the Information Services Associate will be researching how to best plan and execute this update.

b) Strategic Plan update

- P. Desai met with the director of the River Edge Public Library in addition to some directors during the ALA Conference.
- She recommends that the library staff and board manage the development of the 3-yr Strategic Plan internally, focusing on Objectives & Goals.
- It was suggested that the library hire a 3rd party moderator for the focus groups.

10. Meeting open for public comment

Motion to open the meeting to the public made by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by D. Hayden.

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

Motion to close the meeting by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by L. Carson.

Meeting is adjourned at 7:47 pm.

11. Adjournment – Next Board Meeting Monday, September 15th at 7:00pm.