westchester LIBRARY SYSTEM

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Call to Meeting
October 28, 2025

The next Regular Meeting of the Westchester Library System (WLS) is **Tuesday, October 28, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.** PLEASE NOTE: This meeting will take place at the WLS Headquarters, 570 Taxter Rd, Ste 400, Elmsford, NY 10523.

Regular Meeting Agenda

Minutes: September 30, 2025

Finances

Information Items

Information Item #1: **WLS 2026 Operating Budget**

Information Item #2: **Delivery Services RFP**

Action Items

Action Item #1: **Designation of Depositories / Banking Services RFP**

President's Report

WLS Committee Reports

Executive Director's Report

PLDA Report – Erik Carlson, Director, Dobbs Ferry Public Library

NEXT MEETING: The next Regular Meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 25, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

WESTCHESTER LIBRARY SYSTEM
Trustee Meeting
September 30, 2025 – Approval Pending

REGULAR MEETING

The Regular Meeting of the Westchester Library System was called to order by Nishat Hydari at 6:07 p.m. The quorum requirement was met with the following people in attendance:

Board members present: Anthony Amiano, Andrea Bober, Robert Cartolano, Nishat Hydari, Karen Kelley, Maureen LeBlanc, David Mener, Susan Morduch, Diane Tabakman, Barbara Tepper, Karen Zevin

Board Members absent: Wes Iwanski, Alice Joselow, Julie Mills-Worthey, Patricia Phelan

Also present from WLS: Terry Kirchner, Wilson Arana, Rob Caluori, Pat Brigham, Allison Midgley

Public Library Directors Association (PLDA) Representative: Erik Carlson, Director, Dobbs Ferry Public Library

Guests: Jonathan Davis, Mt. Vernon, Bijan Kimiagar, Aequa Solutions, Hudson Trader, Mt. Vernon

MINUTES

The minutes of the June 24, 2025, Board Meeting were approved as submitted on a motion by Mr. Amiano and seconded by Ms. Morduch. The minutes were accepted unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Mr. Caluori presented the financial reports noting significant balances and activity. He spoke to the increase in cash-on-hand due to payments from Westchester County, New York State and the member libraries over the period of June through August. He also reviewed the schedule of Temporarily Restricted Net Assets and end of year projections for revenues and expenses. The Board accepted the financial report for August on a motion by Ms. LeBlanc and seconded by Ms. Bober. The motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Banking Services RFP: The Banking Services RFP was publicly posted to the WLS website on July 14, 2025. Any qualified institution was welcome to submit a proposal. In addition, nine institutions were invited to submit proposals, including WLS's current bank.

The deadline for bidders to submit proposals was September 4, 2025; six proposals were received. Management is currently reviewing the submitted proposals and will be engaged with bidders through October 10 for clarifications and questions.

Management intends to review results of the RFP with the Board Treasurer and bring a recommendation forward on selecting a banking institution as an action item at the October 28, 2025 meeting.

Delivery Services RFP: The Delivery Services RFP was publicly posted to the WLS website on August 26, 2025. Any qualified vendor is welcome to submit a proposal. In addition, two vendors, including the incumbent vendor, were invited to submit proposals.

The deadline for bidders to submit proposals is October 16, 2025. Management will review the submitted proposals and is expected to select a vendor by November 1.

The purchase of these services is included in the current year's approved budget and the following year's proposed budget, therefore separate approval will not be required to move forward with awarding a contract for these services. However, management will keep the Board informed throughout the process in future information items.

ACTION ITEMS

State Aid for Public Library Construction $44 Million Program FY2025-2026: A total of $44 Million was approved for the Public Library Construction Aid Program in the FY2025-2026 State Budget. For Westchester Library System, the allocation of aid available is based on population and totals $2,072,494.

A total of 16 applications were received for this grant cycle, up from 10 applications last year. All the applications were found to meet the criteria established for the Public Library Construction Aid as required by New York State Commissioner's Regulations [Section 90.12], which include more effective library service; more efficient utilization of the library building; improved access to and use of building services; and provision of library services in communities which are geographically isolated or economically disadvantaged. The Public Library Directors Association (PLDA) Public Library Construction Aid Committee reviewed the applications based on the nature of the projects and aid previously received.

The Board approved the State Aid for Public Library Construction on a motion by Ms. Kelley and seconded by Ms. Tepper. The motion was approved unanimously.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Ms. Hydari thanked Dr. Kirchner and Mr. Caluori for the work being done to prepare the proposed budget for FY2026 and reminded the Board that there is one more meeting of the Budget and Finance Committee on October 6, 2025 where the budget will be reviewed in detail before it is presented to the Board at the October 28, 2025 regular meeting.

Board members were reminded that as part of the Executive Director's annual evaluation process, Ms. Hydari will be sending an online link to a survey that each board member is asked to complete.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee: Ms. LeBlanc, Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, reported that the two of three Budget meetings have been held on September 16, 2025 and September 30, 2025 just before this meeting. To date, the committee has reviewed an overview of the budget as well as department level details of the IT, Admin and Delivery department budgets. She noted that there is one more meeting planned for October 6th and encouraged all to attend.

Nominating Committee: Ms. Kelley, Chair of the Nominating Committee, reported that the committee will be scheduling interviews in October with two candidates for the WLS District 13 (Mount Vernon) position that is currently held by Julie Mills-Worthey. Ms. Worthey is completing her second consecutive term which ends on December 31, 2025, and she is not eligible to renew for a third consecutive term due to term limits.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A copy of the Executive Director's Report was mailed in advance of the meeting.

Dr. Kirchner introduced Ms. Midgley and Mr. Kimiagar who presented the work done to date on the development of the SCALE (Strategic Community Analytics for Library Evaluation) data dashboard. They noted that the dashboard underwent testing by WLS and library staff during demonstrations and training sessions in June, July and August. Workshops will continue throughout the fall to widen the user base. They also presented plans for the next phases of the project, which will seek to expand the data and user base in this tool, which focuses on annualized data about WLS, the member libraries and the public served. They noted that plans are also underway to begin development of a new tool which will focus on the monthly transactional and performance data that empower decision making at member libraries and feed into the NYS annual report, which then feeds into the SCALE dashboard.

Dr. Kirchner provided an update on funding at the federal, state and local levels, which is expected to be slightly reduced from the current year's levels. He anticipates that 2026 will be an important planning and preparation year for deeper budget cuts that are expected to occur in 2027.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has ended e-rate reimbursement eligibility for library hotspots as of September 30, 2025. The reimbursement eligibility for library hotspots originated in response to digital access challenges that were exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Dr. Kirchner noted that several member libraries had shared recent accomplishments or ongoing activities. These included the Harrison Public Library receiving their designation as a Certified Sustainable Library; Port Chester-Rye Brook Public Library's director, Robin Lettieri was retiring after 44 years of service; the Friends of the Mount Kisco Public Library raised over $5,000 in their recent book sale; and the Town of Bedford libraries (Bedford Free, Bedford Hills, and Katonah Village) are actively preparing for their first 414 public budget vote that will take place on November 4, 2025.

PLDA LIASON'S REPORT

Mr. Carlson announced that he would not be the representative next year as the PLDA Nominating Committee is actively recruiting nominations for next year's executive committee.

ADJOURNMENT

Having completed its agenda, the Board adjourned its meeting at 7:23 p.m. on a motion by Ms. Tepper and seconded by Ms. Bober that passed unanimously.

Respectively submitted,

Diane H. Tabakman
Secretary

WESTCHESTER LIBRARY SYSTEM
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS WITH NOTES – SEPTEMBER 2025

REPORT NOTES

All of the figures in the accompanying notes are approximate to the nearest $100 or 1% when practical. The figures in the financial statements are rounded to the nearest dollar and percentages are presented to two decimal places.

This month's report includes the following financial statements:

- Balance Sheet
- Statement of Revenues and Expenditures with Comparison to Budget
- Statement of Revenues and Expenditures with year-end projections

INCOME STATEMENT WITH PROJECTIONS

An Income Statement with Projections is included with the financial reports. This report currently projects that the year will end with expenses before depreciation outpacing revenues by $488,600, but $78,800 less than budgeted. This is a positive variance from the original budget which called for a $567,400 deficit. However, this projection based on activity through September and will likely fluctuate as the year continues to progress.

PAYMENTS OVER $50,000

The WLS Purchasing Policy (Policy #13) requires that purchases exceeding $50,000 without prior budget approval be formally reported to the Board at the next regularly scheduled meeting. To meet and exceed the policy directive, all payments over $50,000 in September 2025 are listed below:

- Amount: $75,728
    - Vendor: NYS Employees Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP)
    - Purpose: Employee health insurance for October 2025
- Amount: $69,768
    - Vendor: Midwest Tape (Hoopla)
    - Purpose: August 2025 Patron Pay-Per-Use Digital Content

BALANCE SHEET – SEPTEMBER 2025

The Balance Sheet shows comparative figures for the period from month-ending (ME) August 2025 through ME September 2025. The key changes include a decrease in cash, which partially offset decreases in *Deferred Revenue,* resulting in a 1% decrease in *Net Assets*. Details are discussed below.

ASSETS:

This section indicates the organization's liquidity by showing what assets WLS holds in cash and other assets. The net result for the period is an overall decrease in assets driven primarily by anticipated reductions in cash.

Operating Cash & Cash Equivalents (This shows the cash in WLS's operating and payroll bank accounts and petty cash): WLS's operating cash decreased by $370,335. With $145,800 in receipts, activity included $113,700 from member libraries for IT services and group purchases and $5,000 from the United Way for a grant to support 2026 Disconnect2Reconnect activities. Notable expenditures aside from rent, payroll and benefits, Internet, and delivery to libraries included $69,800 to Hoopla for pay-per-use materials for patrons for August.

Reserve Cash & Cash Equivalents (This shows the cash in WLS's reserve accounts and short-term investment holdings): This line increased by $9,100, the result of earnings on reserve funds held with NYCLASS, TD Bank, and earnings on US Treasury investments.

Unconditional Promises (These are promises to give money to WLS such as governmental aid): This line increased by $111,900, the result of recording receivable revenues from Westchester County.

LIABILITIES:

This section shows WLS's near-term obligations. The net result for the period is an overall reduction in liabilities, primarily driven by the recognition of *Deferred Revenue*. Details are discussed below:

Deferred Revenue (Funds received which have not yet been earned): This figure decreased by $466,200, the result of recognizing $228,500 in revenues from 6-month and 3-month invoices to member libraries for IT services and group purchases, $201,800 in revenues from NYS, and $18,500 in revenues from the Federal e-Rate program against the deferral of $22,600 in revenues from the LIU Palmer School Program.

STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES
COMPARISON TO BUDGET WITH PREVIOUS YEARS TO DATE – SEPT. 2025

Revenues were $12,600 less than expenses before depreciation for September which represents a $34,700 positive variance from the budget, which had called for a $47,300 deficit.

REVENUES:

Total revenue for September was essentially in line with budget and was driven primarily by deficits in *County Revenues with Restrictions* and *Other Revenues with Restrictions being offset by* surpluses in *Federal Revenues without Restrictions* and *Interest*, which is discussed in detail below.

State Revenues without Restrictions and *State Revenues with Restrictions* – These lines have a slight surplus against the budget. The final NYS aid figures came in 0.6% more than budgeted. Revenue had been recognized in-line with the budget through July. With the final figures known, the additional revenue ($16,500) is being recognized from August through December.

Federal Revenues without Restrictions – This line was $6,800 higher than budget. The revenue in this line is recognized in-line with budget until the final figure is known. The reimbursement through the e-Rate program came in $34,100 higher than anticipated and is being recognized from August through December.

Interest revenues exceeded budget for the month. While this is expected due to conservative budgeting, interest was also greater than anticipated due to depositing funds in NYLAF (New York State Liquid Asset Fund), which gives WLS access to higher interest rates.

Other Revenues with Restrictions ended the month $11,300 short of the budget. This was due to (1) a shortfall in restricted contributions where the line fell short of its grants and fundraising goal and (2) no activity for the LIU Palmer School program, which does not operate in the summer months. Other activity in this line includes revenue from New Rochelle BTOP (Broadband Technology Opportunity Program).

EXPENSES:

Expenses before depreciation came in under budget by $34,800 but were $12,600 more than revenue for the month. Lines with significant variances and/or noteworthy activity are discussed below:

Library Materials expenses were more than the budget by $18,600, driven by greater-than-anticipated patron activity in pay-per-use materials from Hoopla and Kanopy. A majority of the overage in this area is related to Hoopla activity, which continues to increase. The line is also $156,600 over budget for the YTD. WLS has identified ways to curb these expenses and will be implementing them incrementally as the year-end approaches to allow member libraries to adjust to the changes to the program. The line is currently projected to carry a $216,300 deficit at the year-end, but this figure will likely improve as the changes to the program are implemented in November and December.

Equipment – This line was $19,200 over budget for the month and $121,900 for the YTD. The deficit in this line is driven by the computer replacement project. The computers for the project were purchased in 2024 and recorded in computer inventory. These units are being installed during 2025 and the related expenses are being recognized monthly. The computer inventory, typically conducted annually, is currently performed monthly during the replacement phase to provide the Board with greater visibility into the project's financial impact. The line is projected to carry a $139,200 deficit at the year-end which was anticipated as a result of the PC replacement project.

Professional Fees – While this line carried a $3,400 surplus for the month, the line is projected to end the year over budget by $3,800 due to unanticipated legal expenses. WLS was wrongly named in an Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) claim. WLS was required to engage its insurance company and their council to resolve the issue at a cost of $5,000.

Salaries – This line is currently projected to end the year with a surplus of $91,000. The primary driver of this surplus was a position that was vacated after the 2025 budget was finalized and was not filled. The responsibilities of this position were partially filled with a new part-time employee and assignment of tasks to existing employees.

Fringe Benefits – This line is projected to end the year with a surplus of $122,600. There are two primary drivers of this surplus: (1) Health insurance premiums were anticipated to increase by 15%, but had minimal increases and, (2) the NYS pension system costs were lower due to rates being lower than anticipated.

Supplies – This line is projected to end the year with a surplus of $23,900. This was primarily the result of conservative spending by staff in multiple departments.

Westchester Library System
Balance Sheet
As of September 30, 2025

	Month Ending 09/30/2025	Month Ending 08/31/2025	Month Ending 09/30/2025		Year Ending 12/31/2024
	Actual	Actual	Period difference	Period variance	Actual
Assets					
Current Assets					
Operating Cash & Cash Equivalents	2,876,475	3,246,809	(370,335)	(11.40) %	1,885,918
Reserve Cash & Cash Equivalents	3,048,283	3,039,214	9,070	0.29 %	2,968,992
Unconditional Promises to Give	335,781	223,854	111,927	49.99 %	365,676
Accounts Receivable	120,960	189,529	(68,569)	(36.17) %	98,558
Prepaid Expenses	738,174	857,327	(119,153)	(13.89) %	728,543
Total Current Assets	7,119,673	7,556,733	(437,060)	(5.78) %	6,047,687
Long-Term Assets					
Property & Equipment	247,506	287,006	(39,501)	(13.76) %	574,690
Right Of Use Asset	677,961	677,962	0	0.00 %	677,961
Total Long-Term Assets	925,467	964,968	(39,501)	(4.09) %	1,252,651
Total Assets	8,045,140	8,521,701	(476,561)	(5.59) %	7,300,338
Liabilities					
Short-Term Liabilities					
Accounts Payable	568,307	558,210	10,098	1.80 %	826,258
Deferred Revenue	1,444,950	1,911,100	(466,152)	(24.39) %	584
Short-Term Right of Use	309,841	309,841	0	0.00 %	309,841
Total Short-Term Liabilities	2,323,098	2,779,151	(456,054)	(16.40) %	1,136,683
Long-Term Liabilities					
Long-Term Right of Use	506,113	506,113	0	0.00 %	506,113
Post-Retirement Benefits Payable	3,563,008	3,563,008	0	0.00 %	3,563,008
Total-Long-Term Liabilities	4,069,121	4,069,121	0	0.00 %	4,069,121
Total Liabilities	6,392,219	6,848,272	(456,054)	(6.65) %	5,205,804
Net Assets					
Net Assets, Beg Bal	1,673,428	1,707,475	(34,046)	(1.99) %	1,809,705
Change in Net Assets	(20,507)	(34,046)	13,539	39.76 %	284,829
Total Net Assets	1,652,921	1,673,429	(20,507)	(1.22) %	2,094,534
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	8,045,140	8,521,701	(476,561)	(5.59) %	7,300,338

Net Asset Detail					
Working Capital	4,796,575	4,777,582	18,994	0.39 %	4,911,004
Long-Term Net Assets	(3,143,653)	(3,104,154)	(39,501)	(1.27) %	(2,816,469)
Total Net Asset Detail	1,652,922	1,673,428	(20,507)	(1.22) %	2,094,535

Westchester Library System
Statement of Revenues and Expenditures
Comparison to Budget with Previous Years To Date
As of September 30, 2025

	Month Ending 09/30/2025			Year To Date 09/30/2023	Year To Date 09/30/2024	Year To Date 09/30/2025			Year Ending 12/31/2025
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Actual	Actual	Budget	Variance	Total Budget
Revenue									
State Revenues without Restrictions	187,186	185,507	1,679	1,573,816	1,616,282	1,672,917	1,669,567	3,350	2,226,090
County Revenues without Restrictions	111,927	114,164	(2,237)	974,915	1,007,280	1,007,344	1,027,470	(20,126)	1,369,960
Federal Revenues without Restrictions	18,495	11,666	6,828	115,293	107,472	118,652	105,000	13,651	140,000
Member Technology Fees	224,016	232,084	(8,067)	2,006,640	2,022,312	2,062,696	2,088,750	(26,054)	2,785,000
Fund Raising & Contributions	68	0	68	249	965	3,618	0	3,619	0
Interest	9,791	5,416	4,374	89,153	114,092	102,976	48,750	54,226	65,000
Other Revenues without Restrictions	2,146	1,375	771	2,261	24,707	18,183	12,375	5,808	16,500
State Revenues with Restrictions	54,559	52,930	1,631	453,465	465,357	479,629	476,363	3,267	635,150
Other Revenues with Restrictions	7,725	12,816	(5,092)	51,417	30,976	61,005	115,350	(54,346)	153,800
Total Revenue	615,913	615,958	(45)	5,267,209	5,389,443	5,527,020	5,543,625	(16,605)	7,391,500
Expenditures									
Salaries	196,236	202,741	6,505	1,612,149	1,665,619	1,755,167	1,824,675	69,508	2,432,900
Fringe Benefits	85,601	120,884	35,283	876,936	986,125	967,659	1,087,950	120,292	1,450,600
Professional Fees	937	4,333	3,396	15,566	35,525	20,889	39,001	18,110	52,000
Equipment	32,544	13,333	(19,211)	99,136	42,222	241,909	120,000	(121,908)	160,000
Library Materials	113,423	94,775	(18,648)	631,552	823,075	1,009,539	852,975	(156,565)	1,137,300
Rent and Utilities	32,609	34,825	2,217	296,851	282,710	290,929	313,425	22,496	417,900
Repairs and Maintenance	46,090	51,725	5,634	482,166	492,090	447,230	465,525	18,296	620,700
Supplies	540	3,334	2,794	3,636	9,905	9,626	29,999	20,373	40,000
Telephone and Internet	31,573	37,966	6,393	362,174	336,143	313,394	341,701	28,307	455,600
Printing and Postage	3,264	5,434	2,169	41,088	35,445	34,696	48,900	14,204	65,200
Bibliographic Fees	7,455	7,658	204	64,342	66,213	68,659	68,925	266	91,900
Professional Development	20,117	9,467	(10,650)	29,547	53,088	60,340	85,199	24,860	113,600
Travel	(42)	5,483	5,525	37,515	32,251	28,166	49,350	21,183	65,800
Memberships	1,668	2,333	666	16,398	12,675	15,977	21,000	5,024	28,000
Contractual Services	13,111	22,367	9,255	286,241	173,599	194,178	201,300	7,121	268,400
Delivery Service	38,695	40,417	1,722	334,672	344,834	357,883	363,750	5,867	485,000
Insurance	3,307	3,333	26	24,762	25,735	28,212	30,000	1,788	40,000
Miscellaneous	1,336	2,833	1,497	4,948	10,808	12,337	25,500	13,164	34,000
Total Expenditures	628,464	663,241	34,777	5,219,679	5,428,062	5,856,790	5,969,175	112,386	7,958,900
Total Net Revenue Before Depreciation	(12,551)	(47,283)	34,732	47,530	(38,619)	(329,770)	(425,550)	95,781	(567,400)
Non-Cash Activity									
Depreciation	12,187	12,084	(103)	131,415	122,503	110,533	108,750	(1,784)	145,000
Unrealized Gain/Loss on Investments	(4,231)	0	4,231	(4,168)	(1,281)	1,310	0	(1,310)	0
Total Non-Cash Activity	7,956	12,084	4,128	127,247	121,222	111,843	108,750	(3,094)	145,000
Total Net Revenue	**(20,507)**	**(59,367)**	**38,860**	**(79,717)**	**(159,841)**	**(441,613)**	**(534,300)**	**92,687**	**(712,400)**

Generated: 10/21/2025

Westchester Library System
Statement of Revenues and Expenditures with Projections
As of September 30, 2025

Revenues	Year Ending 12/31/2025 Budget	YTD Through 09/30/2025 Actual	Current Year Projected Oct.-Dec.	Current Year Total Projected	Current Year Proj vs. Budget
State Revenues without Restrictions	2,226,090	1,672,917	561,559	2,234,476	8,386
County Revenues without Restrictions	1,369,960	1,007,344	335,785	1,343,129	(26,831)
Federal Revenues without Restrictions	140,000	118,651	55,484	174,135	34,135
Member Technology Fees	2,785,000	2,062,696	683,519	2,746,215	(38,785)
Fund Raising & Contributions	-	3,618	382	4,000	4,000
Interest	65,000	102,976	37,663	140,639	75,639
Other Revenues without Restrictions	16,500	18,183	(638)	17,545	1,045
State Revenues with Restrictions	635,150	479,629	163,679	643,308	8,158
Other Revenues with Restrictions	153,800	61,005	29,295	90,300	(63,500)
Total Revenues	**7,391,500**	**5,527,020**	**1,866,727**	**7,393,747**	**2,247**
Expenses					
Salaries	2,432,900	1,755,167	586,733	2,341,900	91,000
Fringe Benefits	1,450,600	967,659	360,387	1,328,046	122,554
Professional Fees	52,000	20,890	34,947	55,837	(3,837)
Equipment	160,000	241,909	57,241	299,150	(139,150)
Library Materials	1,137,300	1,009,539	344,002	1,353,541	(216,241)
Rent and Utilities	417,900	290,929	107,999	398,928	18,972
Repairs and Maintenance	620,700	447,230	168,434	615,664	5,036
Supplies	40,000	9,626	6,501	16,127	23,873
Telephone and Internet	455,600	313,394	106,421	419,815	35,785
Printing and Postage	65,200	34,696	12,304	47,000	18,200
Bibliographic Fees	91,900	68,659	22,963	91,623	278
Professional Development	113,600	60,340	27,193	87,533	26,067
Travel	65,800	28,167	10,241	38,408	27,392
Memberships	28,000	15,976	6,075	22,051	5,949
Contractual Services	268,400	194,179	41,838	236,017	32,383
Delivery Service	485,000	357,883	119,817	477,700	7,300
Insurance	40,000	28,212	8,118	36,330	3,670
Miscellaneous	34,000	12,336	4,376	16,712	17,288
Total Expenses	**7,958,900**	**5,856,790**	**2,025,592**	**7,882,382**	**76,518**
Net Revenue Before Depreciation	**(567,400)**	**(329,770)**	**(158,865)**	**(488,635)**	**78,765**
Non-Cash Activity					
Depreciation	145,000	110,533	37,171	147,705	(2,705)
Post-Retirement Benefits (Gain)/Loss	-	-	-	-	-
Unrealized Investments (Gain)/Loss	-	1,310	-	-	-
Total Non-Cash Activity	**145,000**	**111,843**	**37,171**	**147,705**	**(2,705)**
Total Net Revenue	**(712,400)**	**(441,613)**	**(196,037)**	**(636,340)**	**76,060**

Item: **WLS 2026 Operating Budget**

Background: The Budget Committee of the Board of Trustees met four times through September and October to review a number of options in order to arrive at a budget proposal for the 2026 fiscal year. Each of the committee's meetings focused on the following:

- September 16
  - Budget process and overview
  - Employee compensation
  - Information Technology department
- September 30
  - Administration department
  - Consolidation of Fund Raising department into Administration
  - Delivery department
  - Scenario planning
  - Cash flow analysis
- October 6
  - Outreach department
  - Cataloging department
  - Career Coaching Services department
- October 28
  - Review of final revision to the budget

Status: Attached is the Executive Summary for the proposed FY 2026 operating budget along with detail spreadsheets and back-up information.

In addition to the work of the Committee input was also sought from the WLS managers and staff.

The budget will be presented at this meeting as an information item for discussion and will be brought to the WLS Board for approval at their next regular meeting.

October 28, 2025

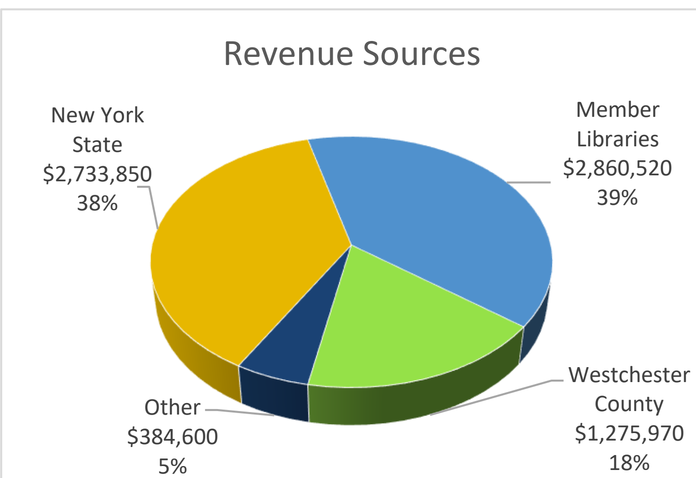
Westchester Library System
2026 Proposed Operating Budget

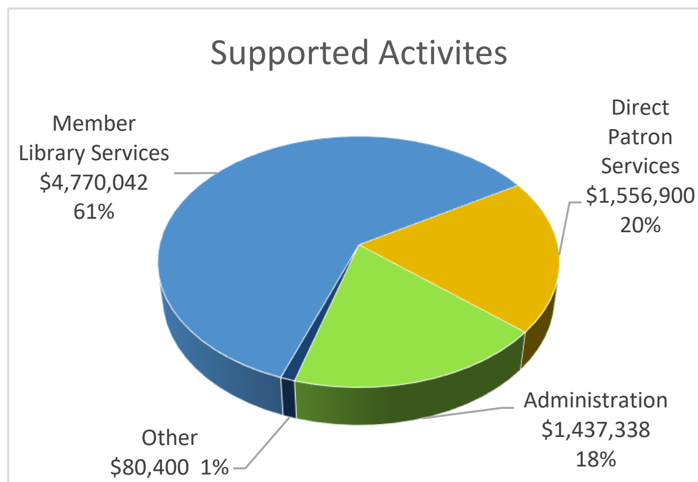
Executive Summary

This budget has been developed to support the Westchester Library System (WLS) mission to empower lives and communities by connecting people in Westchester County with the resources, services and programs available through WLS and the member libraries. The proposed 2025 budget is based on the following significant assumptions:

- 5% decrease in funding from New York State and Westchester County over 2025 actual aid,
- 4% increase in Technology fees over 2025 budget
- 3.5% increase in staff salaries versus 2025 budget
- 45% decrease in spending on e-content in *Library Materials* versus 2025 projected spending
- 1 FTE reduction in staff headcount vs 2025 budget

The charts below provide an overview of the breakdown of WLS' revenue sources and the activities they support.





The budget was designed to help WLS achieve its Strategic Goals:

- Promote equity and access
- Expand community / member library / partner engagement
- Update and improve infrastructure

It allows for the continuation of current programs and services whose focus is to support WLS Strategic Goals through community engagement and outreach by alignment with member libraries, governmental agencies, service organizations, community members and Westchester County.

Specific WLS priorities supported by this budget include the following:

- ✓ Engagement with unserved and underserved populations including youth, seniors, and low-literacy adults and justice-impacted individuals.
- ✓ Assisting incarcerated persons residing in New York State and Westchester County in accessing library services.
- ✓ Promoting discovery, access and resource sharing through Cataloging, Interlibrary Loan and Delivery.
- ✓ Providing Career Coaching Services for unemployed and underemployed adults.
- ✓ Engaging in advocacy for and outreach to new entrepreneurs and small business startups.
- ✓ Providing and supporting technology infrastructure that maintains and improves member library technology services.
- ✓ Embracing data from the NYS annual report, monthly usage statistics and other local and regional census data as key drivers of strategic decision making.

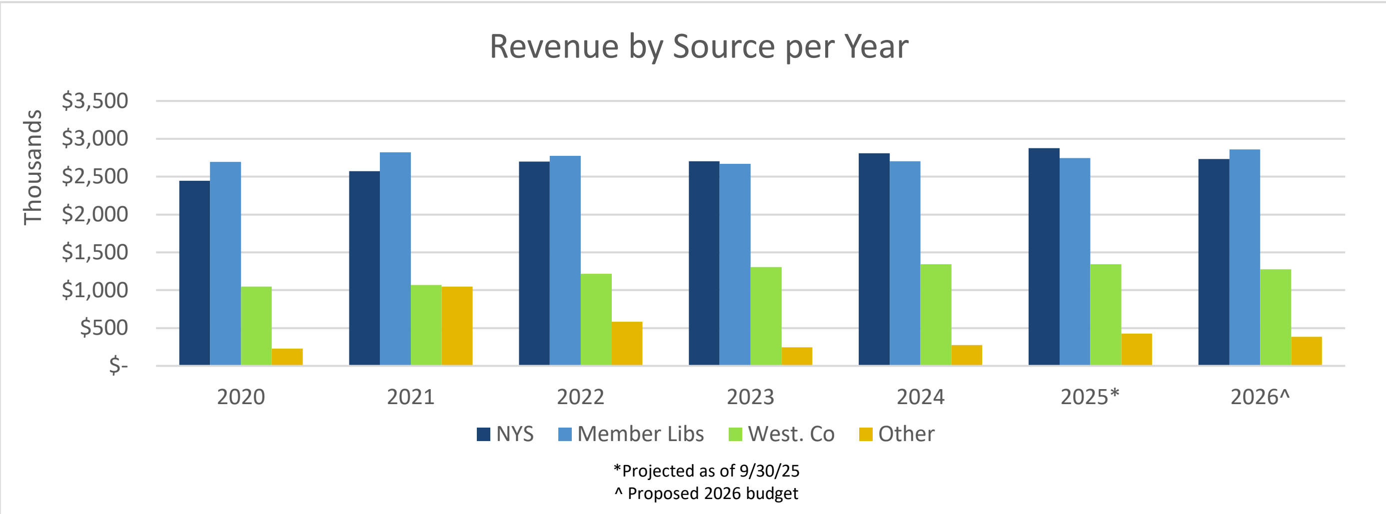
The budget was developed and presented to the Budget Committee over the course of three meetings, each with a deeper focus on department-level data. The committee examined the previous year's actual figures, the current year's budget and projected figures, and the 2026 proposed budget at the department level and aggregate levels. Considerations were made to the purpose of programs as they pertained to administration, services to member libraries, and direct services to the public.

The budget documents include: (1) a top-level summary outlining 2024 actual figures, 2025 adopted budget and projected figures and the 2026 proposed budget; (2) department-level budget details for 2026; (3) line-by-line budget notes; and (4) an analysis of changes to staff allocations by department.

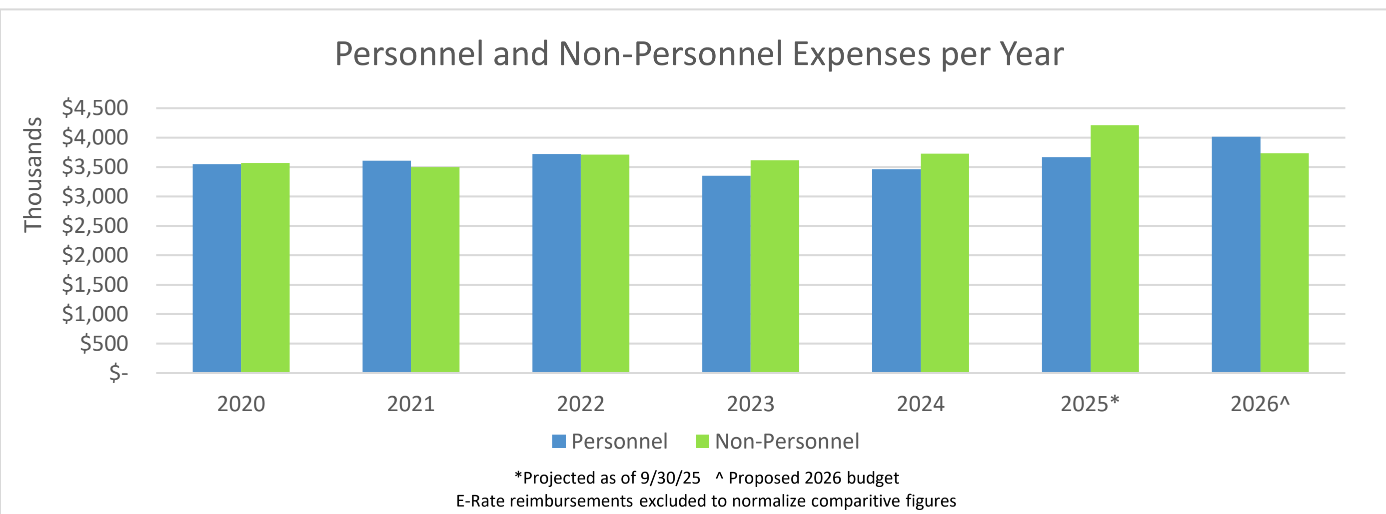
Included in this summary are the key points of and significant changes to the budget.

2026 Budget Highlights

Revenue Highlights



- ✓ Budgeted revenues are projected to total $7.25 million from all sources, $145,600 (1.9%) less than the 2025 budget and $147,800 (1.9%) less than the 2025 projected total.
- ✓ Allocations from Westchester County and New York State are projected to decrease by 5% over 2025.
- ✓ Member Library fees are projected to be 2.7% above 2025 budget (4.2% over 2025 projected figures).
  - ILS fees increased by 5%, computer support increased by $100 per device
- ✓ eRate funding is projected to increase by 14%.

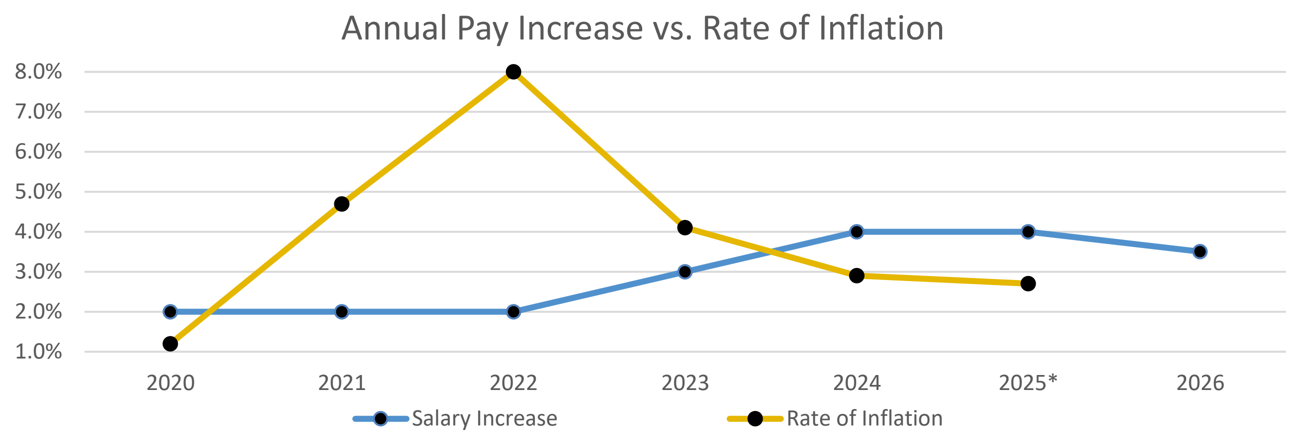


Expense Highlights

- ✓ Total expenses are budgeted to decrease in 2026 to $7.74 million, as compared to $7.96 million in the 2025 budget.
- ✓ Payroll costs are projected to remain essentially flat at $2.4 million with reduction in FTE offsetting salary raises and an increase in benefits costs.

2026 Budget Highlights (continued)

- ✓ Reduction in FTE was due to a position included in the 2025 that was vacated before the start of the year. Responsibilities were distributed among existing staff rather than filling the position.
- ✓ The annual wage increase is budgeted at 3.5% for all staff, except those that received mid-year salary adjustments to meet changes in roles and responsibilities.
  - This follows increases of 4% (2025), 4% (2024), 3% (2023), 2% (2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022)
  - The chart below shows salary increases versus the rate of inflation over the last several years:



*2025 is an estimate based on change in CPI from 4Q2023 to 4Q2024.
Source: Fed. Reserve Bank of Minn.

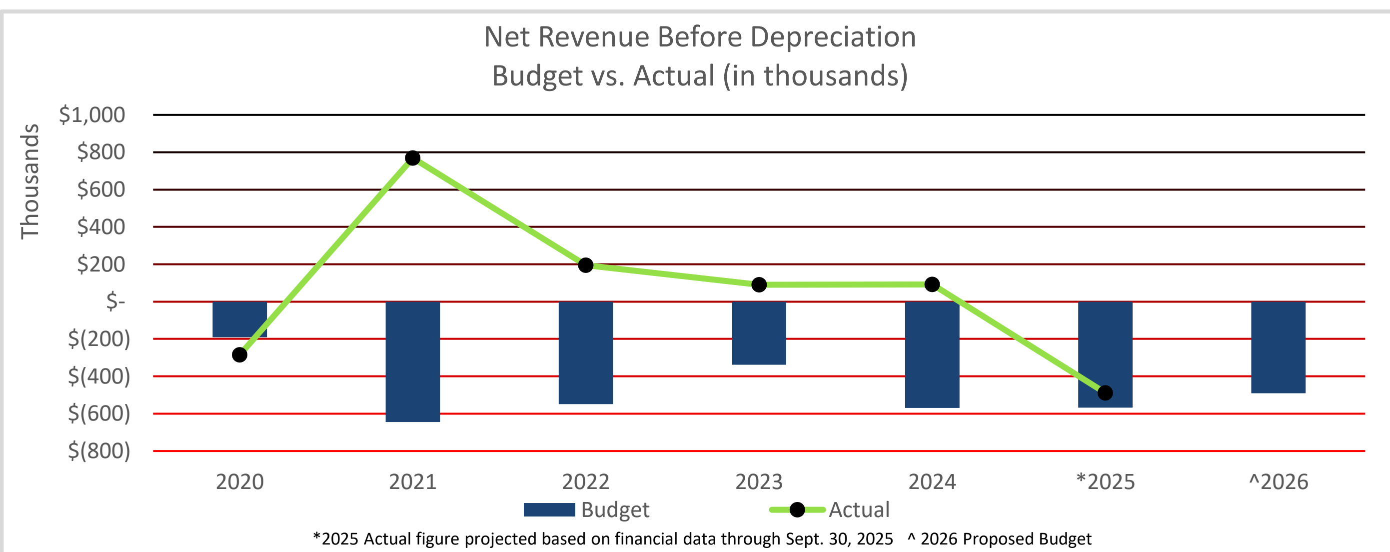
- ✓ Employee benefits are budgeted to rise by 9.1% to $1.5 million.
  - Health insurance is projected to increase by 15%, with employees continuing to contribute 15% to individual health insurance plans and 20% to family plans.
  - Pension costs are estimated to be approximately 15.7% of 2026 salary and hourly pay.
- ✓ Library Materials are budgeted to decrease by 34.5% or $392,800 below the 2025 budget to $744,500 and, 45% or .$609,000 below the projection for 2025.
  - Management is addressing the current year projected overage by reducing the number of monthly checkouts allowed per patron which has caused the increased cost of patron activity on pay-per-use services.
  - Legacy services from Overdrive, Hoopla, Kanopy, Proquest, LinkedIn Learning, ComicsPlus, University of Fashion, Medici, Tumblebooks and Tutor.com will also continue.
  - To continue to address spending in this line, 2026 will be the last year of services added in 2024 as follows:
    - The Shelf – A cost-effective solution to provide interactive and popular Spanish-language content that originates from South America, Mexico and Spain.
    - Mango languages – Driven by member library requests from the PLDA eContent Committee; this service provides language learning programs in more than 70 languages, including English as a second language.
  - These digital content subscriptions and purchases support WLS strategic goal to hold equity and access as core values and advance those values within WLS.

2026 Budget Highlights (*continued*)

- ✓ Repairs and Maintenance is budgeted to increase by $15,100 from the 2025 budget to $635,800.
  - These expenses support WLS strategic goal to continuously update and improve the WLS operational and technological infrastructure.
- ✓ Delivery Service expenses are budgeted to increase $10,500 to $495,500.
- ✓ Telephone and internet expenses are budgeted to decline by $6,700 due to savings achieved on cellular telephone services.
- ✓ Continued work to support workforce development for new entrepreneurs and small business startups
  - Expenses for these activities are included in Personnel, *Printing and Postage*, and *Library Materials* lines
- ✓ Addition of Blue Careers database
  - Provides in-depth information on more than 100 skilled trades, connects individuals with hundreds of trade schools and training to build trade knowledge and experience.

Net Revenue:

- ✓ In 2026, expenses before depreciation are budgeted to exceed revenues by $490,140 (compared to $567,400 budgeted for 2025).
- ✓ Restricted assets (grants) earned in prior years will be spent in 2026.
- ✓ The Budget Committee recommends that WLS appropriate unrestricted assets to cover the remaining budget deficit. (WLS currently holds over $3.05 million in Reserve Cash and Cash Equivalents.)
- ✓ Depreciation is projected at $99,600 and is included in the Operating budget.
- ✓ The chart below shows WLS budgeted net revenue versus actual net revenue for the last six years.



Banking Services

WLS is currently engaged in a Request for Proposal (RFP) process for Banking Services While past practice is to approve Designation of Depositories as part of the budget process, this will instead be addressed in separate Information and Action Items for 2026.

While the RFP process may change the institution used for day-to-day banking services, management will recommend continued use of TD Wealth and the New York Cooperative Liquid Assets Securities System (NYCLASS) serviced through PMA for the purpose of Designation of Depositories, per WLS Policy #12 – Investment of Funds. NYCLASS will be used to hold a portion reserve and operating funds to maximize interest earning potential.

About Supported Activities Charts

The Supported Activities chart on page one identifies expenses as a function of either Member Library Services, Direct Patron Service, Administration, or Other.

Member Library Services are the services that directly impact the member libraries. This includes information technology, cataloging, interlibrary loan, training, support for NYS annual reports and construction and, fundraising and grant writing support, movie licensing coordination and group purchasing of electronic content for patrons with monies from member libraries.

Direct patron services are services where WLS directly serves library patrons, potential patrons and works to drive new library users to the member libraries. This encompasses all outreach services to unserved and underserved populations including, but not limited to seniors, youth, low-literacy populations, justice impacted individuals, and those seeking high-school equivalency (HSE) certification. It also includes career coaching services, and electronic content purchased with funds other than from member libraries such as grants, Central Library, and other NYS funds.

Conclusion

In 2026, WLS will continue to work to maximize investment and resource allocation to support both its ongoing operations and strategic initiatives. At the same time, WLS will support the needs of the libraries, people and businesses in Westchester by providing services that support the member libraries' efforts to engage with their communities and provide inclusive services and programs for all residents.

Spending will be monitored against the budget on an ongoing basis both through regular reports to the Board and in-depth discussions with the WLS Budget & Finance Committee. Management will continue to explore cost savings opportunities and additional sources of revenue throughout the year.

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Budget Summary

Line	Revenues	2024 Actual	2025 Projected	2025 Adopted	2026 Proposed
R1	State Revenues without Restrictions	2,182,531	2,234,476	2,226,090	2,122,760
R2	County Revenues without Restrictions	1,343,125	1,343,129	1,369,960	1,275,970
R3	Federal Revenues without Restrictions	-	174,135	140,000	160,000
R4	Member Technology Fees	2,702,196	2,746,215	2,785,000	2,860,520
R5	Fund Raising & Contributions	1,946	4,000	-	1,600
R6	Interest	161,727	140,639	65,000	67,500
R7	Other Revenues without Restrictions	36,204	17,545	16,500	71,000
R8	State Revenues with Restrictions	628,351	643,308	635,150	611,090
R9	Other Revenues with Restrictions	72,807	90,300	153,800	84,500
	Total Revenues	**7,128,887**	**7,393,747**	**7,391,500**	**7,254,940**
	Expenses				
E1	Salaries	2,247,703	2,341,900	2,432,900	2,430,711
E2	Fringe Benefits	1,219,080	1,328,046	1,450,600	1,583,219
E3	Professional Fees	46,245	55,837	52,000	55,800
E4	Equipment	76,485	299,150	160,000	102,600
E5	Library Materials	1,089,595	1,353,541	1,137,300	744,500
E6	Rent and Utilities	334,537	398,928	417,900	422,200
E7	Repairs and Maintenance	666,736	615,664	620,700	635,800
E8	Supplies	14,304	16,127	40,000	31,000
E9	Telephone and Internet	301,461	419,815	455,600	448,900
E10	Printing and Postage	56,336	47,000	65,200	50,800
E11	Bibliographic Fees	88,193	91,623	91,900	98,300
E12	Professional Development	58,287	87,533	113,600	96,450
E13	Travel	37,058	38,408	65,800	73,000
E14	Memberships	25,492	22,051	28,000	29,000
E15	Contractual Services	265,054	236,017	268,400	318,300
E16	Delivery Service	459,264	477,700	485,000	495,500
E17	Insurance	35,521	36,330	40,000	41,000
E18	Miscellaneous	14,718	16,712	34,000	34,000
	Total Expenses	**7,036,068**	**7,882,382**	**7,958,900**	**7,745,080**
	Net Revenue Before Depreciation	**92,819**	**(488,635)**	**(567,400)**	**(490,140)**
	Non-Cash Activity				
N1	Depreciation	159,941	147,705	145,000	99,600
N2	Post-Retirement Benefits (Gain) / Loss	(351,987)	-	-	-
N3	Unrealized Investments (Gain) / Loss	35	-	-	-
	Total Non-Cash Activity	**(192,010)**	**147,705**	**145,000**	**99,600**
	Total Net Revenue	**284,830**	**(636,340)**	**(712,400)**	**(589,740)**
	Release from Reserves				589,740

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Department Detail Budget

Line		Admin	Delivery	Cataloging	CCS	Outreach	IT	Total
	Revenues							
R1	State Revenues without Restrictions	1,458,340	223,440	265,080	-	175,900	-	**2,122,760**
R2	County Revenues without Restrictions	-	331,000	206,000	403,900	335,070	-	**1,275,970**
R3	Federal Revenues without Restrictions	-	-	-	-	-	160,000	**160,000**
R4	Member Technology Fees	300,000	-	-	-	-	2,560,520	**2,860,520**
R5	Fund Raising & Contributions	1,600	-	-	-	-	-	**1,600**
R6	Interest	60,000	-	-	-	-	7,500	**67,500**
R7	Other Revenues without Restrictions	4,500	-	-	-	66,500	-	**71,000**
R8	State Revenues with Restrictions	332,900	-	-	-	245,190	33,000	**611,090**
R9	Other Revenues with Restrictions	81,000	-	-	-	3,500	-	**84,500**
	Total Revenues	**2,238,340**	**554,440**	**471,080**	**403,900**	**826,160**	**2,761,020**	**7,254,940**
	Expenses							
E1	Salaries	732,100	35,920	270,040	221,100	348,042	823,509	**2,430,711**
E2	Fringe Benefits	746,320	16,119	122,240	60,176	162,461	475,903	**1,583,219**
E3	Professional Fees	40,300	-	-	-	500	15,000	**55,800**
E4	Equipment	12,100	-	2,000	-	7,500	81,000	**102,600**
E5	Library Materials	633,400	-	-	31,000	47,100	33,000	**744,500**
E6	Rent and Utilities	132,700	19,500	30,000	19,300	66,100	154,600	**422,200**
E7	Repairs and Maintenance	56,600	-	-	-	24,200	555,000	**635,800**
E8	Supplies	11,500	2,000	500	2,500	7,500	7,000	**31,000**
E9	Telephone and Internet	4,300	-	2,500	3,400	11,500	427,200	**448,900**
E10	Printing and Postage	11,200	-	-	2,100	37,000	500	**50,800**
E11	Bibliographic Fees	-	-	63,200	-	35,100	-	**98,300**
E12	Professional Development	77,500	-	-	250	7,700	11,000	**96,450**
E13	Travel	25,000	-	2,000	2,500	8,000	35,500	**73,000**
E14	Memberships	26,300	-	500	800	400	1,000	**29,000**
E15	Contractual Services	107,500	-	500	62,000	14,000	134,300	**318,300**
E16	Delivery Service	-	490,000	-	-	5,500	-	**495,500**
E17	Insurance	24,000	-	-	-	-	17,000	**41,000**
E18	Miscellaneous	11,600	-	-	-	-	22,400	**34,000**
	Total Expenses	**2,652,421**	**563,539**	**493,479**	**405,126**	**836,604**	**2,793,911**	**7,745,080**
	Net Revenue Before Depreciation	**(414,081)**	**(9,099)**	**(22,399)**	**(1,226)**	**(10,444)**	**(32,891)**	**(490,140)**
	Non-Cash Activity	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**
N1	Depreciation	9,300	-	-	-	-	90,300	**99,600**
N2	Post-Retirement Benefits (Gain) / Loss	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**
N3	Unrealized Investments (Gain) / Loss	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**
	Total Non-Cash Activity	**9,300**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**90,300**	**99,600**
	Total Net Revenue	**(423,381)**	**(9,099)**	**(22,399)**	**(1,226)**	**(10,444)**	**(123,191)**	**(589,740)**

REVENUE

#	Budget Item	GENERAL NOTES	2026 BUDGET NOTES
R1	State Revenues without Restrictions	Formula aid provided by NYS to WLS in support of services provided to member libraries. Also includes pass-through aid from NYS to WLS for member libraries.	Unrestricted monies which may be budgeted for any services provided by WLS. Assumes a 5% decrease in NYS funding over 2025 actual allocations. All State aid figures do not reconcile with audited financial statements and are structured for budgetary
R2	County Revenues without Restrictions	Allocation from Westchester County for programs and services, based on a Statement of Work submitted by WLS	Aid is used to provide career & educational counseling services for adults, consumer education on health and related services for those who are 60+ years of age, general outreach services, cataloging, interlibrary loan, delivery service and electronic content. Assumes a 5% decrease over 2025 actual figures.
R3	Federal Revenues without Restrictions	Any grants or aid received from the Federal Government or subawards of Federal funding. Includes eRate, IMLS or legislative funding.	WLS currently receives reimbursement on 56% of eligible expenses for eRate and directly correlates to dollars spent on Internet.
R4	Member Technology Fees	The figure in this line represents revenue in two departments, IT and Administration. Revenue in IT is driven by services agreed to in the IT Service Level Agreements. Revenue in Administration is to support group purchases of e-content.	Revenue is projected to be 4% more than 2025 actual figures. These figures are driven by the selections of services in the IT Service Level Agreements. The amount collected for group purchases of e-content is $300,000 and flat over 2025.
R5	Fund Raising & Contributions	Monies raised which may be used for any WLS services	
R6	Interest	Monies earned on as interest from bank accounts and returns on investments.	Despite healthy returns in 2025, this figure is being budgeted conservatively as the volatility in the market could cause dramatic fluctuations in future periods.
R7	Other Revenues without Restictions	Monies raised for Career Counseling Services, purchase of WLS library cards from non-residents, miscellaneous income	
R8	State Revenues with Restrictions	Aid provided to library systems to provide services directly and through member libraries to New Yorkers who are most in need and who often are not regular library users	Outreach, re-entry services for formerly incarcerated individuals, Vision Labs accessibility services, Senior Law Day (legal & financial workshops for older adults and caregivers), and Central Library Funds. Assumes a 5% decrease in NYS funding over 2025 actual
R9	Other Revenues with Restrictions	Monies raised for specific WLS programs	

EXPENSES

#	Budget Item	GENERAL NOTES	2025 BUDGET NOTES
E1	Salaries	Salaries and hourly wages paid to WLS-employed individuals	See separate illustration of FTE comparison 2025 vs 2026
E2	Fringe Benefits	(For Active Staff): Social Security & Medicare (employer portion) health insurance, worker's compensation, disability, life insurance, vision insurance, dental insurance, pension (For Retured Staff): Employer portion of retiree health benefits	15% increase in health insurance, 3% increase in dental and vision insurance, 15% increase in life insurance. Pension costs are estimated based on employee salaries, tiers with a 1% increase in rates from most recent pension invoice.
E3	Professional Fees	Audit & Legal fees; Payroll Processing Fees, Recruitment Fees	
E4	Equipment	Furniture, computer equipment, equipment rental, copier lease, network hardware	This line includes computer and network equipment to support the member libraries.
E5	Library Materials	Books, audio books, e-format materials, periodicals, DVDs/videos, databases	Budget is primarily for audio books, e-format materials and databases.
E6	Rent & Utilities	Rent, utilities, real estate taxes, office cleaning, maintenance	
E7	Repairs & Maintenance	Computer maintenance, equipment maintenance, software & software maintenance	Maintenance support for Evergreen, ASPEN, mobile printing, PC reservations help desk, thin client management, VMware (virtualization software), help desk software, back-up system, security software, Windows 10/Office 365, and business software
E8	Supplies	Office & computer supplies, WLS-identified clothing	
E9	Telephone & Internet	Telephones & internet connections	Internet circuits for all libraries, phone lines and cellular telephones and service.
E10	Printing & Postage	Postage, express mail, printing, publicity	
E11	Bibliographic Fees	Fees to Online Computer Library Center (OCLC), the bibliographic utility that provides shared cataloging records and an automated system for requesting interlibrary loans from participating libraries world-wide	
E12	Professional development	Training & professional development, trustee activities	
E13	Travel	Travel, registration and related expenses for staff representation at professional conferences and meetings	ALA, PLA, NYLA, technology and other professional conferences
E14	Memberships	Institutional membership in professional organizations	Includes memberships in Metro (RRR), Empire Library Delivery to support ILL shipping and receiving with outside institutions, ALA, NYLA, WCA and professional organization memberships for staff.
E15	Contractual Services	Services rendered under a formal contract/letter of agreement by outside persons, consultants or contractors	Network admin, co-location, CCS counselors, and New Rochelle Library's Broadband Technology project
E16	Delivery Service	Transportation of library materials to & from member libraries	Based on estimates. RFP for 2026 services currently in progress.
E17	Insurance	Liability and automobile insurance, Directors & Officers insurance	Increases in rates for each policy based on experienced rate increases in 2025.
E18	Miscellaneous	Automotive Supplies, maintenance & repairs; Miscellaneous expenses; Bank Fees; Contingency	

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2026 Proposed Budget
FTE Changes 2025 over 2026

Department	2025 Budget	2026 Budget	NOTES for 2026 personnel
Administration	5.30	6.55	1 FTE moved from Fund Raising - dept. eliminated .75 FTE moved from Admin to CCS - based on program 0.5 FTE moved from IT - Based on responsibiltities 0.5 FTE added - expanded role
Fund Raising	1.00	0.00	1 FTE moved to Administration - dept. eliminated
Cataloging	3.50	3.50	No Changes
Delivery	0.15	0.15	Admin time from Exec. Dir.
Outreach	6.50	5.00	1 FTE vacated, not filled, .5 eliminated
Career Coaching Services	1.50	2.25	0.75 FTE moved from Admin
Information Technology	9.80	9.30	0.5 FTE moved from IT to Admin - Based on responsibiltities
TOTALS	**27.75**	**26.75**	

Item: **Delivery Services RFP**

Background: WLS currently engages with a delivery service provider to facilitate the movement of library materials between member library locations and the WLS office. This service currently operates six days-a-week and is critical to the intra-library loan program which allows patrons of a library to access materials from any of the 44 library locations in Westchester. It is core to WLS's mission to provide equity of access. The service also ensures that library materials are returned to their owning library efficiently, maximizing their availability to the public and transports approximately 1.5 million items per year.

The current contract for delivery service expires on December 31, 2025.

Status: The Delivery Services RFP was publicly posted to the WLS website on August 26, 2025. Any vendor was welcome to submit a proposal. Two qualified proposals were received.

The deadline for bidders to submit proposals was October 16, 2025. The incumbent vendor, All Island Courier was selected based on the pricing of their proposal in being the lowest bidder.

The purchase of these services is included in the current year's approved budget and the following year's proposed budget, therefore separate approval will not be required to move forward with awarding a contract for these services.

October 28, 2025

Item:	**Designation of Depositories / Banking Services RFP**

Background: The WLS Investment of Funds policy provides comprehensive direction on the deposit and investment of cash assets. The WLS Purchasing policy additionally directs the prudent and economical use of revenues.

To that end, WLS engaged in a Request for Proposals (RFP) for banking services to ensure that: (1) funds are in accounts that return interest on deposited funds, and (2) minimize banking fees to the extent possible. The last RFP was conducted in 2015.

Designation of deposits for the following year is usually included in the Budget approval process. This is being presented in separate information and action items due to the results of the RFP process.

Status: The Banking Services RFP was publicly posted to the WLS website on July 14, 2025. Any qualified institution was welcome to submit a proposal. In addition, nine institutions were invited to submit proposals, including WLS's current bank.

The deadline for bidders to submit proposals was September 4, 2025; six proposals were received. Management has reviewed the submitted proposals and engaged with bidders for clarifications and questions. The WLS Treasurer also reviewed the responses in a meeting with the WLS CFO. An information item regarding the RFP Process was presented to the Board at the September 30, 2025 meeting.

Management is recommending Valley Bank to replace TD Bank as WLS's primary banking provider. This recommendation is based on the bank's proposal which includes no fees, no minimum balance, interest earned on all ledger balances with no deductions for reserve requirements, compensating balances, or float, an interest rate based on the Fed Funds Target minus .75bps, FDIC deposit protection provided through IntraFi Cash Service (ICS) and the ability to also service a line of credit for emergency use.

If approved, additional resolutions will be brought before the Board for approval at the November 18, 2025 meeting to initiate the banking relationship.

Recommended Action

Based on the results of the Banking Services RFP, management recommends the Board approve the following:

Valley Bank for designation of deposits. This includes WLS's operating, payroll and reserve cash accounts, as well as to service holdings of Treasury Bills effective immediately with a goal of full transition by January 1, 2026.

Pursuit of a borrowing facility with Valley Bank with no establishment fee to replace the facility currently in place with TD Bank at the same $500,000 credit limit. In line with approval for the current facility, the Board would be notified if the line of credit is used for any reason.

An extension of the current approval for TD Bank for designation of deposits through March 31, 2026 to allow for a complete transfer of accounts with goal of closing all accounts with TD Bank by this date.

Extension through December 31, 2026 for designation of deposit with New York Cooperative Liquid Assets Securities System (NYCLASS), serviced through PMA.

October 28, 2025

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WLS Executive Director Report
October 28, 2025

WLS Strategic Initiatives

Promoting equity and access

Expand Community/Member Library/Partner Engagement

Update and Improve Our Infrastructure

New York Library Association (NYLA) – Advocacy Day 2026

The NYLA Priorities for the FY 2027 State Budget and 2026 Policy Priorities have been posted on their website at https://www.nyla.org/2026-legislative-session. Trustees and staff are encouraged to review the requests that will anchor the next Library Advocacy Day activities that are scheduled for February 3, 2026

FY 2027 State Budget Requests (the fiscal year is April 1, 2026, to March 31, 2027)

- Library Operating Aid: $181.3 million (last year received $106.325 million)
- Library Construction Aid: $175M (last year received $44 million)
- Library Materials Aid: $11.33/pupil (last year received $6.25/pupil)
- NOVELny: $3.1 million (last year received $3 million)
- Cultural Education Fee: $30/transaction (current rate is $15/transaction)

2026 Policy Priorities

Intellectual Freedom
Key Legislation to Support: Open Shelves Act - S.1100-A (May)/A.3119-B (Kelles)

eBooks Licensing Reform
Key Legislation to Support: A.3589 (Carroll)

Media Literacy in New York State
Currently there is no legislation to support this issue.

Civil Service Reform
Currently there is no legislation to support this issue.

Career Coaching Services (CCS)

Seminar – *Managing Your Career in Changing Times*
These seminars provide participants with relevant information about self-assessment and employer hiring practices. The seminars meet weekly for ninety-minute sessions over six consecutive weeks during the Winter, Spring and Fall. Two Seminars are being held this fall:

Tuesdays, September 30, 2025 – November 4, 2025 – In person – Chappaqua Public Library
Wednesdays November 5, 2025 – December 10, 2025 – Virtual – METRO Library Council

The current seminar at the Chappaqua Library has a full group of registrants from diverse professional backgrounds and employment status. The participants are engaged and enthusiastic about the sessions and the self-assessment materials offering insights into their career intentions.

The METRO Library Council seminar dates and location have been adjusted to logistically accommodate the wide membership which includes Westchester County Libraries. This is a professional development program for this cohort with early registration showing strong interest from library professionals throughout the region.

Individual Advisement and Career Coaching
Individual Advisement and Career Coaching services continue to be active. These services provide patrons who find themselves in between seminar schedules or have specific career needs which can be personally addressed with a professional Career Coach. As the current job market remains highly competitive, we are working with professionals from diverse backgrounds who are facing extended job search timelines. Our Career Coaches work closely with each client to develop and follow a strategic action plan providing ongoing guidance and accountability to ensure they stay focused on achieving their employment goals.

Community Engagement
Hopes Door NY connected with Career Coaching Services to learn about the career and job search resources provided by WLS and the local libraries. Hope's Door supports individuals who are experiencing forms of domestic violence and assists in ensuring they are safe from the threat of violence. They offer domestic violence education and training in schools and community centers throughout Westchester County. Their staff provides counseling, advocacy, and legal services for victims.

The counselor was encouraged by the resources available through WLS and the local libraries, which will be helpful for the organization's clients as they begin to start over and navigate their job searches.

Cataloging Services

On September 17, Director of Cataloging Services Douglas Wray had a call with Moses Lai, a member of the team at Amazon which is tasked with upgrading the MARC records which they are now providing to their library customers. (A MARC record is a MAchine-Readable Cataloging record, a standardized format for storing bibliographic and other information in a way that computers can read, store, and exchange. They are used to represent the member libraries' holdings in the online catalog.) Because Amazon has only recently sought to target libraries as customers, it has only recently begun to create and provide MARC records.

Mr. Wray offered suggestions, and subsequently a written document detailing the minimum level of content and accuracy that Amazon MARC records would need to belong in the WLS catalog. Mr. Lai followed up by saying that his team is taking Mr. Wray's input seriously. Amazon is expected to send more samples soon.

Soon after, the extremely large and popular 197-year-old distributor Baker & Taylor announced that it would be closing by the end of the year. The company has been struggling to satisfy its customers since the pandemic, largely due to supply chain problems. Many WLS member libraries have been customers of Baker & Taylor, and the news created a sudden need for them to find other vendors.

WLS ILS Discovery Specialist Allison Pryor created a spreadsheet which the member libraries will be able to use to compare leading vendors, and Mr. Wray is currently gathering data from the vendors to complete it. In addition to offering objective data regarding prices, turnaround times, inventories and more, the spreadsheet will include Mr. Wray's assessments of the various suppliers' MARC records.

WLS Cataloging Services catalogs titles in many world languages, with the especially challenging non-Roman alphabet works handled by Manager of Cataloging Services Melissa Glazer. During the past month, items in Arabic, Chinese, French, Japanese, Korean and Spanish were added to the catalog, serving members of the Westchester community who read these languages.

Mr. Wray continues to catalog New Rochelle Public Library's Joseph Albanese Collection of jazz CDs and added over 170 to the catalog during the past month, bringing the current total to 1,649.

The WLS catalogers perform original ("from scratch") cataloging when the applicable MARC records are not available from vendors nor from the OCLC WorldCat database. Some recent examples:

The Wood Family of Braewold Farm: Reminiscences of James Wood III / by James Wood, III, in collaboration with Elin Peterson.

> The author lived from 1927-2024. His writings tell of his almost eight decades living on the farm in Bedford, N.Y. which his ancestors first purchased in 1809, as well as his years following Braewold's sale in 2005.
> (Cataloged by Part-time Cataloger Steven Pisani for the Bedford Free Library)

Somers Tuskers: 2024 New York State champions

> This brightly illustrated book celebrates the Somers High School football team's successful campaign for the state championship last season.
> (Cataloged by Mr. Wray for the Somers Library)

Library of Things:

> Sets of wooden puzzles intended for toddlers (Cataloged by Mr. Wray for the Port Chester-Rye Brook Public Library)

Popular Culture:

> Taylor Swift's *The Life of a Showgirl*, on orange glitter vinyl (Cataloged by Mr. Wray for the Croton Free Library).

IT Services

The department is continuously exploring ways to enhance and advance our cybersecurity measures. Employee education and training are critical to the success of an effective security plan, and the department continues to deploy KnowBe4 training modules. This month, our focus has been on cybersecurity awareness. The goal of this initiative is to assess the current knowledge level of our staff and identify areas where improvements in awareness of potential threats are needed. As cyberattack strategies targeting email accounts evolve, all staff must be equipped to protect themselves and the organization through proper education.

The Service Level Agreement (SLA) process is nearing completion. Most libraries have returned their signed agreements, and those that missed the October 1 deadline have expressed their intent to have their agreements signed at their next board meeting in October. Overall, the process this year has been straightforward. The monthly technology meetings, where the costs and services outlined in the SLA are discussed, have been vital in keeping directors informed about current services and potential changes anticipated for 2026. We plan to continue this strategy and further leverage this platform to better serve the libraries.

Outreach Services

Disconnect to Reconnect (D2R)
Disconnect to Reconnect (D2R) was invited to participate as an exhibitor at the Chappaqua Book Festival on September 27th. Janet Donat, WLS Outreach Assistant for Family Literacy and Reentry Services, Department of Community Mental Health (DCMH) Program Director for Children's Mental Health, Kathy Hallas and Rosie Finizio from the County Executive's Office staffed the table at this all-day event.

Many parents, caregivers and children stopped by the table and were given an activity backpack to help support the goal of finding alternatives to screen time for families. Many visitors signed up in support of the D2R initiative and will now receive monthly newsletters and announcements of upcoming events. To sign up for the latest D2R news, go to https://www.discoverwcm.org/d2r.

An additional screening of the documentary **Playing For Keeps** has been scheduled for a Saturday afternoon in December at the New Rochelle Library. The Ossining Library is also interested in scheduling a screening. All screenings will be followed by an interactive group discussion facilitated by a D2R steering committee member.

The D2R steering committee continues to meet monthly with the primary focus on planning for the spring conference on the importance of play across the lifespan and its importance as a crucial mitigating factor in dealing with the toxic effects of overexposure to social media and screen exposure.

Legal Aid Society of Westchester (LASWest)
WLS provided training in collaboration with Legal Aid Society (LAS) on Tuesday October 21st at the LAS state-of-the-art training center located in White Plains. Rebecca Mazin, author of the Job Search Tool Kit, facilitated the training that focused on finding employment after involvement with the criminal legal system.

Online Health Research Tools
We recently completed an update on our Online Health Research Tools brochure (previously named Online Health Information for Older Adults) which aims to help Westchester residents make sense of the information they are finding online. The brochure discusses common pitfalls and strategies to find, interpret, and utilize health information with a critical approach, which is crucial in a time where seniors have access to more information than ever-much of which is outdated, incorrect, misleading, or the product of AI hallucinations. (Access this resource at https://conversations.westchesterlibraries.org/health/).

Users of this resource are encouraged to make use of databases provided by WLS, including X-Plain Patient Health Portal and ConsumerLabs. We also direct readers towards external databases for learning about health topics, comparing doctors and hospitals, seeking legal help, and understanding Medicare. Our intent is for this brochure to serve as a vehicle for further programming and resource sharing related to information literacy in the Web 3.0 era.

Revolutionary Westchester 250's RevFest

On September 27th and 28th, WLS was invited to set up an information table at Revolutionary Westchester 250's RevFest event at Croton Point Park. The audience primarily consisted of families with young children, giving us an opportunity to promote library resources for homework help, library programming, and the county-wide Disconnect 2 Reconnect (D2R) campaign. Our proximity to the Westchester County Archives table also gave us an opportunity to explore ideas for shared programming and collaboration with the County Archives and member libraries in the coming year.

Senior Law Day Collaborative

On October 9th, the annual Senior Law Day conference welcomed more than 550 attendees to the Westchester County Center. The event featured 18 workshops on a range of senior topics, including a session led by WLS Outreach Coordinator Elena Falcone on Online Health Research Tools.

A total of 333 one-on-one consultations with attorneys, financial planners, and geriatric care managers were completed. WLS is a proud Senior Law Day Collaborative partner, with Outreach Director, Krishna Brodigan serving as co-chair. The growing demand for programs and resources like Senior Law Day reflects the increasing length of time people are spending in the senior phase of life. Learn more about the Senior Law Day Collaborative at https://www.seniorlawday.info/.



Sing Sing Correctional Facility

WLS is assisting the Sing Sing Correctional Facility with a collection development project since the facility's library materials were damaged by flooding. WLS has reached out to member libraries to request gently used weeded (discarded) materials that meet the prison's collection guidelines.

Westchester Breaths / Breath Body Mind (BBM)

In addition to online classes, WLS staff have been providing in-person Breath Body Mind classes on Monday evenings for the Drum Hill Senior Residence in Peekskill. The group averages 8 participants all of whom attend regularly and are fully engaged in the practices. Sign up for a Westchester Breathes session at https://conversations.westchesterlibraries.org/breathe/.

Westchester County Department of Corrections (WCDOC)

The Turning The Page literary group continues to meet weekly on the women's unit at the Westchester County Department of Correction (WCDOC). The focus this month has been on trauma informed creative writing using a poem template allowing participants to express themselves and find their voice as a pathway through trauma into transformation and healing.

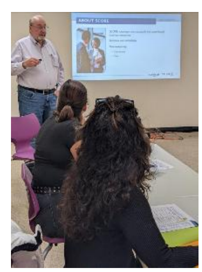
Poem titles include "If You Really Knew Me," "Where I Come From," "Where I First Met Courage and Fear." The program averages 10-12 participants a week with all choosing to both create and share their poetry aloud in the group. The option of printing out a group anthology of submitted poetry will be offered to participants prior to the culmination of this series of workshops.

Small Business and Workforce Development

Our community engagement and awareness of the WLS Small Business Resources website and BlueCareer continues to make good progress.

In late September, we partnered with the Community Center of Northern Westchester (CCNW) and facilitated a pilot ***BlueCareer workshop*** with a few Latino teens. The hour-long workshop was interactive and provided an overview of skilled trades careers including direct use of the BlueCareer skilled trades career exploration and planning features. The participants accessed the BlueCareer tool via their smartphones and completed the workshop with a career plan to consider. We are exploring more pilot opportunities for the BlueCareer workshop. In addition, we participated in the Somers Chamber of Commerce event called Celebrate Somers. The Somers Library hosted a table and WLS resources, including the WLS small business and BlueCareer brochure, were available to Somers residents.

To continue our member library collaboration, Putnam County Savings Bank (Somers Branch) invited WLS and the Somers Library to highlight our library resources via their monthly community table in the branch. In October, WLS and the Somers Library collaborated to promote the many library resources available to the community including those that support small businesses and skilled trades.

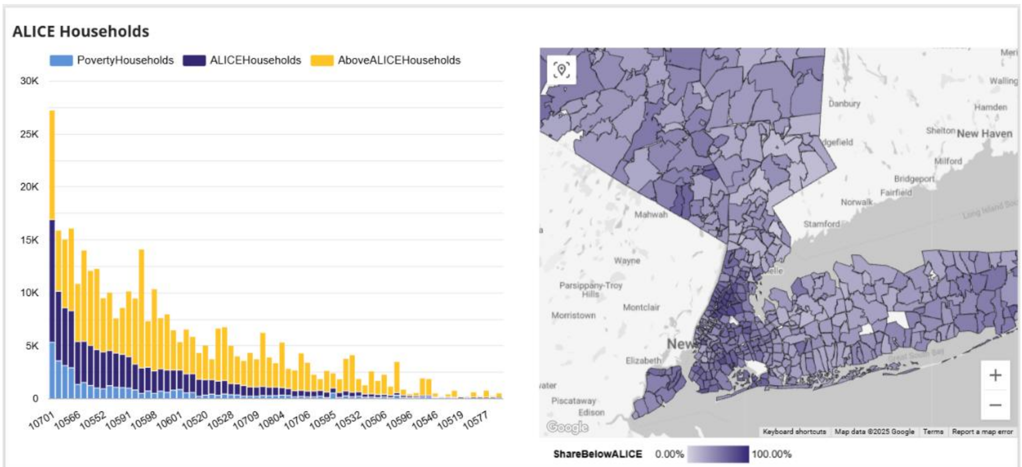


WLS along with the Field Library in Peekskill, jointly sponsored a SCORE Westchester Chapter "***Simple Steps to Start a Small Business***" three-part seminar (over three Wednesdays in October) at the Field Library. An experienced SCORE mentor facilitated the seminar, and it provided key information on starting a business, developing a marketing plan and financial and funding considerations. The sessions were interactive and allowed entrepreneurs the opportunity to learn and ask questions from experienced SCORE mentors. The participants were of diverse backgrounds, and the feedback on the program's usefulness was positive.

Strategic Data Analysis and Member Library Support

WLS continues to develop as a data-driven organization. Allison Midgley, Manager of Strategic Data Analysis and Member Library Support, is finalizing WLS' 2024-2025 Project with Bijan Kimiagar of AEQUA Strategies.

An exciting addition to the data catalog is **ALICE** demographic data that illustrates the growing number of **A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mployed families living in Westchester.



Other activities include review of concepts, next steps, and operational documentation that will allow her to add and update the SCALE Dashboard. SCALE Dashboard webinars continue, with one in each of the final months of 2025, focused on use by specific audiences, starting with an October session for decision-makers.

Ms. Midgley is working with WLS staff to build mechanisms to collect, report, and analyze program and service statistics that show impact more easily. For instance, she is working with Manager of Outreach Services, Linda Smith, to streamline delivery of Summer Reading Program statistics to the State; providing organizational support for developing communications and marketing strategies in the WLS Communications Working Group; and supporting Executive Director, Terry Kirchner, in analysis of digital resource use.

With final DLD approval of the Mount Vernon Public Library's 2024 Annual Report, recent years' Member Libraries Annual Statistics Reports will be revised and the 2024 Report published.

In October, Ms. Midgley facilitated two OverDrive Marketplace webinars for library staff, led by OverDrive Account Manager, Kristin Preyss; consulted with hoopla support to help libraries resolve patron access issues; and has become a primary contact to support the WLS Data Dashboard with the WLS IT Team.

The effort to help WLS staff integrate AI into their workflows is moving forward in a team approach and participation in an AI Leadership Cohort. Ms. Midgley, Dr. Kirchner, and Allison Pryor, Blas Jaramillo, Korn Chantravakan, Andres O'Connor- Anaki, and Michael Petrocelli from the IT Team are developing a framework and training strategies for the coming year. Ms. Midgley also attended *NPW Supervisor Essentials*, which gave her the opportunity to learn and network with Westchester non-profit partners, and the webinar *Using Data For Decision-Making* *in Uncertain Times,* learning essentials for strategic planning and action, including a phrase that she plans to share with WLS staff and member libraries, "Data is a Mirror and a Map."

Trustee Education Opportunities

October 30, 2025, 6:30 PM-8:30 PM – ***IN PERSON at WLS Headquarters*** – **Sustainable Fundraising Strategies! Demystify Incorporating Planned Giving, Designated Funds, and Working with Professional Advisors**

> *A conversation with Laura Rossi, vice president of the New York Community Trust, Westchester Division. Ms. Rossi will demystify the process of planned giving, share how the NYCT promotes planned giving to individuals to support the causes and issues they care about the most, how they work with professional advisors to boost awareness, and how a designated fund for a library (or WLS itself) can be a solution. Registration required.*

November 18, 2025, 5:00 PM-6:30 PM – ***ONLINE*** – **Trustee Handbook Book Club – Next Level Trusteeship: Building an Effective and Impactful Board Culture**

> *To register for and to learn more information about each of the 2025 sessions, go to the Trustee Handbook Book Club website at https://midhudson.org/trusteebookclub/. Archived recordings of earlier sessions are available on the Trustee Handbook Book Club Archive at https://midhudson.org/trustee-handbook-book-club-archive/.*

Respectfully submitted,

Terry L. Kirchner, PhD
Executive Director