



# Albany Public Library

## LIBRARY VOTE INFORMATION

### CANDIDATES FOR ALBANY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Twelve Albany residents are running for three available seats on the Albany Public Library Board of Trustees. The candidates are listed in ballot order. Candidate statements start on page 6.

**1. Daniel Schneider**



**2. Zachary Cunningham**



**3. Carlos Velasquez**



**4. Paige Allen**



**5. Jennifer Marlow**



**6. Bradford Lachut**



**7. Kirsten Broschinsky**



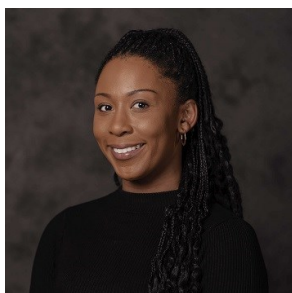
**8. Paul Collins-Hackett**



**9. Marsha Lazarus**



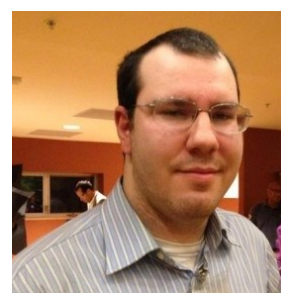
**10. Tia Anderson**



**11. Mary A. Rosch**



**12. Daniel Plaat**



## 2024-25 LIBRARY BUDGET FACTS

- City residents go **to the polls on Tuesday, May 21, to cast ballots on the library's 2024-25 operating tax levy of \$7,864,740.**
  - The spending plan was approved by the elected Board of Trustees in March.
  - The library's fiscal year runs July 2024 through June 2025.
- The 2024-25 operating tax levy is an **increase of 2%** over the current year.
  - This is **under the NYS tax cap limit for the library.**
- The **library continues to deal with rising operational costs and contractual increases.**
  - The **proposed budget increase supports our staff and core services** and positions the library to leverage partnerships and grant opportunities.
- An Albany resident with a \$250,000 home will **pay about an extra \$9.15 next year** for the library.
- **Polls are open Tuesday, May 21, from 7 am until 9 pm.**

## LIBRARY SERVICES SUPPORTED BY THE TAX LEVY

- Free access to a **large and diverse collection of books and DVDs, audiobooks and music CDs, eBooks and eMagazines**, as well as **databases and museum passes.**
- Free public **computers, laptops, and WiFi access** at all library branches and outdoor spaces, plus WiFi at three city parks and 13 Albany Housing Authority community rooms. Also, a **mobile app** for devices and **WiFi hotspots** for in-home use.
- Free **educational and entertainment programs for all ages and interests** including: story times, computer classes, financial workshops, music performances, book reviews, movies, tax assistance, arts and crafts activities, science and technology programs, and health and wellness classes.
- Free access to **professional librarians and staff who assist** with information and research needs, downloading library items to devices, and reader's advisory service to support and encourage literacy and a love of reading.
- Free use of **community meeting rooms and study spaces** for local organizations and individuals.
- Free **24/7 online access** to the collections and databases of all 29 libraries in the Upper Hudson Library System, which covers Albany and Rensselaer counties.

## TRUSTEE ELECTION FACTS

- There are **12 official candidates** running in the May 21 trustee election.
- The library **board has three open positions.** Two carry full five-year terms, and the other has a one-year term. The two highest vote getters will fill the full terms, while the third highest vote getter will fill the partial term.
- The library's nine-member **board is charged with ensuring that the library fulfills its mission in a fiscally and operationally responsible way.**
- View the **candidate statements starting on page 6** of this guide.

## LIBRARY VOTE FAQ

### What is the Albany Public Library vote on?

The library budget is a proposition on the ballot. Here is the actual ballot language:

*“Shall the sum of \$7,864,740 be raised by annual levy of a tax upon the taxable real property within the City School District of Albany for the purpose of funding the operating budget of the Albany Public Library?”*

Yes       No

### When is the vote?

The vote is on Tuesday, May 21, 2024, from 7 am to 9 pm. The city school district runs the voting process, and the library’s tax levy appears on the same ballot as the school budget. The trustee election is also on the ballot.

### Why is my polling place in a different location than the general election polling place?

Polling places for the school and library budget votes are different than the polling locations used for citywide elections. The polling places are determined by the school district and can be found at [albanyschools.org/business/budget/voting-information](https://albanyschools.org/business/budget/voting-information).

### Who is eligible to vote?

Anyone registered to vote in the city of Albany general election is eligible to vote in the library election.

### Will people be allowed to vote by absentee ballot or participate in early voting?

Yes, early voting and absentee ballots are available this year. Information is available through the school district at [albanyschools.org/business/budget/voting-information](https://albanyschools.org/business/budget/voting-information).

### How many votes are needed for the passage of the library tax levy proposal?

A majority of those cast in the election.

### How much is the proposed library tax levy increase?

The library is proposing an increase in its operating tax levy of 2%. This amount is under the NYS tax cap. If approved, this would result in an increase in the library tax of about \$9.15 for a home with an assessed value of \$250,000. The estimated homestead tax rate for 2024-25 is \$1.71 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

### Why is an increase proposed?

This increase helps cover the rising costs of operations, including contractual salary increases for our staff.

### What other sources of revenue does the library have?

The 2024-25 budget includes supplemental sources of revenue from PILOT payments (payments in lieu of taxes), federal and state grants, fees and rental income, interest income, plus contributions from foundations and individuals. The majority of support for the library comes from the tax levy.

### Does STAR apply to the library tax?

No, STAR does not apply to the library tax.

### Why can’t you just charge a fee to anyone who uses the library?

It is against the NYS Education Law, which requires that public library service must be “forever free.”

### What will happen if the voters do not approve the tax levy increase?

If the tax levy increase fails, the library would receive the same funding level as this year.

# APL FISCAL YEAR 2024-25 LINE ITEM BUDGET

	2023-24 Budget Approved	2024-25 Budget Proposed
<b>SUPPORT AND REVENUE</b>		
<b>Tax Levy - Library Operations</b>	\$7,710,529	\$7,864,740
Tax Levy - Branch Improvement Plan	\$1,655,394	\$1,654,894
<u>TOTAL TAX LEVY</u>	<u>\$9,365,923</u>	<u>\$9,519,634</u>
<b>OTHER REVENUE</b>		
PILOT Payment	\$477,000	\$391,315
NYS Grants	\$288,501	\$288,501
Federal Grants	\$32,000	\$35,640
Other Grants/Construction Grant	\$0	\$0
Fees and Sales	\$20,000	\$50,000
Interest Income	\$25,000	\$60,000
Rent Income	\$58,575	\$58,575
<u>SUBTOTAL OTHER REVENUE</u>	<u>\$901,076</u>	<u>\$884,031</u>
Total Fund Balance Used	\$329,492	\$561,186
<u>TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE</u>	<u>\$10,596,491</u>	<u>\$10,964,851</u>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>		
<b>PAYROLL AND RELATED COSTS</b>		
FT Salaries	\$3,890,000	\$4,115,000
PT Salaries	\$735,000	\$848,000
NYS Retirement System	\$492,047	\$562,762
Payroll Taxes & Processing Fees	\$378,812	\$399,822
Employee Benefits	\$1,100,000	\$1,100,000
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$6,595,859</u>	<u>\$7,025,584</u>
<b>OCCUPANCY COSTS</b>		
Utilities & Telephone	\$250,000	\$200,000
Building Repairs & Maintenance	\$215,000	\$215,000
Maintenance Service Contracts	\$185,000	\$190,000
Custodial Supplies	\$50,000	\$50,000
Vehicle Maintenance	\$18,000	\$12,000
Construction Grant Expense	\$0	\$0
Furniture/Building Improvements	\$40,000	\$40,000
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$758,000</u>	<u>\$707,000</u>
<b>MATERIALS AND SERVICES</b>		
Books & Audio/Visual Materials	\$398,000	\$388,000
Periodicals	\$52,000	\$55,000
Central Library Services Aid	\$158,464	\$157,973
Digital Content	\$116,774	\$136,774
Programming, Community Relations & Engagement	\$75,000	\$80,000
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$800,238</u>	<u>\$817,747</u>
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE AND MISC.</b>		
Office & Library Supplies	\$55,000	\$60,000
Bank Fees	\$8,000	\$10,000
Memberships	\$3,000	\$3,000
Postage	\$3,000	\$3,500
Publicity & Printing	\$25,000	\$27,000
Training/Travel	\$17,000	\$17,000
Professional Services	\$136,000	\$136,000
Tax Cert Payments	\$100,000	\$50,000
UHLAN Fees	\$60,000	\$63,126
Liability Insurance	\$80,000	\$90,000
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$487,000</u>	<u>\$459,626</u>
<b>INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY</b>		
Information Technology Services	\$190,000	\$190,000
Information Technology Software	\$35,000	\$35,000
Information Technology Hardware	\$75,000	\$75,000
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$300,000</u>	<u>\$300,000</u>
<b>DEBT SERVICE</b>		
Total Debt Service Payment on Branch Improvement Plan	\$1,655,394	\$1,654,894
<u>TOTAL EXPENDITURES - LIBRARY OPERATIONS</u>	<u>\$10,596,491</u>	<u>\$10,964,851</u>

## TAX IMPACT OF PROPOSED 2024-25 LIBRARY BUDGET WITH 2% INCREASE

Home Property Assessed Value	2024-25 Projected Tax Amount (Homestead) \$1.708654 per \$1,000 Assessed Value	Total \$ Increase Over 2023-24 Budget
\$100,000	\$170.87	\$3.66
\$125,000	\$213.58	\$4.58
\$150,000	\$256.30	\$5.49
\$175,000	\$299.01	\$6.41
\$200,000	\$341.73	\$7.32
\$225,000	\$384.45	\$8.24
\$250,000	\$427.16	\$9.15
\$275,000	\$469.88	\$10.07
\$300,000	\$512.60	\$10.99
\$325,000	\$555.31	\$11.90
\$350,000	\$598.03	\$12.82
\$375,000	\$640.76	\$13.75
\$400,000	\$683.46	\$14.65
\$425,000	\$726.18	\$15.56
\$450,000	\$768.89	\$16.48
\$475,000	\$811.61	\$17.40
\$500,000	\$854.33	\$18.31



## TRUSTEE CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

The trustee candidates are listed in ballot order. The following statements were provided by the candidates and published without edits.

### 1. Daniel Schneider

Crescent Dr., 12208

Danny Schneider is passionate about libraries as community hubs, as sources of information and enrichment, and as one of the last true public goods.



Raised as a PBS Kid in Idaho, Danny first moved to Albany in 2021, but New York became his home in 2017. His experience as a Legal Aid Attorney in Elmira, NY advocating for clients facing eviction, experiencing homelessness, and seeking financial assistance taught him that libraries can be spaces to support the most vulnerable among us.

As a future Board member, Danny hopes to expand services and diversify library offerings in collaboration with community organizations. Danny currently works for the New York Department of Tax and Finance where he specializes in corporate tax law, and he plans to bring this expertise into his work with the Albany Library Board.

He's currently reading *The Buried Giant* by Kazuo Ishiguro and *A Fierce Discontent* by Michael McGerr.

### 2. Zachary Cunningham

Park Ave., 12208

I am an extension faculty member at Cornell University's ILR School, where I design and facilitate educational programs for unions



and policymakers. I have been an educator and organizer my entire adult life, bringing community members together to build strong public services.

I moved to Albany in 2015 with my wife Kelly, a teacher in Albany City Schools. We live in Pine Hills with our daughter Margo and our two dogs, Rocky and Bella. I love this city, and I want it to thrive. A strong public library helps make this happen. On Saturday mornings, my daughter plays with children from all different backgrounds at our local branch. And as a unionist and former CSEA employee, I know the library can't run without its dedicated staff.

The library brings people together from all walks of life. I'm running for Trustee to make sure we continue investing in and growing this amazing institution and the people who make it work.

### 3. Carlos Velasquez

Jefferson St., 12210

I am retired from NYS Higher Education, as supervisor for Students Loan Unit. I was also a international manager for various banks in NYC.



Born in Puerto Rico and raised in Brooklyn, NY, I graduated with honor from East New York High School. I also very proud to be a US veteran Marine. I was the President of Centro Civico of Amsterdam, NY. I enjoyed reading, cooking and taking long walks.

I have lots of experience to offer the Board of Trustee that will benefit not only the Board but most important the public. My experience in life will also help the staffs and make the library the best in the state.

### 4. Paige Allen

Jay St., 12210

Director of Internal Operations, Office of Mental Health, Population Health and Evaluation



I'm an Albany-area native and public servant committed to making Albany a great place to live. I attended Siena College for my BA in English Literature and UAlbany's Rockefeller College of Public Affairs & Policy for my Masters in Public Administration. For nearly 8 years I've worked with the Office of Mental Health's data analysis division managing budgets, grants, operations, and personnel. I'm an active volunteer at the Regional Food Bank and The Egg and chair of the Lark Street Beautification Committee.

I think access to education, the arts and culture, and a communal space to gather should be a basic right. I'm running for the library board because I believe in the power of libraries as a public resource and will be a passionate, ethical, and open minded trustee. I will defend against censorship and advocate for the expansion of free programming.

Favorite book: *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*.

## 5. Jennifer Marlow

Tallmadge Pl., 12208

Professor of English, Co-chair of English Department, Coordinator of First-Year Writing Program. Community advocacy and involvement in various forms (e.g. Normanskill Neighborhood Association and Moms Demand Action).



I have spent the last 20 years getting to know the city of Albany and its amazing library system. I am an English Professor at The College of Saint Rose and feel passionately about reading and writing—lifelong learning skills and hobbies that libraries nurture and support. My wife, my son, and I are active library users and visit all the branches, partaking in events, summer reading, and the interlibrary loan system. When I'm not teaching, I love camping, biking, building LEGO, and, of course, reading and writing.

I've lived in a lot of places and held a library card in all of them. We have a gem of a system here in Albany, and I am running for the BoT to help keep it that way. Libraries are the life blood of cities, providing essential and valuable support for all people. I want to help ensure those services not only continue but are continually improved.

## 6. Bradford Lachut

Western Ave., 12203

I'm an attorney serving as Director of Government & Industry Affairs and General Counsel, overseeing legal and governmental relations as well as legal services for a regional insurance trade association.



Originally from Buffalo, NY, I graduated from Utica College and attended law school at the University of Buffalo. I have spent 15 years in the Capitol Region, where I live with my family. Recently, I completed a 13-year tenure on the Board of Governors of Shriners Children's New England, serving as Secretary for six years. I am excited to bring this experience to our local library system and positively impact our community.

Passion and Experience. I'm a passionate advocate for the public library. It has helped shape the person I am today. My legal background as well as past board experience make me uniquely positioned to meaningfully give back to the library system that means so much to the community.



## 7. Kirsten Broschinsky

Edgewood Ave., 12203

Kirsten Broschinsky is Director of Development for Albany Symphony. She manages fundraising initiatives, budgeting, strategic planning, and stewardship. She works to advocate for the Arts and build vital community partnerships.



Kirsten moved to Albany in 2011. She grew up in Wyoming and Utah, with a stint in Washington, DC to earn her MPA from George Washington University. Kirsten and her husband, Solon, live in Albany with their dog, Arlo. She is a proud aunt of 3 nieces and 10 nephews! Kirsten enjoys being outdoors, reading, running races as a St. Jude Hero, exploring history and spending time with those she loves.

Kirsten believes that libraries are a vital part of our community. They provide ACCESS to ideas and opportunities, EMPOWERMENT for the seekers and the underserved, and a REFUGE from the elements and the storms of life. It would be a great honor to continue serving on the Albany Public Library Board.

## 8. Paul Collins-Hackett

Park Ave., 12202

In a world plagued by fear, in a city haunted by neglect, a dark knight rose. Born and raised in Albany, New York, Paul committed to helping others after the death of his father when he was 3. He helped care for his blind mother as they forged a path together. As Paul grew, programs such as the Big Brother Big Sister program and mentors such as Jim Snyder helped him develop. It was there he learned the importance of caring for others, and just how impactful a community can be on a child. After graduating from Albany High and then Siena college, Paul joined with others to launch the non profits "Tru Heart Inc" and "PULSE". He worked at a local homeless shelter and began to plan. This, league, of concerned individuals became the blueprint for his work moving forward. Now working for our great city as Director of the summer youth employment program, Paul continues to bring others into this league to work with our youth and save the city. In addition to his day job, Paul is on the board for the Albany Fund For Education, serves as Vice President of Tru Heart, is on the alumni board of the sponsor a scholar program, is Co-founder of PULSE, is on the steering committee of the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion program, the co owner of a small business venture and more. Despite his humble beginnings, Paul lives by the motto "what I do defines me", and is an example to others that where you begin is not where you have to end in life. The most important question in life is "how do we move forward". Paul does his best to be the change he wants to be and lead by example. We can all sleep peacefully knowing our Dark Knights are behind us.



## 9. Marsha Lazarus

Colonial Ave., 12208



Workforce Development Professional: Program developer, Forum organizer, Workshop planner/facilitator, Skilled interviewer/ability to engage people, Solution-seeker, Inclination to look for people's strengths, Excellent writing skills

My 30+ year career in workforce development reflects my social entrepreneurial spirit and goal to promote workplace inclusion and a level playing field for all job seekers. In 1999, I founded a community-based employment service for job seekers from marginalized communities. In 2018, I started a business to provide quality employment services for individuals with limited resources. I accomplished this through contracts with Albany Public Library, Trinity Alliance of the Capital Region and NYS ACCES-VR.

I deeply believe in the library's commitment to offer accessible, quality programs that meet the varied needs and interests of all residents and neighborhoods served. My career focus over the past 30 + years mirrors this same commitment. I would welcome the opportunity to be a part of keeping the library's inclusive vision alive and vibrant.

## 10. Tia Anderson

North Allen St., 12203



I'm an experienced Executive Assistant with over 5 years of administrative professional experience. My background spans across nonprofits, government, and public service agencies.

I'm a lifelong Capital Region resident and Saint Rose alumni, with a BA in Communications and Public Relations. In my free time I enjoy cooking, reading dystopian novels, and playing the viola. I also frequently attend and volunteer at Albany Symphony performances.

My work and personal history has made me detail oriented, adaptable, and a true strategic thinker. It's also given me a deep appreciation for the accessible resources and equitable opportunities the library provides.

I believe that libraries play a crucial role in our society as a hub of knowledge and cultural exchange. I'm running for the Board of Trustees because I am dedicated to ensuring it remains a vibrant resource for residents of all backgrounds and ages.

## 11. Mary A. Rosch

Mercer St., 12208



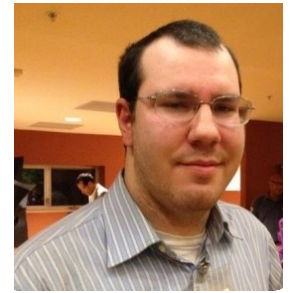
Mary A. Rosch is a proud Albany native & CSD of Albany K-12 graduate. After completing a degree in English from SUNY Geneseo and a semester in Paris, France, she moved to New York City. Sarah Orne Jewett said: "One must know the world so well before one can know the parish." Ms. Rosch's time away from Albany only reinforced her desire to return home, enriched by her experiences & travels while she was away.

She is Discover Albany's Operations Manager, teaches yoga at the Co-op, & volunteers with Friends & Foundation of the APL, LWVAC, & The Vegetable Project.

The library reflects our community. Our branches are safe spaces where anyone can show up as they are, explore curiosities, attend inspiring programs, and alleviate anxieties by accessing vital resources. As Trustee she will ensure APL has everything needed to deliver quality services to the richly textured City of Albany.

## 12. Daniel Plaat

Elk St., 12210



I am a Standard State Employee under SUNY system Admin as an Office Assistant for the office of Institutional Research and Data Analysis.

I've lived in Albany all my 36 years and used the library system at every stage. I went to school for Architecture and History. Afterward I split my time between temporary and gig work and community activism and projects of all types. Involving housing, gardens, justice, media, energy and more. For income I've been a home shopper, home health aide, staff serving former homeless, and various state employment in support roles which continue today.

It's a goal to step up as a leader and encourage and train others to do the same. I wish to intensify the library system as a 3rd place institution with a non-commercial culture. This includes complementary services like healthcare and news, libraries of things with sporting goods, and restoring Pre-Covid access.

# VOTING LOCATIONS FOR MAY 21

## ALBANY PUBLIC LIBRARY VOTE

◀ The library vote is held in conjunction with the school district vote ▶

<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> WARD: All Districts</b> New Hope Church 334 Second Ave.</p>	<p><b>7<sup>th</sup> WARD: Districts 1-5</b> Delaware Community School 43 Bertha St.</p>	<p><b>11<sup>th</sup> WARD: All Districts</b> Abrookin Career &amp; Technical Center 99 Kent St.</p>
<p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> WARD: All Districts</b> Giffen Memorial Elementary School 274 South Pearl St.</p>	<p><b>7<sup>th</sup> WARD: Districts 6-8</b> Hackett Middle School 45 Delaware Ave.</p>	<p><b>12<sup>th</sup> WARD: Districts 1-3</b> Italian American Community Center 257 Washington Ave. Ext.</p>
<p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> WARD: All Districts</b> Sheridan Preparatory Academy 400 Sheridan Ave.</p>	<p><b>8<sup>th</sup> WARD: Districts 1-4</b> NEW LOCATION Myers Middle School 100 Elbel Ct.</p>	<p><b>12<sup>th</sup> WARD: Districts 4-9</b> Montessori Magnet School 45 Tremont St.</p>
<p><b>4<sup>th</sup> WARD: All Districts</b> North Albany Middle School 570 North Pearl St.</p>	<p><b>8<sup>th</sup> WARD: Districts 5-9</b> Albany School of Humanities 108 Whitehall Rd.</p>	<p><b>13<sup>th</sup> WARD: All Districts</b> Pine Hills Elementary School 41 North Allen St.</p>
<p><b>5<sup>th</sup> WARD: All Districts</b> Arbor Hill/West Hill Branch Library 148 Henry Johnson Blvd.</p>	<p><b>9<sup>th</sup> WARD: All Districts</b> New Scotland Elementary School 369 New Scotland Ave.</p>	<p><b>14<sup>th</sup> WARD: All Districts</b> NEW LOCATION Myers Middle School 100 Elbel Ct.</p>
<p><b>6<sup>th</sup> WARD: All Districts</b> Hackett Middle School 45 Delaware Ave.</p>	<p><b>10<sup>th</sup> WARD: All Districts</b> Pine Hills Elementary School 41 North Allen St.</p>	<p><b>15<sup>th</sup> WARD: All Districts</b> Eagle Point Elementary School 1044 Western Ave.</p>



Info about the library's budget:

[albanypubliclibrary.org/about/budget/](http://albanypubliclibrary.org/about/budget/)

Info about early voting, absentee ballots, and polling places:

[albanschools.org/business/budget/voting-information](http://albanschools.org/business/budget/voting-information)