



Albany Public Library VOTER INFORMATION GUIDE

Trustee Election & Budget Vote | May 19, 2026 | Polls Open 7 am to 9 pm

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LIBRARY TRUSTEE CANDIDATES

1. Kathryn Bamberger



2. Lori Kochanski



3. Matthew Reed



4. Jenna Kersten



5. Smriti Sinha



6. Kayli McTague



7. Sarah Macinski



8. Kenneth Louzier



9. Leslie Dykeman



CANDIDATES FOR ALBANY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- **Nine Albany residents are running** for three seats on the library board in the Tuesday, May 19, election. Two positions have full 5-year terms and one has a partial 1-year term.
- The library's nine-member **board is charged with ensuring that the library fulfills its mission in a fiscally and operationally responsible way.**
- Statements provided by the trustees are on pages 2-5. The **candidates are listed in ballot order.**

1. Kathryn Bamberger

Park Ave.



Kathryn has lived in Albany for over 30 years. She has attended events and visited every branch across the city.

Kathryn's career is in economic development and international trade which affords her opportunities to travel to other communities where she often takes advantage of the chance to visit libraries around the country and around the world. Prior to public service, she had a private sector career in publishing, both retail DIY and career tech textbooks.

During many years while their children attended Albany Public Schools, Kathryn was involved in various

PTA, club and other parent groups, Albany Youth Soccer and most recently as President of the Albany Fund for Education.

As a volunteer, Kathryn held leadership positions with the Junior League of Albany, The Red Cross, Susan G Komen Race for the Cure, and volunteered at the Ronald MacDonald House, the church of St Vincent de Paul and other organizations.

Through all these experiences, she has learned to balance mission, programming and budget. They have often had to be creative in their approach to various challenges and always, a sense of responsible stewardship of the organization.

She is looking forward to serving Albany as a library trustee.

2. Lori Kochanski

Ten Eyck Ave.



Crisis Caseworker, Albany Police Department. As a member of the Community Advocacy Response Team (CART) I respond to emergencies and connect vulnerable neighbors with resources to improve their quality of life.

I am a creative professional, currently working as a Crisis Caseworker for the APD and as a fiber artist with a studio at the Albany Barn. I earned a Masters of Divinity from Yale University and have been an ordained

Lutheran pastor for 25 years. In every season of my life libraries have been places of learning, growing, teaching and refuge. When I am not working you may find me relaxing on my porch with a good book or bicycling or learning how to be a runner or playing board games with friends.

One of the most consistent, vibrant and steadfast institutions of freedom in this city is the Albany Public Library. The library serves all people through creative use of space, learning opportunities and the diverse library collection. I will bring gifts and skills as a leader who is able to think critically, strategically and creatively.

3. Matthew Reed

Pinehurst Ave.



I have been a resident of the City of Albany for nearly 10 years, settling my family here after completing service in the U.S. Marine Corps. I am an attorney, employed by New York State, an avid reader, and a busy parent of two elementary aged children. We

are constant patrons of the library and its programs, particularly the Pine Hills branch (for books) and the Washington Ave branch (for Mini Makers every Monday).

The public library is one of the best services offered by the City of Albany. As a frequent user of our many branches, I want to give back to the community and help the library meet the goals of its stated mission and serve the greatest number of Albany residents.

Special Skills:

Expertise in legal research and writing

Detail oriented, deadline driven, and adept at critical analysis

Professional focus primarily on civil litigation and legal compliance

4. Jenna Kersten

Madison Ave.



Jenna is an Administrative Coordinator with KPMG and German instructor with the Capital Region Language Center.

Jenna moved to the Capital Region from Buffalo to pursue a B.A. in English from Siena University ten years ago. After living in Germany

on a Fulbright grant post-college, she returned and has been a proud Albany resident since 2020. She has a M.S. in Global Studies and International Relations from Northeastern University and experience in higher education administration, event planning, and for-

eign language education. She loves reading, baking, and supporting local events.

The APL is vital in connecting Albany residents to important resources and to others in our community. As an APL trustee, Jenna aims to ensure that these resources meet evolving community needs and provide the many educational, professional, and community-focused services that make the library so special for so many.

5. Smriti Sinha

Andriana Ln.



Business Analyst/Project Manager fluent in English and Hindi, skilled in public speaking, change management, and community organization. Emerging artist and entrepreneur.

A resident of Guilderland for 22 years and Albany for 5, the library has always been my happy place. It serves as my "third space" where I meet people, build community, and foster personal and professional growth. From the Pizza Hut reading program

to Winter Reading Bingo, I've embraced every challenge. From being a teen volunteer to hosting a writing workshop this year, I've always loved engaging with the library.

Having used the library extensively and attended programs at every branch, I want to give back. The Albany community is diverse, and I aim to ensure our libraries reflect that diversity with inclusive services and programs that meet evolving needs, while fulfilling the mission to educate, entertain, and empower.

6. Kayli McTague

Davis Ave.



Kayli McTague serves as Chief of Staff to Senator Patricia Fahy, who represents Albany and the Capital Region in the NYS Senate. She has assisted efforts to bolster funding for libraries and ensure library systems have the resources they need to support the

health and vibrancy of communities across New York State.

Kayli is an Albany, New York, native and proud graduate of the Albany City School District. She got her first library card as a kindergartener at P.S. #19 (now NSES). She holds a BA in English from Manhattan College, where she spent a great deal of her time in the stacks around New York City. As Trustee, she will work at the local level to mitigate the damage of federal efforts to ban books and spread misinformation. Kayli will be an unwavering advocate for safeguarding and strengthening access to career and financial resources, educational and early literacy programs, and the other vital services and information our libraries deliver for the City of Albany.

7. Sarah Macinski

Edgewood Ave.



As an epidemiologist, I use data to find patterns and translate those patterns into narratives that can effect change. I believe that data is essential.

I moved to Albany 25 years ago for my first post-

undergraduate job and attended the University at Albany for graduate school. I was not expecting to stay here; however, my roots became deeply planted in this sandy soil. My child graduated from Alba-

ny High in 2023. I have proudly served on the Albany Public Library (APL) Board of Trustees for the past four years, where I am currently serving as Board President.

APL is a community center. I've sat next to residents who excitedly share their APL program guide and favorite programs. I've seen people line up to come in first thing in the morning, and fill study rooms. I've borrowed books and received assistance from librarians. I am running because I love this community, and know the role that APL has in supporting us.

8. Kenneth Louzier

Wilan Ln.



Neighborhood Specialist, City of Albany, Department of Neighborhood and Community Services

My special skills include innovative thinking, strong partnership building, the ability to find

compromise, organizational leadership, policy development, community building, among others.

Originally hailing from New Hampshire, I landed in Albany by way of Colorado. Having lived in different parts of the country, I can say that I truly en-

joy living here and feel at home. Albany has a grit, history, and personality that I admire. In both my current and previous positions, one constant has been community service and engagement. Throughout my career, I've held roles focused on serving residents, building connections, and strengthening communities.

I'm running to ensure all residents have access to library services, including those who may struggle to reach or live far from physical branches, to maintain safe spaces for patrons and staff to utilize the library's important services, and to maximize the budget by building strong relationships with community stakeholders.

9. Leslie Dykeman

Cardinal Ave.



Retired with 30 years as a Bank Examiner, Trust Auditor, then QA, EDP and Fraud Auditor (NYS Medicaid Contract). My skills are in analyzing data, understanding financial documents and ensuring adherence to regulations.

Albany native—Simmons College graduate (BA Business Administration) - Boston career bank examiner and bank trust auditor - Albany career employment a QA, EDP and a Fraud Auditor all with NYS Medi-

caid contract. - Continue in retirement as a long-term college fundraising volunteer, the Community Hospice and St Agnes Cemetery. - Active in the NNORC, Pine Hills Street Fair, HNA - Member of the Albany Institute of History and Art, Friends of the APL and CDIAA.

As Board and Board Committee member I want keep the APL the dynamic resource it is in the community. I want to ensure its financial future to continue providing services to new citizens. literacy outreach, programs from 6 to 60+. Being on the Board and shaping the library's future is important.

Trustee Candidates Forum!

Watch on YouTube
@AlbanyNYLibrary

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2026-27 LIBRARY BUDGET BASICS

- The **tax levy for the library's operating budget is \$9,661,856.**
 - This is the amount voters will see on the May 19 ballot.
 - The Board of Trustees approved the budget and tax levy in March.
 - The total tax levy includes annual debt service for the Branch Improvement Plan (construction of two new buildings and major renovation of three more), approved by voters in February 2007.
- The owner of a **home assessed at \$250,000 will see an increase of \$42.58 in library taxes** if the budget is approved.
 - The proposed operating budget tax levy reflects an increase of 17% over the current year.
 - The estimated homestead tax rate for 2026-27 is \$1.32 per \$1,000 of assessed value.
- The **proposed operating budget tax levy protects all branches and current hours, balances the operating budget, and establishes a "Capital Improvements and Contingency" line** to safeguard against the inevitable rainy day and help fund necessary building infrastructure updates.
 - The proposed increase addresses the impact of expenses that have gone up more dramatically in recent years, including health benefits and utilities.
 - The proposed increase helps stabilize reserve funds to maintain branch facilities and be eligible for construction grants.
- An Albany resident with a home assessed at \$250,000 will **pay an extra \$42.58 in library taxes next year.**

LIBRARY SERVICES SUPPORTED BY THE TAX LEVY

- Access to a **large and diverse collection of books and DVDs, audiobooks and music CDs, eBooks and eMagazines**, as well as **databases and newspapers.**
- Public **computers, laptops, WiFi hotspots, and WiFi access** at all library branches.
- **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.
- **Specialty items like reservable Museum and Adventure Passes, bike repair stations outside branches, and 3D printers, sewing machines, hand tools, digital arts software, and more fabrication implements** in the Albany Made Creative Lab at the Washington Ave. Branch.
- 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.
- Use of **community meeting rooms, study rooms, and tutoring spaces** for local organizations and individuals.

BUDGET VOTE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How does the budget question appear on the ballot?

“Shall the sum of \$9,661,856 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 19, 2026, from 7 am to 9 pm. The city school district runs the voting process, and the library’s tax levy and trustee election appear on the same ballot as the school budget.

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/.

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/.

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

A majority of those cast in the election.

What other sources of revenue does the library have?

The 2026-27 budget includes revenue projections from PILOT payments (payments in lieu of taxes), federal and state grants, fees and rental income, interest income, and contributions from the Friends and Foundation of APL 501(c)(3).

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 for fiscal year 2025-26, and some services would need to be restricted or cut. The process to determine service adjustments would be undertaken by the Board of Trustees and take a number of months to finalize.

APL FISCAL YEAR 2026-27 LINE ITEM BUDGET



**Public Vote on 2026-27 Operating Tax Levy
Tuesday, May 19, 2026**

	FY2025-26 Current Budget	FY2026-27 PROPOSED Budget
SUPPORT AND REVENUE		
Tax Levy - Library Operations	\$8,257,997	\$9,661,856
Tax Levy - Branch Improvement Plan	\$1,607,144	\$1,657,144
<u>TOTAL TAX LEVY</u>	<u>\$9,865,141</u>	<u>\$11,319,000</u>
OTHER REVENUE		
PILOT Payment	\$191,432	\$235,174
NYS Grants	\$302,030	\$228,175
Federal Grants	\$35,640	\$35,640
Other Grants/Construction Grant	\$0	\$0
Fees and Sales	\$55,000	\$60,000
Interest Income	\$100,000	\$150,000
Rent Income	\$58,575	\$27,200
<u>SUBTOTAL OTHER REVENUE</u>	<u>\$742,677</u>	<u>\$736,189</u>
<u>TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE</u>	<u>\$10,607,818</u>	<u>\$12,055,189</u>
EXPENDITURES		
PAYROLL AND RELATED COSTS		
FT Salaries	\$4,226,583	\$4,269,991
PT Salaries	\$940,000	\$1,097,149
NYS Retirement System	\$655,264	\$754,761
Payroll Taxes & Processing Fees	\$415,244	\$431,360
Employee Benefits	\$1,200,000	\$1,350,000
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$7,437,091</u>	<u>\$7,903,261</u>
OCCUPANCY COSTS		
North Albany Services	\$33,098	\$33,098
Utilities & Telephone	\$200,000	\$250,000
Building Repairs & Maintenance	\$215,000	\$215,000
Maintenance Service Contracts	\$195,000	\$195,000
Custodial Supplies	\$50,000	\$50,000
Vehicle Maintenance	\$12,000	\$12,000
Furniture/Building Improvements	\$40,000	\$40,000
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$745,098</u>	<u>\$795,098</u>
MATERIALS AND SERVICES		
Books & Audio/Visual Materials	\$390,000	\$390,000
Periodicals	\$57,000	\$57,000
Central Library Development	\$167,599	\$93,747
Digital Content	\$139,760	\$139,760
Programming & Community Engagement	\$80,000	\$80,000
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$834,359</u>	<u>\$760,507</u>
ADMINISTRATIVE AND MISC.		
Office & Library Supplies	\$70,000	\$70,000
Bank Fees	\$25,000	\$10,000
Memberships	\$3,000	\$3,000
Postage	\$4,500	\$5,000
Publicity & Printing	\$27,000	\$27,000
Training/Travel	\$17,000	\$17,000
Professional Services	\$150,000	\$150,000
Tax Cert. Payments	\$50,000	\$0
UHLAN Fees	\$65,000	\$70,000
Liability Insurance	\$95,000	\$100,000
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$506,500</u>	<u>\$452,000</u>
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY		
Information Technology Services	\$190,000	\$200,000
Information Technology Software	\$35,000	\$35,000
Information Technology Hardware	\$75,000	\$75,000
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$300,000</u>	<u>\$310,000</u>
<u>CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS/CONTINGENCY</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$177,179</u>
Operating Deficit / Projected use of Fund Balance	<u>\$822,374</u>	<u>\$0</u>
<u>TOTAL EXPENDITURES - LIBRARY OPERATIONS</u>	<u>\$9,823,048</u>	<u>\$10,398,045</u>
Total Debt Service Payment on Branch Improvement Plan	\$1,607,144	\$1,657,144
<u>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</u>	<u>\$11,430,192</u>	<u>\$12,055,189</u>

TAX IMPACT OF PROPOSED 2026-27 LIBRARY BUDGET

Home Property Assessed Value	2026-27 Projected Tax Amount (Homestead) \$1.325899743 per \$1,000 Assessed Value	Total \$ Increase Over 2025-26 Budget
\$100,000	\$132.59	\$17.03
\$125,000	\$165.74	\$21.29
\$150,000	\$198.88	\$25.55
\$175,000	\$232.03	\$29.80
\$200,000	\$265.18	\$34.06
\$225,000	\$298.33	\$38.32
\$250,000	\$331.47	\$42.58
\$275,000	\$364.62	\$46.83
\$300,000	\$397.77	\$51.09
\$325,000	\$430.92	\$55.35
\$350,000	\$464.06	\$59.61
\$375,000	\$497.21	\$63.86
\$400,000	\$530.36	\$68.12
\$425,000	\$563.51	\$72.38
\$450,000	\$596.65	\$76.64
\$475,000	\$629.80	\$80.89
\$500,000	\$662.95	\$85.15

VOTING LOCATIONS FOR MAY 19

ALBANY PUBLIC LIBRARY VOTE

◀ Polls open 7 am to 9 pm | Library vote held in conjunction with school district ▶

<p>1st WARD: All Districts New Hope Church 334 Second Ave.</p>	<p>7th WARD: Districts 1-5 Delaware Community School 43 Bertha St.</p>	<p>11th WARD: All Districts Abrookin Career & Technical Center 99 Kent St.</p>
<p>2nd WARD: All Districts Giffen Memorial Elementary School 274 South Pearl St.</p>	<p>7th WARD: Districts 6-8 Hackett Middle School 45 Delaware Ave.</p>	<p>12th WARD: Districts 1-3 Italian American Community Center 257 Washington Ave. Ext.</p>
<p>3rd WARD: All Districts Sheridan Preparatory Academy 400 Sheridan Ave.</p>	<p>8th WARD: Districts 1-4 Bethany Reformed Church 760 New Scotland Ave.</p>	<p>12th WARD: Districts 4-9 Montessori Magnet School 45 Tremont St.</p>
<p>4th WARD: All Districts North Albany Middle School 570 North Pearl St.</p>	<p>8th WARD: Districts 5-9 Albany School of Humanities 108 Whitehall Rd.</p>	<p>13th WARD: All Districts Pine Hills Elementary School 41 North Allen St.</p>
<p>5th WARD: All Districts Arbor Hill/West Hill Branch Library 148 Henry Johnson Blvd.</p>	<p>9th WARD: All Districts New Scotland Elementary School 369 New Scotland Ave.</p>	<p>14th WARD: All Districts Bethany Reformed Church 760 New Scotland Ave.</p>
<p>6th WARD: All Districts Hackett Middle School 45 Delaware Ave.</p>	<p>10th WARD: All Districts Pine Hills Elementary School 41 North Allen St.</p>	<p>15th WARD: All Districts Eagle Point Elementary School 1044 Western Ave.</p>

 *Library Budget
& Trustee Candidates*



albanypubliclibrary.org/about/budget



Tuesday, May 19!

*Voting Info &
Polling Places*



albanschools.org/business/budget