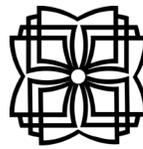




**Board of Trustees Meeting
Central Library
March 16, 2026, 5:00 PM
Agenda**

- | | | |
|---|--------------|---------|
| I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES | Shelly | page 3 |
| II. PUBLIC COMMENTS | Shelly | |
| III. FINANCIAL CLAIMS | Hasselwander | page 9 |
| IV. REPORTS & DISCUSSION | | |
| 1. Liaison Reports | | |
| a. From Friends & Foundation of RPL | Borgus | |
| 2. Staff Reports | | |
| a. Director's Report | Clasper | |
| b. MCLS Associate Director's Report | Smathers | |
| c. Central Associate Director's Report | Lehman | |
| 3. Other Reports or Discussion | | |
| V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS | | |
| None | | |
| VI. NEW BUSINESS | | |
| 1. Agreement with RPL to Administer the Love Your Library Grant Program | Hasselwander | page 11 |
| 2. Transfer of Love Your Library Grant Funds | Hasselwander | page 11 |
| VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS | | |
| VIII. ADJOURNMENT | | |

**Next Meeting:
April 20, 2026, 5:00 p.m.
Central Library, 115 South Avenue, 14620**



**Meeting of the MCLS & RPL Boards of Trustees
Board Room, Central Library
February 25, 2026
Minutes**

MCLS Trustees Present: Gary Brandt, Kimberly Brown, Christopher Corcoran, Amy Moffitt (Vice President), Francesca Padilla, Mei Qi, Jamia Williams (quorum present)

MCLS Trustees Excused: Marjorie Shelly (President), Suzanne Stockman

MCLS Trustees Unexcused:

RPL Trustees Present: Donna Benjamin, Gary Brandt (MCLS Liaison), Marcus Cooper, James Kraus, Matt McDermott (VP), Sarah Murphy Abbamonte (Secretary), Sharon Salluzzo (Reynolds Liaison), Jeffrey Tucker, Mark Wyand (Treasurer) (quorum present)

RPL Trustees Excused: Ellen Brenner (President),

RPL Trustees Unexcused: None

Staff and Guests: Monroe County Administration Liaison, Conor McMahon; Monroe County Law Dept. Liaison, Bridget Cook; City Administration Liaison, Barbara Pierce; City Law Liaison Johanna Brennan; Friends & Foundation of Rochester Public Library Liaison, Donna Borgus; staff members, Emily Clasper, Katy Hasselwander, Sarah Lehman, Debi Mansour, BJ Scanlon, Geraldine Scott, Jennifer Smathers

Vice President Moffitt called the MCLS meeting to order at 9:06 a.m., welcomed trustees, staff, and guests, and noted a quorum was present.

Vice President McDermott called the RPL meeting to order at 9:07 a.m., welcomed trustees, staff, and guests, and noted a quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MCLS MINUTES

The minutes of the January 26, 2026, meeting were APPROVED AS PRESENTED.

APPROVAL OF RPL MINUTES

The minutes of the January 28, 2026, meeting were APPROVED AS PRESENTED.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no members of the public wanting to address the board.

MCLS FINANCIAL CLAIMS

Finance Mgr. Hasselwander reviewed the financial claims with the trustees and offered to answer questions. After discussion, Trustee Corcoran MADE A MOTION to approve the financial claims as presented. Trustee Brandt Seconded. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

RPL FINANCIAL REPORTS

Finance Mgr. Hasselwander reviewed the financial reports with the trustees and offered to answer questions. Trustee Salluzzo MADE A MOTION to approve the monthly financial reports as presented and approved by the RPL Finance Committee. Trustee Benjamin seconded. HE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

PERSONNEL CHANGES

Human Resources Specialist Scott called attention to the personnel changes and staffing levels for January 10–February 13, 2026, and offered to answer questions. Trustee Murphy Abbamonte MADE A MOTION to approve the personnel changes. Trustee Tucker seconded. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

LIAISON REPORTS

Liaison from the Rochester Public Library (RPL)

RPL Trustee Murphy Abbamonte directed the MCLS trustees to the enclosed RPL Board minutes and offered to answer questions.

Liaison from the Monroe County Library System (MCLS)

MCLS Trustee Brandt directed the RPL trustees to the enclosed MCLS Board minutes and offered to answer questions.

Liaison from the Friends & Foundation of the RPL (FFRPL)

Executive Director Borgus reported that the Friends and Foundation of the Rochester Public Library's spring annual campaign letter is scheduled to arrive in homes around March 2. Planning is underway for Library Giving Day on April 1. The Books Sandwiched In spring series will be held on Tuesdays at 12:12 p.m. in the Kate Gleason Auditorium from March 10 through April 21, with registration details and future access to recordings available at ffrpl.org. Trustees were also asked to note that the Sokol High School Literary Awards Ceremony and Reception will take place on Thursday, April 23, from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. in the Kate Gleason Auditorium.

She further reported that all required annual reports for the FFRPL Library Grants for Circulating Materials program have been received, and 2026 grant agreements were distributed on February 18. Signed agreements are due by March 31, 2026. In 2025, the program awarded \$844,161.19 to 62 eligible libraries in the Monroe County, OWWL, and Nioga Library Systems, resulting in the purchase of 32,846 supplemental items, including 19,335 print books, 7,125 e-books, and 6,386 audiobooks. For 2026, a total allocation of \$914,541.78 will be distributed. Of that amount, the Monroe County Library System will receive \$687,397.84, including \$117,258.24 for the Rochester Public Library.

STAFF REPORTS

Director's Report

Director Clasper reported that her first year as Director has been challenging but successful, and she expressed appreciation to the Board and staff for their support during this period. She stated that her recent and upcoming work is focused on strategic planning for both RPL and MCLS, including development of the five-year plan of service, review of RPL policies, and internal reorganization to support future transformation. She emphasized that although much of this work is not immediately visible, it is foundational for long-term change.

Director Clasper also underscored the urgency of state-level advocacy for library funding, noting that the Governor's proposed budget reduces both construction aid and library aid. She urged trustees to contact their state legislators as soon as possible in support of restoring and increasing library funding, commenting that while email is helpful, phone calls are even more effective.

Trustee Brown joined the meeting at 9:17 a.m.

MCLS Associate Director’s Report

Associate Director Smathers reported briefly, reinforcing the Director’s call for advocacy. She explained that the Legislature is currently working on the “one house” budget bills, during which the Assembly and Senate attempt to restore funding removed in the Governor’s proposal, making this a critical moment for outreach to state legislators. She advised that any email communications to legislators should be personalized, even slightly, to attract more attention. Smathers also noted that a pre-Advocacy Day meeting had been held to identify ways to help trustees and others become more effective advocates, and that staff will be developing additional opportunities over the coming year for trustees to learn and practice advocacy skills.

Central Associate Director’s Report

Associate Director Lehman reported that she, along with other representatives of MCLS and RPL, attended Advocacy Day at the beginning of the month and met with several state legislators and lawmakers. She indicated that her written report outlines the main state-level priorities they advanced during those meetings and offered to answer any questions regarding those advocacy points.

Next, she announced that Roc Paint will be coming to the Central Library in March to complete mural work on interior walls. In preparation, a survey will be distributed to patrons and staff to gather feedback on desired themes, content, and what the library means to them.

Community Libraries Deputy Director’s Report

Deputy Director Scanlon added to the advocacy discussion that letters have been drafted to all Assembly members and Senators the group met with, summarizing key talking points and specific advocacy requests. He stated that these materials will be distilled into bullet points and shared with trustees to support their ongoing advocacy. Scanlon further reported that a new heating unit for the Wheatley branch is expected to arrive in the United States next month and be installed in April, and that the damaged carpet there has already been replaced with an economical but attractive option. He informed the Board that the People’s Pantry, a tenant at the Lincoln Branch Library, is seeking to extend its lease and appears to be investing in the space, including adding a new freezer, which signals a continued long-term commitment to the neighborhood. He also described discussions with the Father Tracy Advocacy Center regarding expanding their presence and services at library locations, including additional days at Central and potential expansion to the Lyell Branch, as well as possible future staff space needs in the Central Library. Finally, Scanlon noted that he is approaching his one-year anniversary in his current role and is very happy to be working at RPL.

NEW MCLS BUSINESS

Nominating Committee Recommendation

Trustee Padilla presented the item to the trustees and offered to answer questions. Trustee Brandt MADE A MOTION to appoint Ichin Zinn to complete the unexpired term of Peter W. Knapp, effective immediately, with a term ending date of June 30, 2027. Trustee Qi SECONDED. After discussion, THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Telecommunication Agreements

Finance Mgr. Hasselwander presented the item to the trustees and offered to answer questions. Trustee Corcoran MADE A MOTION to approve a professional services agreement for digital transmission services with Crown Castle Fiber, LLC, with a term of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2029. And to approve a professional services agreement for internet services with First Light Fiber with a term of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2029. Trustee Williams SECONDED. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Annual Library Automation Services Agreement

Finance Mgr. Hasselwander presented the item to the trustees and offered to answer questions. She noted the dates in the board documents were incorrect and should be February 25, 2026, through December 31, 2026. Trustee Corcoran MADE A MOTION to approve a professional services agreement with CampbellNet Solutions for a term of February 25, 2026, through December 31, 2026, with maximum compensation not to exceed \$5,000. Trustee Brandt SECONDED. After discussion, THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

JOINT NEW BUSINESS

Proposed FY27 Central Library Budget

Finance Mgr. Hasselwander presented the item to the trustees and offered to answer questions.

RPL Vice President McDermott made a motion to move into Executive Session to discuss matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, dismissal, or removal of particular people. Trustee Kraus seconded. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MCLS Vice President Moffitt made a motion to move into Executive Session to discuss matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, dismissal, or removal of particular people. Trustee Brandt seconded. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Both Boards moved into Executive Session at 9:58 a.m. Staff and guests were excused.

RPL Trustee Wyand made a motion to exit Executive Session. Trustee Salluzzo seconded. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MCLS Vice President Moffitt made a motion to exit Executive Session. Trustee Brandt seconded. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Both Boards exited the Executive Session at 10:15 a.m.

MCLS Trustee Brandt MADE A MOTION to approve the proposed 2026-27 Central Library Budget. MCLS Trustee Corcoran SECONDED. After discussion, THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

RPL Trustee Wyand MADE A MOTION to approve the proposed 2026-27 Central Library Budget. RPL Trustee Cooper SECONDED. After discussion, THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

RPL NEW BUSINESS

Proposed FY27 Community Library Budget

Finance Mgr. Hasselwander presented the item to the trustees and offered to answer questions. Trustee Benjamin MADE A MOTION to approve the proposed 2026-27 Community Library Budget. Trustee Murphy Abbamonte SECONDED. After discussion, THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Grant Acceptance, Rochester Regional Library Council

Deputy Director Scanlon presented the item to the trustees and offered to answer questions. Trustee Murphy Abbamonte MADE A MOTION to accept a grant of \$3,500 from the Rochester Regional Library Council. Trustee Cooper SECONDED. After discussion, THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Close All Branches for Community Library Training Day

Deputy Director Scanlon presented the item to the trustees and offered to answer questions. Trustee Kraus MADE A MOTION to approve the closure of the ten community branch libraries on Thursday, April 30, 2026, for an all-branch training day. Trustee Salluzzo SECONDED. After discussion, THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice President Moffit reminded MCLS trustees that the next meeting is March 16, 2026.

Vice President McDermott reminded RPL trustees that the next meeting is March 25, 2026.

ADJOURNMENT

Both Boards adjourned at 10:37 a.m.

Emily Clasper, MCLS Secretary

Sarah Murphy Abbamonte, RPL Secretary

DRAFT

**MONROE COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM
FINANCIAL CLAIMS 2026**

MON	DAY	CLAIM VO	VENDOR	DESCRIPTION	EXPENDED	REMARKS
12	31	2000676095	Rochester Public Library - 11105181	DIGITAL EQUITY SYS BILL JULY-DEC 25 - INV#10146	\$174,931.85	2025 ARPA FUNDS
1	20	2000674139	AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOC - 11104672	2026 MEMBERSHIP - SMATHERS	\$1,150.00	
1	22	2000674176	SWANK MOVIE LICENSING - 11108836	COPYRIGHT LICENSE 1/1/26-12/31/26	\$7,276.00	
1	22	2000674177	OVERDRIVE - 11109903	DIGITAL MATERIALS PLATFORM FEE	\$2,500.00	
1	27	2000673967	CARL CORPORATION - 11106297	CARL X CONTRACT	\$150,799.90	
1	27	2000674030	CROWN CASTLE - 11120635	DIGITAL TRANSMISSION JAN 2026	\$16,942.88	
1	27	2000674030	CROWN CASTLE - 11120635	INTERNET JAN 2026	\$2,075.00	
1	27	2000674180	NYLA - 11111096	2026 EXCELSIOR MEMBERSHIP DUES	\$1,500.00	SPLIT WITH 504620
1	27	2000674180	NYLA - 11111096	2026 EXCELSIOR MEMBERSHIP DUES	\$2,801.00	SPLIT WITH 504205
1	27	2000674183	PULISDO - 11113398	2026 MEMBERSHIP DUES	\$400.00	
2	1	-	-	-	\$7,954.97	County Journal for Fleet Maintenance Fuel & Repairs
2	2	2000674062	KNACK - 11127344	PRO NON PROFIT YEARLY SUBSCRIP.	\$990.00	
2	3	2999675573	OVERDRIVE - 11109903	MATERIALS HOLD	\$245.18	
2	3	2999675573	OVERDRIVE - 11109903	MATERIALS HOLD	\$989.47	
2	3	2999675573	OVERDRIVE - 11109903	MATERIALS HOLD	\$987.66	
2	4	2000675981	CROWN CASTLE - 11120635	DIGITAL TRANSMISSION FEB 2026	\$16,942.88	
2	4	2000675981	CROWN CASTLE - 11120635	INTERNET FEB 2026	\$2,075.00	
2	9	2000672465	LITERACY ROC- 11128531	SUPPLIES FOR DIGITAL LITERACY PROGRAM	\$12,950.00	ARPA FUNDS
2	12	2000575597	SPRINGSHARE- 11119312	2026 PATRON POINT, SMS, & RECOMMENDS SUBSCRIPTIONS	\$20,555.00	
2	12	2000675818	UNIQUE MANAGEMENT SERVICES - 11102541	MATERIAL RECOVERY- JAN	\$2,390.85	

\$426,457.64



March 2026

NEW BUSINESS (BOARD ACTIONS)

*AGREEMENT WITH RPL TO ADMINISTER THE LOVE YOUR LIBRARY GRANT PROGRAM
(HASSELWANDER)*

Board Action Requested: A motion to approve an agreement with Rochester Public Library to administer the Love Your Library grant program.

Details: The New York State Education Department, Division of Library Development, allocated Love Your Library grant funds to the Monroe County Library System to support summer reading activities. The Monroe County Library System intends to transfer these funds to the Rochester Public Library for administration. The funds will supplement the cost of a professional service agreement for staff training. The agreement was approved at the January 2026 RPL board meeting.

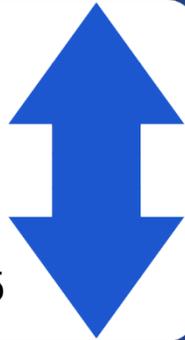
TRANSFER OF LOVE YOUR LIBRARY GRANT FUNDS (HASSELWANDER)

Board Action Requested: A motion to transfer the \$3,995 in grant funds to RPL pursuant to the Agreement between RPL and MCLS to administer the Love Your Library program.

Details: MCLS will transfer the allocated Love Your Library grant funds totaling \$3,995 to the RPL for administration pursuant to the Agreement between MCLS and RPL. The funds will supplement the cost of a professional service agreement for staff training. The agreement was approved at the January 2026 RPL board meeting.

MCLS AT A GLANCE (JAN–FEB 2026)

MCLS Libraries
circulated
1,075,896
items YTD
on pace with 2025



MCLS Libraries
circulated
2,240
MiFis YTD
Up **47%** from 2025



The Shipping Dept.
moved
253,784
items YTD
Down **1.5%** from 2025



Technical Services
added
4,499
items to the
catalog YTD
Up **8%** from 2025



The Outreach Dept.
made
24
facility visits YTD
Up **41%** from 2025



The Outreach Dept.
made
28
in-home visits YTD
Down **15%** from 2025



The Outreach Dept.
provided
2,572
items YTD
Up **4%** from 2025



PATRON STORIES

TALKING BOOK AND BRAILLE LIBRARY MAKES A WHALE OF A DIFFERENCE FOR PATRONS

Library patrons with visual impairments are eligible to receive audiobooks through the Talking Books and Braille Library (TBBL) in Albany. The service even provides the required player to patrons. We often help patrons sign up TBBL. While it is an amazingly easy to use system for patrons who are having difficulty reading or are fully blind. It is normal for patrons who have received home delivery visits from MCLS to experience vision loss, making it increasingly difficult to read large print books. Sometimes those patrons hesitate to embrace RBBL since they don't want to lose the relationship they've build with outreach staff. Everyone can benefit from interacting with their local library staff. For those patrons, MCLS works with TBBL to set up an account, but continues to visit the patrons at home to maintain that human connection while loading the TBBL player with new books.

This month, one of our regular patrons began receiving their first audiobooks from TBBL. This patron was having increased difficulty with any print, even large type. Her tastes ranged widely, however a huge portion of her To Be Read (TBR) list was not even available in large print. Moby Dick was one of the titles she'd been waiting and wanting to read. The TBBL offered an audio version of that great American novel, so the excited patron was finally able to set sail on her preferred reading adventure.

TRANSLATION SERVICES USE LEADS TO PATRON PARTICIPATION

A Spanish-speaking mom came to the library with her daughter in February. She had been given a flyer of library programs by Raising a Reader staff and told Margarita Chaves that she came to the library because she read our flyer, which we provide translated into Spanish as well. We are happy that our services are reaching people in our community and bringing them into the library.

AMERKS READING POWER PLAY FINISHES WITH KIDS DAY AND NEW LIBRARY CARDS

Another successful Amerks Reading Power Play season wrapped up on February 15 at the kid's game. Since November, the Amerks players visited 8 member libraries across the county to host a story time and give hockey demonstrations to a total of 529 attendees. MCLS tabled at some of the highest attended hockey games. Each night staff signed up hockey fans for new cards, and renewed expired cards from library fans.

The Hat Trick Reading challenge had 1,072 entries (967 from grades k-5th, 105 from grades 6-12.) Winners Frank from the Penfield Library and Sophie from the Greece Public Library got to drop the puck at center ice and enjoy the game from a suite.



MCLS SERVICE & PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

RIISING TIDE OF MCLS TRAINING: YA BOAT CONFERENCE

The MCLS Office, at the request of the Young Adult Librarians group members, supported the creation and launching of the full day of training at the Irondequoit Public Library. The conference was dubbed YA Best of All Time (YA BOAT) with different topics pertaining to library teen services presented throughout the day. A total of 27 staff from across the County attended, engaging in sessions on Youth Brain Development and

Neurodiversity, Designing Accessible Spaces, providing resources for Homeschooling, and overcoming Acquisitions issues in a post-Baker & Taylor landscape.



TAKE YOUR CHILD TO THE LIBRARY DAY

Monroe County Libraries celebrated International Take Your Child to the Library Day. In its 15th year, this annual event was a wonderful opportunity for children to have fun while parents and caregivers learned more about their library. Take Your Child to the Library Day showcased all the free resources local public libraries provide for families.

Participating library patrons had many program options, from experiencing a Model Train Show, Baby Storytime, Ice Cream for Breakfast Day treats, Donut Designing, scavenger hunts, and various crafts.

At the Central Library of Rochester and Monroe County, families celebrated all the library had to offer with a musical journey through the library. They visited the Children's Center and other departments for dance, drumming, and an instrument petting zoo. Guests got their passports in the Children's Center and visited participating departments throughout the Central Library, completed fun activities, and collected stamps along the way. Once their passports were full, they returned them to the Children's Center for a chance to win a 9-week Music FUNdamentals or Dance class from The Hochstein School or bundles of books.



MCLS STAFF NEWSLETTER LAUNCHED

In an effort to broaden communication throughout all member library staff, the MCLS Office has been producing a monthly newsletter that brings valuable information about MCLS service to everyone working in a Monroe County Library. The January issue was opened by nearly 65% of the staff in the County, totaling 465 people. With recent feedback indicating that many library staff don't have a strong understanding of the services MCLS has to offer, this new effort seems like a promising opportunity to raise awareness.

Trustees may choose to subscribe by signing up here [MCLS Staff Newsletter opt-in](#).

SPECIAL INITIATIVES

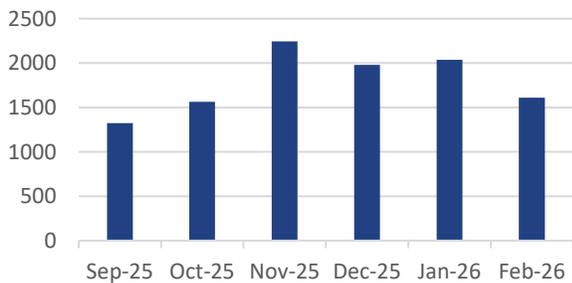
WIRED FOR OPPORTUNITY

PROGRAM STATISTICS

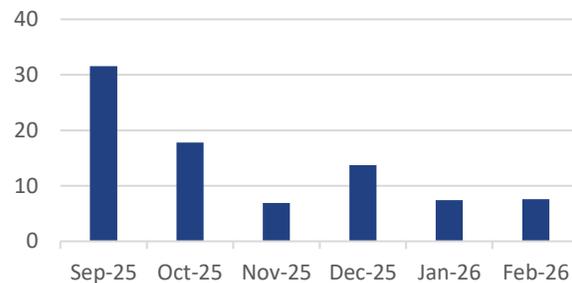
Month	Classes	Attendance	Class Topics	
Jul-2025	25	170	Intro to Computers	Library Resources
Aug-2025	23	146	Applying for Benefits	Intro to Google
Sept-2025	26	175	Computer Catch-Up	Online Job Search
Oct-2025	23	161	Scams and Security	
Nov-2025	35	252		
Dec-2025	21	109		
Jan-2025	27	178		
Feb-2025	35	229		

SOLAR TABLE USAGE

Total Solar Table Connections



Total Solar Table GB Used



INTEGRATED LIBRARY SYSTEM (ILS) RFP

RRLC once again hosted the ILS RFP team at their offices in Henrietta. The team had come prepared having studied the feedback from all sources and surveys and used that information to rank draft requirements, as prepared by Emily Clasper. Over 280 individual requirements were reviewed and prioritized by the team, who engaged in a lively discussion of what features of a system they could or could not possibly live without. The group continues to evaluate staff feedback and may comment on the spreadsheet through mid-March. Those requirements will then be translated into a scoring matrix to use in evaluating vendor responses once the RFP is released later this spring.

STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

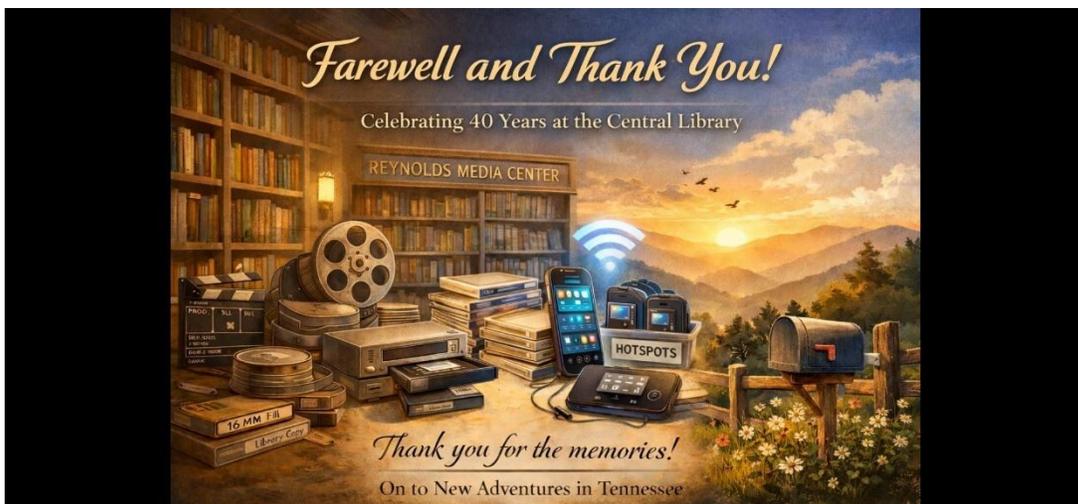
GOING FULL-TIME AT CITY HALL

Congratulations to part-time Mail Clerk, Suede White. He will be leaving the shipping department in March to take on a full-time position for the City Hall mailroom. RPL will miss Suede's affable presence during mail runs between Rundel and BLB. We wish him the best of luck!



SO LONG TO OUR FRIEND, JOE!

RPL said a fond farewell to Reynolds Media Center Supervisor Joe Born upon his retirement at the end of February. Joe will be missed after 40 years of bringing his wisdom and kindness to the patrons and staff Central of the Central Library.



MCLS MEMBER LIBRARY HIGHLIGHTS

EVERYONE HAS A STORY

The Charlotte Branch launched Tell Your Story, a program that invites community members to record personal stories using video equipment, lighting, and guided prompts. Participants leave with a DVD to share with family and friends. Branch Manager Cathy Kyle recently recorded her first session with a patron who initially felt she had "nothing interesting" to share. After a brief conversation to help her feel at ease, the patron opened up about her experiences, resulting in a 40-minute recording that captured a rich and engaging life story. She left excited about the experience and plans to encourage friends to participate. The program offers a meaningful way for community members to preserve memories and connect across generations. This program was funded through Harold Hacker Grant Funds.

MAPLEWOOD ON THE MOVE

As the Maplewood Branch remodel nears completion, the Maplewood team has had the opportunity to learn and grow at other RPL branch locations, including Lincoln, Monroe, Charlotte, Winton, and Wheatley. The team is grateful to the staff at each branch for their warm welcome and support. While working in different locations, Maplewood staff have stayed connected through Teams Chat, sharing updates, celebrating

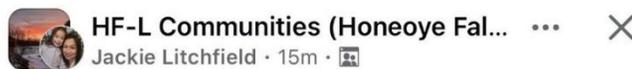
milestones, and shouting out Maplewood patron sightings. Several team members have also participated in training at their host branches, including updated MiFi procedures. The experience has strengthened collaboration and reinforced a simple truth: none of us are as smart as all of us.

LIBRARY SERVICE DELIVERED

MCLS Outreach Coordinator Maren Kyle and Amy Discenza, a librarian in Branch Administration, launched mobile library services this month at Plymouth Gardens, an affordable housing community for adults ages 55+ in southwest Rochester. Kyle and Discenza used RPL GO! to transport materials to set up a pop-up library in the building's meeting room for residents. Services included library card registration, a small circulating collection, holds pickup, and returns. Plymouth Gardens is scheduled to receive ongoing service on the third Wednesday of each month.



HIGH PRAISE FOR A HOMETOWN TREASURE



🌿 A Huge Appreciation Post for Mendon Public Library 🌿

I just have to share how wonderful the Mendon Public Library is. This place is truly a gem in our community — peaceful, beautifully maintained, and filled with so much heart. From the moment you walk in, the ambiance is calm, welcoming, and perfect for reading, studying, or simply taking a quiet break from the day.

The librarians are some of the kindest and most helpful people you'll ever meet. They're always ready to assist, recommend new books, or guide you through all the amazing programs they offer for every age group. And speaking of resources — they have new books, new DVDs, fun activities, and so much to explore every time you visit.

The facility itself is spotless. The cleanest bathrooms, drinking water available, and study rooms (Room A & B) that are perfect for focusing or working in peace. Everything is thoughtfully taken care of.

Parking is easy, and the library is conveniently located right across from Harry Allen Park, making it a perfect stop before or after a walk.

Honestly, this is one of the best libraries I've ever visited — a true treasure for our community.

Thank you, Mendon Public Library, for creating such a beautiful, tranquil, and inspiring space for all of us.



LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S CORNER: EMILY CLASPER

MCLS IN THE NEWS

NEWS 10: [Rochester Mayor's Madden Invitational kicks off on Saturday afternoon](#)



NEWS 10: [Celebrating Take Your Child to the Library Day](#)

WXXI News: [Monroe County Libraries Celebrating Take Your Child to the Library Day](#)

TRUSTEE CALL TO ACTION

[Contact Congressman Morelle](#) to share your opinion of the newly introduced **HR 7661**. This bill would withhold federal funds from any public classroom or school library accused of having “sexually oriented” materials on their shelves. **HR 6440, the “Right to Read Act of 2025”**, on the other hand, would expand access to materials and protect constitutional rights and protections for school libraries.

RECOMMENDED READING

Spectrum News: [How New Yorkers will be impacted after passport processing stopped at all nonprofit libraries](#)

Courthouse News Service: [Blind man who was told to read library sign cleared to fight San Francisco](#)

Governing: [Libraries Are Becoming Telehealth Hubs in Rural New Mexico](#)

Publisher's Weekly: [‘Same Ingredients, Different Recipe’ in Proposed U.S. Book Ban](#)

IMPORTANT DATES

March 24, 6:00–7:30: Robert's Rules and Board Meeting How-Tos (Training) Fairport Public Library [REGISTER](#)

April 2, 6:00–7:30: Robert's Rules and Board Meeting How-Tos (Training) Gates Public Library [REGISTER](#)

April 16, 5:00–6:30: Trustee Handbook Book Club: Hiring and Evaluating the Library Director with Brian Hildreth, [REGISTER](#)

April 19–25: National Library Week

April 24, time TBA: MCLS Legislative Breakfast, Central Library

April 24, 1:00: Screening of *The Librarians*, Central Library

May 21, 5:30–7:00: Director's Choice Book Discussion: *The Correspondent* by Virginia Evans [REGISTER](#)

UPCOMING LIBRARY PROGRAMMING

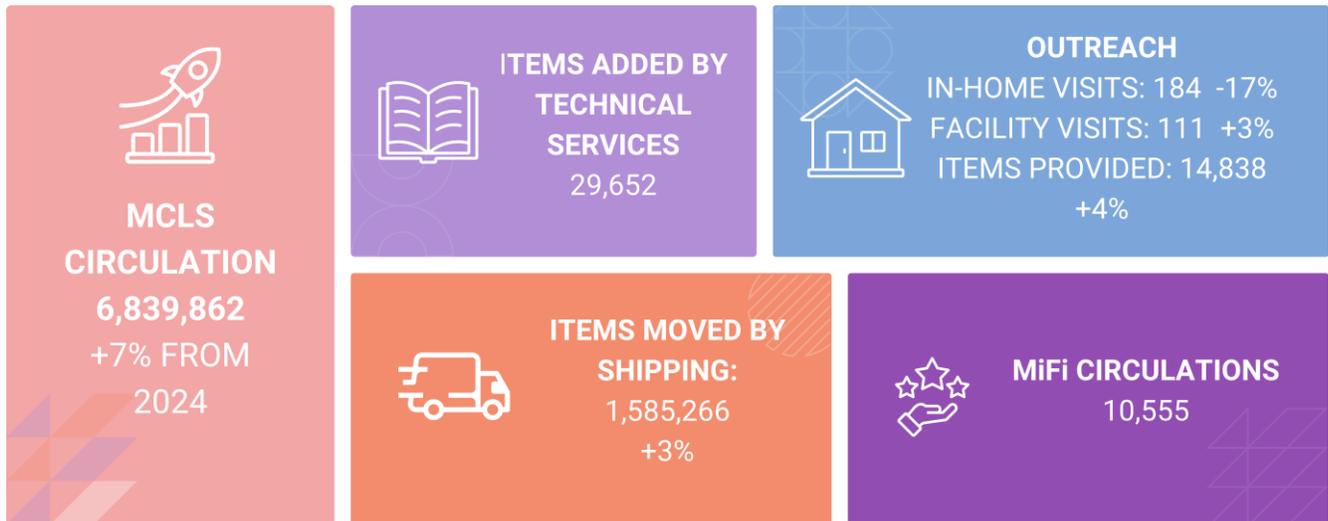
[Find Upcoming Library Programming Here](#)

DIRECTOR'S UPDATES

February may be a short month, but this one was packed full of efforts to plan for the future, strengthen partnerships, and prepare both RPL and MCLS navigate what will likely be a challenging upcoming fiscal year.

One of the biggest areas of work was beginning the development of the Monroe County Library System's next Five-Year Plan of Service. As part of that effort, our team developed and launched a survey for our member libraries to gather feedback on how well MCLS has met the goals of the current plan and to collect ideas and priorities that should shape the next one. Getting this input early will help ensure the new plan reflects the real needs and experiences of our member libraries.

I also participated in the MCLS Directors' Retreat, where I presented a 2025 Year in Review highlighting many of the accomplishments we've seen across the system over the past year, the challenges we've worked through, and the opportunities ahead. The retreat also gave us time to gather additional feedback for the Five-Year Plan and included some media training, which was a helpful opportunity to strengthen how we communicate about the work libraries do and the impact we have on our communities.



Another major focus this month has been budget preparation during a particularly lean fiscal year. Developing a responsible budget under these circumstances requires a fair amount of creativity and careful prioritization. The coming year will likely involve continued problem-solving, some rethinking of how we approach certain services, and finding new ways to maintain strong library service while operating within tighter financial limits. Supporting staff morale while we work through these challenges will also remain an important priority.

I also spent time addressing several ongoing operational issues, including continuing to work through the outstanding questions surrounding the status of the MCLS Staff Association. At the same time, we have been bringing training and informational resources into the system to help staff feel prepared should any ICE-related enforcement activity occur in our library locations.

Advocacy and partnership work also continued throughout the month. I met with a number of community partners, including the Monroe County Youth Bureau, Rochester Museum & Science Center, Literacy Rochester, and the Father Tracy Advocacy Center, to maintain and strengthen collaborations that support the work of our libraries. I also continued my work with the City's Opioid Response Team, contributing the library perspective to ongoing community response efforts.

It wasn't all hard work, though. I did get a chance to have some fun attending the "Mayor's Madden" eSports tournament at the beginning of the month and watch the teens play football against each other and against Mayor Evans. And I even found time to have coffee with former director Patty Uttaro, which was a lovely opportunity to reconnect and reflect on how our libraries continue to grow and evolve, and what a privilege it is to be entrusted with the responsibility of being the Director.



~Emily

MCLS OFFICE ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE: JENNIFER SMATHERS

February's focus was trained on service to our member library directors and ongoing budget meetings. The Director's Council retreat was held February 18, at the Lodge Cobb's Hill Mark. The snowy day kicked off with media training courtesy of Barbara Pierce and Carlet Cleare from the City of Rochester's Communications team. They built off knowledge from previous trainings with a quick Media 101 review. The next section of the workshop led the group through how to select and strengthen media pitches. Successful media stories were told, and specific ways to appeal to media were discussed.

Their segment ended with mock interviews of Lyla Grills and Jennifer Reis-Taggart, who were great sports about being put on the spot. MCLS now has even more camera-ready directors who are primed to promote their libraries. Valuable bonus materials were sent to us from City Communications after the fact, everyone now has a deep list of local media contacts to work with.



Emily followed that up with an MCLS year in review presentation and a speed-dating style brainstorming activity preparing for the next MCLS Plan of Service. It is a pleasure to facilitate this annual event, which gives directors time to step back and feed off their colleagues' thoughts.



Alicia Gunther advocated with the Division of Library Development for the release of state annual report logins and adjustments to due dates. It is expected that we will get logins to the new annual reports, using the Counting Opinions platform, soon.

Many other efforts from the MCLS office have been represented earlier in the report. We are excited that March will be a little bit longer because there is so much still to do for supporting our member libraries, MCLS cardholders, and ultimately all of Monroe County.

~Jennifer

CENTRAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE: SARAH LEHMAN

Budget

February saw the submission of the first annual budget that I have been a part of as a member of the RPL administrative team. This month saw many meetings as the administrative staff worked to develop a comprehensive budget proposal during a challenging budget year. Some of the work is still continuing for Central as we wait for more solid figures from the County, which follows a different budget calendar than the city.

Advocacy Day

Along with Associate Director Jennifer Smathers and Deputy Director BJ Scanlon, I traveled to Albany at the beginning of the month to meet with State Legislators and representatives for the annual Library Advocacy Day. We spoke with representatives on statewide topics such as challenges with Civil Service guidelines, the Governor's proposed budget and upcoming legislation related to libraries.

MCLS Plan of Service

I continued to work with a group of representatives throughout the county on the MCLS Plan of Service. The team has worked together to develop a survey to be sent to all staff throughout the county. Moving forward, I will be working to develop a Five-Year Plan of Service for the Central Library based on feedback received from the survey and work done on the MCLS plan.

MCLS Retreat

I attended an annual, all-day retreat held by the MCLS office for directors across the county. We received wonderful training by Director of Communications for the City of Rochester Barbara Pierce and Assistant Director Carlet Cleare on effective communications with the media. Both presenters offered very useful information on the topic that will be used by all attendees in their roles. Attendees also listened to a very informative presentation from Director Emily Clasper on the state of MCLS, as well as participated in an exercise to help us develop the New York State required Five Year Plan of Service.

~Sarah

MCLS Circulation

Town Libraries				
	Feb-26	Feb-25	+/-	%
Brighton	49,021	48,783	238	0.5%
Seymour	11,676	11,931	(255)	-2.1%
Chili	21,715	20,299	1,416	7.0%
East Rochester	3,680	3,663	17	0.5%
Fairport	54,704	58,392	(3,688)	-6.3%
Gates	18,333	19,793	(1,460)	-7.4%
Greece	50,075	48,191	1,884	3.9%
Hamlin	4,045	4,418	(373)	-8.4%
Henrietta	37,426	37,854	(428)	-1.1%
Irondequoit	36,937	37,666	(729)	-1.9%
Mendon	9,169	9,286	(117)	-1.3%
Newman Riga	1,994	1,905	89	4.7%
Ogden	10,887	11,274	(387)	-3.4%
Parma	7,336	7,651	(315)	-4.1%
Penfield	40,126	39,902	224	0.6%
Pittsford	48,607	47,781	826	1.7%
Rush	2,776	2,607	169	6.5%
Mumford	462	580	(118)	-20.3%
Scottsville	2,551	2,594	(43)	-1.7%
Webster	38,560	38,540	20	0.1%
<i>Towns Subtotal</i>	<i>450,080</i>	<i>453,110</i>	<i>(3,030)</i>	<i>-0.7%</i>
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>76,241</i>	<i>76,253</i>	<i>(12)</i>	<i>0.0%</i>
MCLS Total	526,321	529,363	-3,042	-0.6%