



Special Library Board of Trustees Meeting – APPROVED 11/18/2025  
*October 16, 2025, in person, livestreamed, and recorded*

**ATTENDEES:**

*Presiding Officers:*

- Charlie Pensabene, President
- Katie Sheehan, Vice-President
- Camie Engel, Secretary
- Nichole Krisanda, Treasurer
- Mari Harris, Trustee
- Kayla Kutzscher, Trustee (exited 7:33 p.m.)
- Amanda Miller, Trustee

*Library staff, Community Partners & Members of the Public:*

- Jill Dugas Hughes, Library Director
- Jennifer O'Brien, East Greenbush resident
- Lige English
- Jared Schulman
- Steve Montano
- Catherine VanOrden
- Jennifer Nassivera
- Anne Hadijoano
- Blake Fox
- Elijah Jenkins
- Elana Peralta-Sapienza
- Kevin McCann
- Eve Halloran
- Tom Grant, Rensselaer County Legislator
- Michael Poost
- Michael Zargham
- Gabriela Paixao
- Mickey Jenkins
- Albert Yasus, Jr.
- Shay Harrison
- Betty Bellino Guigno

A Special Library Board of Trustees meeting of the East Greenbush Community Library was held on October 16, 2025, at the East Greenbush Community Library and was livestreamed. It began at

6:31 p.m. and was presided over by Charlie Pensabene, President with Camie Engel as Secretary. The meeting was recorded.

**CALL TO ORDER:**

- C. Pensabene called the Special Library Board of Trustees meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

**REVIEW OF AGENDA:**

- Public Comment will come first followed by written-in comments

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- Jennifer O'Brien, former library trustee and school board member, opposed building the police station on library property. She supports better police facilities but said this location would worsen traffic on Luther Road and negatively impact the nearby school, YMCA, and Hawthorne Ridge. She called the site choice shortsighted.
- Lige English, a three-year East Greenbush resident opposed building the police station on library property. He said while police deserve better facilities, the site should instead be used for something that builds community- such as a teen or performing arts center. He called the proposed location shortsighted and unfair to residents, urging the community to resist if the project is pushed through.
- Jared Schulman, who lives across from the library, opposed the proposed police station site, citing lack of transparency and public input. He noted traffic dangers for students in the area and suggested Route 9 & 20 as a better location, warning that eminent domain would cause delays and conflict.
- Steve Montana opposed building the police station on library property, calling it a poor and irresponsible location with traffic and access problems. He said the proposal appears to be driven by Supervisor Conway, not the full town board, and criticized the rushed four-month site search after years of known need. Montana urged the library not to be pressured into donating land, noting better options such as Temple Lane and Columbia Turnpike. He suggested the community could pursue a permissible referendum if the plan advances.
- Catherine VanOrden, spoke out of the lack of transparency from the Town, noting that taxpayers fund both the library and the police. She called for community input and data-driven decisions, including traffic and feasibility studies, before any action is taken. She added that if alternative uses like a teen center are cited, they should be genuinely pursued rather than just discussed.
- Jennifer Nassivera, longtime East Greenbush resident, said she supports the need for a new police station but opposes using the library property. She emphasized preserving the area's limited green space and criticized the lack of transparency about alternative sites and feasibility studies.

- Anne Hadijoano, Castleton resident and library user criticized the lack of transparency about the proposed police station, expressing distrust of the process and warning that deals may already be happening behind closed doors. She urged the community to take swift action before decisions are finalized.
- Blake Fox, a Columbia High School graduate and longtime library user, supports a new police station but opposes placing it on library property. He cited traffic congestion near the library, safety concerns for students, and the availability of other suitable locations.
- Elijah Jenkins, a lifelong East Greenbush resident, opposed placing the police station on library property, calling it the community's decision and criticizing the Town Supervisor for pushing it for personal or political gain. He emphasized that taxpayers should have a say, that the site is inappropriate for children, and that the library should not be pressured into giving up its land.
- Elana Peralta-Sapienza, a parent and frequent library user, also opposed the location, citing safety concerns for children, and lack of transparency. She said many parents would not bring their children to the library if a police station were built there and suggested alternative sites like Columbia Turnpike.
- Kevin McCann, longtime East Greenbush resident, former Library Trustee, praised the library and surrounding campus on Community Way as the town's cultural center. He emphasized that his opposition to the proposed police station is not a critique of the police, but a concern over coercive tactics and lack of good faith in the process. He suggested alternative uses, like a community center, that would complement existing services and preserve the campus' value.
- Tom Grant, longtime resident and library liaison, supports a new police station but criticized the lack of transparency and respect in the process by the Town Supervisor. He questioned why no concrete proposal has been submitted to the library and highlighted alternative sites, like Columbia Turnpike. Grant urged residents to contact Town Board members to demand answers and oppose coercive tactics like eminent domain.
- Michael Poost, a former 30-year board member, opposed placing a police station on library property. He explained that when the site was planned, the leftover land, now Hawthorne Ridge, was originally going to be donated by the Library and YMCA to the town for free if they became the third partner and took over Community Way, but the town declined. The library site was carefully designed as green space and reserved for future expansion, making a police station inappropriate, as it would consume over 25% of the library site and a building that's half the size, along with significant parking, disrupting its intended use.
- Michael Zargham, a systems engineer and library patron, emphasized the need for deeper scrutiny of the decision-making process rather than just calling for transparency. He warned that studies and metrics can be manipulated to justify predetermined outcomes and suggested focusing on understanding the interests and incentives of the players involved to better protect the library and guide collective action.
- Gabriela Paixao, a parent and regular library visitor, emphasized the importance of preserving the library's land for both indoor and outdoor programs. She noted that placing

a police station there could disrupt the library's welcoming environment and deter community members from attending and suggested exploring other locations.

- Mickey Jenkins, joined by her husband Frank, said a new police station is needed but disagrees with the library site due to heavy traffic. She noted that her husband drives the fire truck and experiences the traffic firsthand. She suggested alternative locations like Temple Lane or Route 9 & 20 and recommended forming a committee to explore other options.
- Albert Yasus, Jr., warned that the Town Supervisor may be acting unilaterally. He noted that the Town Board might need to proactively block an eminent domain lawsuit rather than just vote "no." Yasus also highlighted the upcoming library board of trustees election on November 17, in which he is a candidate.
- Shay Harrison, a former 5-year library board member and school board member, cautioned that eminent domain between municipal entities carries a high legal threshold, could trigger costly, prolonged litigation, and would require increased legal budgets for both the town and library. Citing Jack Conway's past pressure on the school board during the casino debate, he stressed the need for transparency and community input. He also noted that pre-COVID, the library began discussions about adding a teen center on this site, but funding challenges and the pandemic halted those plans; if restarted the effort would take more two years to complete.
- Betty Bellino Guigno a longtime resident, and former library board member, emphasized the library as the town's cultural center and praised the police while criticizing the Town Supervisor's coercive approach. She condemned town leaders for neglecting the police station issue for over 20 years and for not using available land along Columbia Turnpike and expressed frustration that the proposal was pushed onto the library with little choice. She praised current and former trustees, especially Michael Poost, for their dedication, highlighted the importance of preserving the library campus and green space, and suggested a community center could complement the library. She thanked the board for holding the hearing, expressed deep affection for the library, while appreciating the strong community turnout.
- Amy Beyor (submitted in writing, read aloud by Camie Engel)  
Hello, I am writing in about the potential build of a new police station on the East Greenbush library property. I think this is an awful idea. There are a lot of people that don't particularly care for E.G police for their lack of assistance in real matters and stay far away from them so to know their building will be on property of the library may keep those library patrons away. Also, the police station brings drama to its building and the library doesn't need that. Times have changed a lot since back when the police station and library shared a building...it's just not good for business. Alot of things go on within the library and I think police would compromise that. Another point, financially. Taxpayer dollars shouldn't go to that when the building the police are currently in is just fine. It works. If anything, they should remodel or add on to their current location.

- Caitlin B. (submitted in writing, read aloud by Camie Engel)  
Good evening, I was alarmed a few days ago to discover the news that the town intends to claim library property through eminent domain. While I appreciate that the town police are in need of updated facilities, taking the library's green space is not the answer. This is a place intended for teens, children, families, all people who seek its peace and refuge, a gathering space for events, a place for those who may struggle with sensory issues. I appreciate the library giving us all the opportunity to speak our opinions and hope that we will continue to share our voices freely and keep our libraries safe community spaces. Thank you, Caitlin B.
- Dawn McNally (submitted in writing, read aloud by Camie Engel)  
**Dear East Greenbush Library Board Members,**  
I am writing to formally express my serious concerns regarding the recent discussions about relocating the East Greenbush Police Department to the undeveloped land in front of the East Greenbush Community Library. While I recognize the need for a new police facility, I believe placing it adjacent to our community's library is inappropriate and potentially harmful to both institutions.  
My primary concerns with this proposed location are as follows:  
**Safety and atmosphere for children and families:** The library serves as a safe, welcoming, and accessible space for people of all ages, especially children. Locating a police station directly next door could fundamentally change the library's atmosphere. The constant presence of police activity—including emergency responses, patrol cars, and interactions with individuals in custody—could create an intimidating or stressful environment that discourages families and children from using the library.  
**Aesthetics and community space:** The grassy area in front of the library and the adjacent YMCA currently offers a sense of openness and tranquility. Replacing this green space with a secure government facility will diminish the area's aesthetic appeal and alter the feeling of a shared community campus.  
**Traffic and pedestrian safety:** A new police station will inevitably increase vehicle traffic, especially large emergency response vehicles. This poses a safety risk to the high volume of foot traffic, including children and seniors, who regularly visit the library and YMCA.  
**Impact on the library's autonomy:** The recent reports, such as those in the *Times Union*, indicating that Town Supervisor Jack Conway is prepared to pursue eminent domain against the library district are particularly troubling. This aggressive approach could undermine the library's independence and create a contentious relationship between two vital community institutions.  
**Alternative locations:** East Greenbush has other potential sites for the police station, as indicated by earlier discussions. I urge the Town Board to explore other, less disruptive options, such as the grassy area near the Farmgate development, which was previously considered.

I urge you to consider the long-term implications of this decision and to engage in a more collaborative process with the East Greenbush Community Library. Our town deserves a solution that benefits all its residents without compromising the safety and unique character of our beloved library.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my perspective.

Sincerely,  
Dawn McNally

- Susan Herrmann (submitted in writing, read aloud by Camie Engel)  
I vehemently oppose the new EG police station being built on the green lawn around the EG Library. I posted this today on What's Going on in and around East Greenbush NY on FB. Please look at the comments there, reasons why people oppose, and number of people who reacted. We know the meeting is tonight at 6:30. One reason that stuck out for me is the noise (sirens) disrupting patrons who are used to the traditional respect of peace and quiet in a library. Sincerely, Susan Herrmann

- Theresa Poitras (submitted in writing, read aloud by Camie Engel)  
Library board of trustee members,

I just read the Times Union article about Town Supervisor Jack Conway's threat to take the library land by eminent domain. Please do not give in to his bullying tactics. Not only does it seem this use of the vacant library land was a surprise to the board, it is also a surprise to me and many in the community.

I also viewed the October meeting on YouTube and commend your board members for keeping your cool and conducting a civilized conversation, despite the repeated threats and comments that the board is at fault for not jumping on this opportunity and if you don't agree, he will use his power to take the land for other town usage.

Perhaps other locations were viewed and passed on; however, which other property owners were contacted and why is he not threatening them with eminent domain, just the library board of trustees?

I am not fully apprised of the feasibility study or what other options are out there and am in support of a new police station, but do not agree the EG library space with only a one lane road is the right space. The quiet sanctity of the library and various events you hold would be broken by the traffic and sirens of the police station. Children walking in would be faced with additional traffic and situations where accused criminals may be entering or exiting the police building, which could increase anxiety.

You should be presented with the physical documents of the review and given sufficient time to review the proposal; not two months and then told times up and you have to agree or the town is taking the land. This is not a good faith offer.

I am a big supporter of the library and disagree with Mr. Conway's comment that the EG library is too big and too expensive. I am a member of the Friends of the Library, have a brick in your patio and was there as recently as last week at your semi-annual book sale. As one of "The people of East Greenbush", I do not want to see you bullied into selling your land or having it taken for the new police station. I hope you are able to maintain your independence and courage in pushing back on this bullying action.

If there's a way I can assist in your review of information or community outreach, please let me know.

President Charlie Pensabene, on behalf of the board, thanked and appreciated all the public comment that was given tonight.

**Kayla Kutzscher exited 7:33 p.m.**

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

- **MOTION #2025-10-66:** Motion to enter executive session. Motion was made by M. Harris at 7:33 p.m. Seconded by K. Sheehan. The motion was carried with 6 in favor, none opposed.
- **MOTION #2025-10-67:** Motion to exit executive session. Motion was made by C. Pensabene at 8:39 p.m. Seconded by K. Sheehan. The motion was carried with 6 in favor.
- **MOTION #2025-10-68:** Motion to authorize the Library Director to engage an attorney for purposes of legal representation. Motion was made by C. Pensabene. Seconded by A. Miller. The motion was carried with 6 in favor.

#### **ADJOURN:**

- **MOTION #2025-10-69:** To adjourn the October 16, 2025, Special Library Board meeting. Motion was made by M. Harris at 8:40 p.m. Seconded by K. Sheehan. The motion carried with 6 in favor.

Recorded & Submitted by: Camie Engel, Secretary