



10 Community Way  
East Greenbush, NY 12061  
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### **January 21, 2025 Meeting Minutes**

#### **ATTENDANCE:**

Julie Ann Price – President	
Diana Valenchis - Advocacy & Awareness Co-Chair	Frank Coppa
Betty Bellino - Advocacy & Awareness Co-Chair	Gary Klee
MaryAnn Baird - Membership Co-Chair	Linda Kospa
Ei Aung - Membership Co-Chair	Mary Kolb
Diana Vance - Secretary	David Gonsalves
Jenn Romer - Fundraising Chair	
Susan Bell - Library Liaison	
Jill Dugas Hughes - Library Director	

#### **Absences:**

Shay Harrison - Vice President

#### **CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 PM.

#### **MEMBERSHIP REPORT:**

Ms. Baird presented the 2025 Membership Renewal Campaign. The letter and electronic membership were cleaned up. The mail list will be created by the end of month, for distribution by mid February or sooner. The electronic notice will go out January 26.

#### **ADVOCACY & AWARENESS REPORT:**

Ms. Valenchis reviewed the 2025 Advocacy Day Plan. The budget came out today, but is still proposed and has not gone through the formal processes yet. Library aid is up from last year; library construction aid is down from last year; novel NY is flat. An advocacy table will be set up; anticipated February 1st and 2nd from 1:00-3:00. Library advocacy day is February 5.

Proposal to change the format for the children's letter.

#### **PLANNING SESSION:**

Goal: Ms. Price presented two discussion topics for the group to brainstorm - Awareness/New Member Recruitment and New Fundraising Ideas. Attendees divided into two groups to discuss.

### **New Fundraising Ideas Brainstorming Meeting**

Many ideas were discussed, but no decisions were made. Discussions regarding the demographic we are attempting to reach concluded that activities could be geared toward the 60+ age.

- Previously we had discussed a road race or 5k. This was raised by a member, but additional research shows that there are high costs and requirements involved. We will table this idea for now.
- Monthly word puzzles or bingo
- Consignment sale or craft fair with a table rental fee
- Community garage sale - cons include responsibility of removing leftover items.
- Kids art show/art auction
- Mixed arts community night
- Silent auction
- Additional baskets with the monthly raffle baskets
- Adding a food component to the book sale
- Taste Event
- Night out at the Library - this could have different theming each year
- Children's book festivals - the library held these previously and they were a great success as an event, but there were no fundraising components in the past.
- Adding food to the summer concert series.

### **Advocacy and Awareness Brainstorming Meeting**

#### **Advocacy**

- Advocacy Day Table:
  - Use physical letters to help Senators visualize the volume of community support.
  - Plan for an interactive table set up to attract attention.
  - Dates:
    - February 1st (10 am–1 pm).
    - February 2nd (Check with Diana).
  - Activities for Kids:
    - Heart printouts with a fill-in prompt: *"I love my Library because ..."*
    - Provide two options for customization:
      1. Pre-designed hearts that they fill out
      2. Blank red sheets of paper for kids to decorate themselves (possibly)
    - Include heart stickers to make it fun and appealing for children.
- Goals for Advocacy Day:
  - Engage community members of all ages.
  - Collect meaningful, visual testimonials to showcase support for the library.
  - Build relationships with elected officials by presenting tangible evidence of community backing.

#### **Awareness**

Goal: Increase membership by addressing communication gaps, clarifying the role of the Friends group, and enhancing visibility.

- Clarifying Membership:
  - Emphasize the distinction between:
    - Holding a library card.
    - Being a member of the Friends of the Library (a booster club supporting events and initiatives).
  - Communicate the direct impact of the Friends group, such as funding events and initiatives like *1000 Books Before Kindergarten*.
- Outreach Strategies:
  - Video Presentation:
    - Create a 1–2 minute video to play on the library’s TV.
    - Showcase what the Friends group does, including event sponsorship, fundraising, and community impact.
    - Use visuals and testimonials to reduce intimidation for potential new members.
  - Quarterly Emails:
    - Send updates to library patrons with details on:
      - Upcoming events.
      - How funds are used.
      - How to become a Friend.
    - Include an engaging tagline, such as: *“Here’s what the Friends are doing this year... Come Join Us!”*
    - Consider collaborating with library staff to include the email in library-wide newsletters.
  - Printed Materials:
    - Develop a trifold brochure that explains the Friends group, its impact, and membership benefits.
    - Display brochures at library events and prominently near sign-up sheets.
    - Include signage like: *“This event is sponsored by the Friends.”*
- Interactive Engagement:
  - Attach QR codes, brochures, membership forms to sponsored items (e.g., museum passes, Library of Things) to link directly to membership forms or explain the Friends’ support.
    - Emphasize that we support not only the library but YOU as a patron
  - Attend events at the library and before it starts someone explains the Friends mission

## Discussion Points

- Our Unique Impact:
  - Other libraries support only a few events, but we sponsor many.
  - While this demonstrates our commitment, it can make it harder for patrons to identify which events are sponsored by the Friends.
- Branding Opportunities:
  - Highlight specific initiatives like *1000 Books Before Kindergarten*:

- Communicate that the Friends group fully funds this project.
  - Example messaging: *“This Month’s Events Sponsored by the Friends...”*
- Add stickers or QR codes to sponsored materials to make the connection clear.
- Strengthening Member Connection:
  - Plan member-only events to foster a sense of community and exclusivity:
    - Example: Host a local author reading or book signing.
    - Encourage members to “Bring a Friend” to expand the group.
  - Schedule a “Friends Day” during a popular event like Children’s Story Time to engage families.

## **Branding Improvements**

- Logo Redesign:
  - Create a more distinctive and recognizable logo to separate the Friends from the library’s official branding.
  - Explore options like changing the logo entirely or modifying its color scheme.
- Tagline Ideas:
  - *“Will you join us?”*
  - A child’s drawing of a stick figure with the message: *“Won’t you be our Friend?”*

Our next Meeting will be held February 18th.

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

#### **MOTION:**

Ms. Price made a motion to adjourn at 7:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Vance