



VOLUME 26 NO. 02 | SUMMER 2026

Bookshelf

THE QUEENS LIBRARY GUILD, LOCAL 1321 NEWSLETTER

In this Issue

- President's Message
- Central Library's Auditorium Asbestos Abatement
- MVOs' Vehicle Temperature and Forklift Mediation
- Accretion of Non-Union Staff Analysts Complete
- T-Shirts
- Customer Service Redesign
- Local 1321's Executive Board Approve Resolutions
- Local 1321's Statement on the Mayor's FY 2027 Budget
- Local 1321 AI Task Force
- Union Bulletin Board
- Flushing Fire Dampers

President's Message



Local 1321 members are a microcosm of our City. The membership is composed of people from different backgrounds around the world, who bring their own humanity to make our union richly diverse. That is why Local 1321's Executive Board adopted the following principles.

Queens Library Guild, Local 1321, DC 37, AFSCME, AFL/CIO represents all full-time union eligible Queens Public Library employees. All members are represented regardless of ethnicity, skin color, age, religion, class, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, physical characteristics, and national origin. Representation is done with hard work, integrity, honesty, conscientiousness, and compassion.

Representing that diversity is challenging because every member has their own perspective. Yet, Local 1321's diversity is our greatest strength because the members'

perspectives shape our goals for:

- Contract negotiations with Queens Public Library's Administration and the City to improve members work-lives, pay, and benefits
- Contract enforcement through advocacy and grievances
- Communication conducted via email, newsletters, text message, social media, virtual and in-person meetings, and other written and verbal means
- Advocacy for budgets, library workers, libraries, and the broader labor movement

As you will read, the Local has been very active fighting for all groups of members — shipping, public service, PSD, Central, and Flushing to ensure their work lives are better and they are recognized for the work they actually do.

However, Local 1321 cannot rest. Right now and on the horizon, we have many challenges — defining what AI means for the members; organizing and negotiating an improved working conditions contract; organizing and negotiating a strong economic agreement; continually protecting jobs and ensuring our work is recognized; protecting our members rights; and fighting for each and every Local 1321 member.

Central Library's Auditorium Asbestos Abatement



On Thursday, May 28, 2026, FES informed Central Library staff that in 24 hours, contractors would be renovating Central Library's auditorium, which includes asbestos abatement. Surprised and concerned, Central Library staff contacted their Local 1321 representatives to find out more. The Local 1321 representatives contacted DC 37's Safety and Health for assistance. Together, the Union delayed the project until DC 37 could confirm all the correct safety measures were followed.

On Tuesday, June 9, DC 37's Safety and Health Alvin Williams; Local 1321's DC 37 Representative Maryym McDonald; and the Local's Blue Collar VP Howard Goldsmith inspected the contractor's workflow to ensure it follows proper asbestos abatement protocols. The Union determined that it does. Additionally, Howard Goldsmith was working that day and would ensure that work was being done properly.

After the project was completed, the air quality monitoring reports showed that there were no detectable asbestos fibers in the air.

Everyone knows that Central's auditorium is in need of renovation. However, we all want to know that it is being done safely. For the sake of our members and customers, DC 37 and the Local ensured that it was.

MVO Vehicle Temperature & Forklift Mediation



In July 2025 the MVOs started complaining to their supervisor that the trucks did not have working air conditioners and that their trucks were dangerously hot. Their supervisor told them, "Talk to their Union." So, they did. Their union representatives started asking questions; filed out-of-title and Article V violation grievances; demanded information about trucks; and were preparing for more legal action.

Last year, the Administration generated a considerable amount of acrimony and ill-will in how they responded to the ongoing crisis. Eventually, they harmed our chances to resolve this issue. At an impasse, the Local's DC 37 lawyer proposed mediation — a process whereby an independent person can help craft a solution that appeals to both sides. The drivers and Administration agreed to participate.

On June 8, 2026 the MVOs; the Lead MVO; the Local's Negotiator Shanta Gee; VP for Blue Collar Howard Goldsmith; DC 37 Representative Maryym McDonald; DC 37 Lawyers Michael Coviello and Steve Sykes; President John Hyslop; the Library's COO Sung Kim; Labor Relations Director Andrew Wedmore; Health and Safety Officer Nina Luca-Bolowsky; and the Assistant Director of Materials Management Jose Colon held a seven-hour mediation session.

The mediation began with the MVOs providing poignant, powerful, and emotional testimony that expressed their anger, fear, and disappointment at how they have been treated, even after all they have done for the Library over the years. Everyone in the room understood the depth of the drivers' anger. After that, Andy Wedmore apologized profusely for how the drivers were treated.

In the next few hours, the mediator mediated a settlement, of which the MVOs approved unanimously, that provides protection for the drivers and compensates them for operating the forklift.

Additionally, in May 2026, the Library finally got a brand new truck and will be receiving two more later this summer. This ONLY happened because the MVOs went to the Union. For years, the Administration told the drivers that the Library will buy new trucks and

always blamed the City for the delays. Obviously, this was untrue because once the Union started asking questions three new trucks were purchased, with more to come.

This years-long saga and conflict were totally unnecessary and could have been avoided years ago. MVOs worked in very dangerous working conditions, and their supervisor kept dismissing their concerns. In the end, the drivers were rewarded for their dedication, solidarity, and commitment. This was a great win for the Library and its workers and demonstrates how earnest and genuine collaboration and negotiations can resolve very complicated problems.

Accretion of Non-Union Staff Analysts Complete



In April, the Library finally completed the full integration of the formally non-union staff analysts into the Union. The Local and Administration collaborated on identifying their correct classifications and in mid-May the Administration transitioned the last remaining Staff Analysts into their correct classifications. This was a long process, with a number of tricky legal issues. Finally, though, these library employees now enjoy the union rights covered in our contract; have classifications that accurately describe what they do; and are compensated correctly. Notably, this included salary increases for many, because the library was underpaying them.

T-Shirts



If you didn't get a T-shirt, contact president@local1321.org. And send along the photos of you wearing your T-shirts.



Rosedale



Woodhaven



Peninsula ALC



Queens Village



Hunters Point



Metadata Services



Elmhurst Custodial



Broadway



Bellerose



Arverne

Customer Service Redesign



The Local's Clerical Redesign Committee and Administration held a negotiation meeting on Monday, June 15, 2026, to explain the Local's counterproposal to the Administration's latest proposal.

Local 1321's Negotiator Shanta Gee's explained in her introduction that she sent eight to ten emails since January requesting a counterproposal to the Local's October 2025 proposal. She stated that the Administration only responded with their "last, best and final" offer only after she sent a cease-and-desist memorandum on May 18, 2026.

After she finished, she asked the committee to provide testimonials about the impact the status quo is having on public service. The Committee detailed all the problems public services are having — considerable confusion on reporting structure; confusion on the management of the Specialist position; confusion on the Specialist and Representative roles; confusion of what the Specialist is supposed to do given they are only required to perform Representative work 20% of the time; and more. The Committee impressed upon the Administration that coming to an agreement will be a win-win outcome for everyone by creating clarity and compensating people fairly for the extra work being required of them.

Our negotiator explained the Local's counterproposal and explained our numbers. The Administration asked helpful questions and allowed the Local to expound on the proposal. The dialogue was constructive. The Union stressed that the parties' proposals are less than \$100,000 apart and are close to an agreement.

The Administration's decision to not hire Representatives and make the Specialists do this work is one of the most significant changes to the Library's operation in decades. Change can be difficult and disruptive. That is why the Local is proposing a solution that combines the Representative and Specialist positions; makes them be supervised by the Supervisor; and compensates everyone for their extra work making this difficult transition as smooth as possible and compensates people correctly.

Local 1321's Executive Board Approve Resolutions



Local 1321's Executive Board and Membership passed two resolutions. One is for the membership to support all efforts to increase access to voting and support voting accessibility measures in the United States and to vote for legislation that takes down barriers for voting. Local 1321 will provide information on local, state, and federal legislation that supports voting rights and will encourage members to...

The other is to support the newly formed ALA Workers' Union (ALAWU) in their efforts to negotiate their first ever contract. Local 1321's support is impactful because we are one of the largest groups of members in ALA.

The Local is in contact with the ALAWU. They have asked us to reach out to ALA management to let them know that ALA members are looking forward to good faith bargaining with ALAWU. They will keep us abreast of anything we can do to support their bargaining efforts.

Local 1321's Statement on the Mayor's FY 2027 Budget



President John Hyslop presented the following statement at the City Council's Finance Committee hearing on the Mayor's Executive Budget.

Speaker Julia Menin, Deputy Speaker and Libraries Committee Chair Dr. Nantasha Williams, Finance Committee Chair Linda Lee, and fellow City Council members, thank you for giving me this opportunity to testify on behalf of the over 840 Local 1321 Queens Library Guild members, that include librarians, clerical, IT, motor vehicle drivers, maintainers, custodians, public safety officers, and other titles.

Local 1321 members are disappointed.

In 2016, with great fanfare and many news articles, Mayor De Blasio and the City Council touted their agreement to "baseline" funding across the three library systems. From an August 26, 2016 City Council Press Release, these are their words "Working alongside the Administration, they were also able to secure \$43 million baseline funding which was adopted through negotiation in the FY 17 budget. This funding will help with more staff hires, extended hours on open days, continue 6 day

service, more classes offered to the public and more materials.”

Mayor De Blasio’s baseline did not stop him from proposing cuts in successive preliminary budgets. Mayor Adams continued this strategy and proposed cuts in his preliminary budgets. Mayor Mamdani continued the decades’ long library budget dance and proposed cuts in his preliminary budget. With great social media fanfare, he celebrated the 10th Anniversary of Mayor De Blasio’s baselining, by announcing his proposed underwhelming baseline.

As we have experienced, these mayoral declarations are not guaranteed baselining. Local 1321 is calling for our elected officials to guarantee baseline funding and legislate or amend the City’s Charter to allocate 0.5% of the City’s budget to New York City’s public libraries, which would be an amount that provides substantial financing for the library system. With a predictable and adequate funding source, libraries can plan for the future, hire additional staff, provide sustainable six-day service, modernize library infrastructure, maintain clean branches, provide robust IT, and offer additional programs and services. Furthermore, having baselining will prevent unnecessary conflicts between Local 1321 and the Library’s Administration. Currently, the Administration refuses to recognize and pay a vital group of public service library workers for their invaluable work.

Mayor Mamdani, this country and our City needs you to succeed. That success comes with a strong foundation of public institutions including libraries.

Mayor Mamdani and the City Council, if you are serious about supporting public libraries, amend the City’s Charter or legislate baselining of library budgets, and allocate 0.5% of the City’s budget to the three public library systems.

Local 1321 AI Taskforce



Local 1321 is very concerned with artificial intelligence’s impact on our library operations and jobs. The Executive Board created a task force to develop contract demands that address our concerns. Once the demands are formulated, the task force will share them with the membership.

Union Bulletin Board



The Local has a new poster for the Union bulletin board. Designed by Woodside's Kevin O'Connor, it provides a more dynamic method for communicating with the members. Along with the list of your representatives and benevolence policy, it has QR codes that take you to the Local's and DC 37's websites where you can find the latest information and benefits about your union.

Flushing Fire Dampers



Following the Local's report of Flushing's HVAC issues, produced by VP of Blue Collar Howard Goldsmith, the Library closed Flushing for about a month in June to replace all the fire dampers in the building, a machine that closes when there is a fire to prevent smoke from spreading in the duct work. The Local hopes that the Administration fixed the HVAC dampers while the building was closed and the ceilings were open.