Demarest Free Public Library
Board of Library Trustees Meeting Minutes
January 12th, 2026

1. Call to order at 7:08 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 have been filed with the Borough Clerk and posted on the Municipal Bulletin Board and the Library's Website. All notice 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; D. Hayden; L. Ma; A. Sandoval, D. Marks (M&C Liaison) *early departure to attend the M&C Meeting

Absent: E. Kass

3. Approval of the Agenda

Motion to approve the Agenda made by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by A. Sandoval.

All present vote YES.
Agenda is approved.

4. Approval of the Minutes of the December 15th, 2025 meeting

Motion to approve the December 15th, 2025 meeting minutes made by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by S. Nankani.

All present vote YES.
Minutes are approved.

5. Annual Motions

a. Resolutions for Annual Motions
   i. Motion to re-affirm the Library Director as the official Purchasing Agent of the Library
   ii. Motion to authorize the Library Director to make payment of bills in the event there is no Board meeting for reasons such as recess or lack of quorum
   iii. Motion to approve payment to vendors for which a monthly payment is regularly made, including but not limited to, Verizon, PSE&G, Rockland Electric, Suez, B&T, Amazon, Intermediate Cloud Solutions, Hoopla, Kanopy, Overdrive, etc.
   iv. Motion to approve, in adherence with BCCLS Bylaws, the Demarest Public Library's continued participation in the Consortium
   v. Motion affirm Resolution 2026-3 to designate Spencer Savings Bank as the official depository of the Demarest Library Board of Trustees
   vi. Motion affirm Fidelity as the official brokerage account of the Demarest Library Board of Trustees
   vii. Motion to approve a Petty Cash fund of $50
   viii. Motion to confirm the Library Board Attorney, Douglas S. Zucker, Esq.
   ix. Motion to confirm the Library Auditor, Lerch, Vinci & Bliss, LLP.

x. Motion to confirm the meeting agenda according to the by-laws of the Demarest Library

Motion to approve the above-stated Annual Motions made by L. Ma; seconded by A. Keysar.

All present vote YES.
Annual Motions are approved.

6. Treasurer's Report

- L. Ma presented a summary of the 2025 budget. In 2025, the library earned approximately $8,500 in interest on the board's investments.
- Board discussed the schedule of the Appropriations check. The 2025 Q4 check is anticipated in March which is later than the scheduled delivery.
- Board discussed some of the larger projects to improve the library building, ADA Compliance and safety. P. Desai is going to explore Demarest's eligibility for NJ grants under the New Jersey Library Construction Bond Act (LCBA).

Motion to approve the Bill List made by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by S. Nankani.

All present vote YES.
Bill List is approved.

7. Director's Report

General Updates

- Annual deep cleaning of the library building and carpets was completed on December 31st.
- The ADA-compliant door opener has been temporarily mounted on the wall next to the Stelfox entrance. This is a temporary solution until the Demarest Borough finalizes a plan to complete the correct installation.
- P. Desai and L. Ma raised with the Board that they would like to work with the Borough to bring Library Staff payroll in-house.

Programming & Outreach

- The music class with Miss Nota has concluded following her retirement. The Youth Services Associate is exploring new music class program options to replace Miss Nita's program.
- The virtual yoga program will conclude in December due to declining attendance and the significant staff time required to manage weekly sessions. Community interest has also shifted toward in-person wellness programs, which we will explore for the upcoming year.

Building Repairs:

- The Board discussed putting together a punch list of immediate and outstanding issues for which the library is awaiting support from the Borough. This summary and a list of corresponding proposals (solutions) will be presented at the February meeting.

8. Old Business

a) Strategic Planning Meeting update

- A. Keysar shared that the Strategic Planning Committee met with Allison Trimarco of Creative Capacity on January 8th to review the plan and timeline for the survey and focus group execution.
- The next steps will include survey content drafting, target audience definition and advertising of this effort to the community to increase engagement and participation.
- P. Desai will research printing costs and proposed language for town-wide mailing. With this estimate, she will also be creating a list of marketing channels with library partners.

9. New Business

a) Resolution 2026-2 to authorize the appointment of the library Board Attorney / VOTE

Motion to approve Resolution 2026-2 to appoint Douglas S. Zucker, Esq. of Hatfield Schwartz Law Group, LLC as the Library Board Attorney to the Demarest Free Public Library for a 1-year term in 2026 made by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by S. Nankani.

Roll Call Vote.
All present vote YES.
Motion is approved

b) Resolution 2026-1 to authorize the Board President and Board Treasurer to sign and execute bills on behalf of the Demarest Library (VOTE)

Motion to approve Resolution 2026-1 to authorize signing powers to the Board President and Board treasurer made by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by L. Carson.

Roll Call Vote.
All present vote YES.
Motion is approved.

c) Vision Benefits Reimbursement (VOTE)

Motion to approve the proposed 2026 Vision Benefits Reimbursement made by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by A. Sandoval-.

Roll Call Vote.
All present vote YES.
Motion is approved.

d) Employee Bonuses (VOTE)

- P. Desai proposed a 1-time retention bonus of $1,000 for each of the 4 full-time staff members who stepped up beyond the scope of their roles to support the Director and the Library during a period of personnel turnover. The Director feels strongly that these employees should be recognized for their exceptional commitment to the Demarest Library. This proposed bonus plan can be supported by our budget.

Motion to approve the proposed Employee Retention Bonuses made by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by D. Hayden.

Roll Call Vote.
All present vote YES.
Motion is approved.

10. President's Report

- The Personnel Committee will be working with L. Ma and P. Desai to prepare the Rice Notices, reviews summaries and staff salary recommendations for the February meeting.
- P. Desai has prepared the 2026 budget which is currently being reviewed by L. Ma.
- S. Nankani shared a very lovely voicemail from a community member citing how special their library experience was. She also raised that we are hoping to improve the library's Google Reviews and asked that we encourage as many people as possible to share their feedback in a Google Review wherever possible.

11. 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 D. Hayden.
The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 pm.

12. Adjournment – Next Board Meeting Monday, February 9th at 7:00pm.