

AGENDA
Exeter Public Library
Board of Trustees
September 23, 2025
6:00 PM

1. Call to order & Roll Call
 - a. Kathy Boudreau, Lisa Wilson, Cathleen Toomey, Jenny Medlock, Barbara Young, Julia Lanter, Sarah James
 - b. Called to order 6:01 PM
2. Correspondence
 - a. Barbara read an article from Jan 8, 1986 about the Exeter Public Library's year in 1985
 - b. Davis Moore sent an email to Jenny on Monday, September 22, formally stepping down as a Trustee.
 - i. By the law, the Select Board picks the replacement. The library trustees can recommend someone to fill the role.
3. Minutes last meeting
 - a. Barbara motioned to accept minutes.
 - b. Sarah seconded.
 - c. Minutes approved.
4. Reports
 - a. Directors Report
 - i. Summer went really well. Adult participation tripled from last year. The teens have already picked a theme for next year: Cryptids. Children's theme next year will be dinosaurs! Take a look at the full report as there are a lot of new programs and offerings this fall.
 - ii. Town of Exeter news
 1. Russ Dean has officially stepped down as Town Manager.
 2. Melissa Roy is currently the interim town manager.
 3. The letter that was submitted by the board to the Select Board was declined as they are utilizing other search methods, but a meeting will happen in October with the interim town manager to connect and exchange information. The town in general is looking for more connections with the library.
 - iii. The staff is having Fire and Emergency Services training this month and next month.
 - iv. State Library news
 1. The State Library has funding.
 2. There is still a hiring freeze, so ILL is still being impacted, resulting in delays and schedule changes.
 3. Visit State Library for state library statistics:
 - a. Exeter Public Library is the 19th largest library in the state
 - b. 1st in programs offered
 - c. 185th in cost per program. We do a lot of programs for cheap

- d. 192nd in salary and wages. Despite being a bigger library, our pay is not comparable to other larger libraries.
 - e. 33rd in appropriation budget. Our budget does not fully reflect our size.
 - f. 11th for computer usage. People know about our technology and come to the library to use it.
 - g. These are things to bring up during budget season to show how much people use this library and how we compare to the rest of the state.
 - h. Are we doing enough for our staff? Beyond salaries, are there other perks like paying for college or other education opportunities that could be offered? We used to help pay for college.
 - 4. Proposed budget cuts in the state are likely to impact State Parks not the library.
- v. Local library news has been added to the report. See some news from other libraries.
- vi. NHLTA regional meeting on October 25 in Barrington. Seacoast not explicitly included but can still go. Never a bad thing to go to. Sign up until oct 19
- vii. CIPs
 - 1. We were informed by Corey Stevens that we needed to do create a CIP for the warrant article regarding the Building Maintenance Fund.
 - a. It is being proposed as an Expendable Fund, which means it an have two accounts with one to receive donations.
 - b. Because this is a Trust, we would not have to give the money back at the end of the year. Rather than creating an account every year, this could exist year after year, making the process smoother.
 - c. The proposed amount (\$75,000) comes from average of last 3 years building expenses.
 - 2. Regarding the River Walk, Melissa Roy thinks town may have water rights that can extend past 2029. We are still waiting to hear back from Melissa if that is the case. If it is not required to be done by 2029, then we may be able to wait.
 - 3. The CIPs have already been looked at by the Building Committee and have been deemed viable.
 - 4. They still have to go before the Budget Committee.
- viii. Warrant Article new language
 - 1. Update to Expendable Fund
- ix. Closing Library for trainings 9/18, 9/25, 10/2 for Emergency Preparedness Training & on September 18th hosted Seacoast Area Libraries for Trauma Informed Training for staff
- b. Operating Statement
 - i. 2026 Operating Budget Review & Vote
 - 1. In review the budget and preparing for next year, it is clear that we have just barely enough money to cover the rest of the year. We can have the building opened and staffed, but no more books will be able to

purchased. This has happened for the last two years in a row. There is no extra money for any emergencies. This is a bare bones budget, keeping in line with what Hope promised the tax payers before the renovation in 2016. In part this is because there are some costs that have risen dramatically, like Hoopla. When we changed over to the new cards, we were able to greatly reduce non-active cards, allowing us to save \$3,000 in Libby. We were able to renegotiate with some of our vendors because we had less cards. When people came in for new cards, they discovered the library offers Hoopla and began using it. Overall, our digital services have increased. Electricity has also gone up and is the biggest part of our budget. The budget was created to save as much money as possible, but it also seems dangerous because we work on a bare bones level. Last year the budget was increased 8% because the staff joined the rest of the town's employees on the non-union scale. This year the budget is proposed with a 5.6% increase, but increasing operation line by 40%.

2. We have been meeting with the town because they are trying to cut down on the overall budget.
 - a. They are not in charge of the library though. We do try to work with them.
 3. There were no extraordinary costs this year that would have caused stress on the budget. This is a normal year for the library. It has been five years since the agreement that the library wouldn't increase. The library has been affected by price increases, just like everyone else, especially books and electricity.
 4. If the library needs to make a major cut, we could go to Hoopla and cut down check outs, but this still is a small amount. We have gone to the vendors to cut down as much as possible.
 - a. Question about operating statement: it should read Libby and Hoopla.
 5. Digital services are not going away. It is in demand.
 6. The Return on Investment for the library also shows how beneficial it is for the town. Patrons have saved \$2.2 million dollars by borrowing physical materials from the library. They have saved \$20,500 with museum passes. They have saved over \$199,000 by using Hoopla. In total, library users have saved \$2.4 million.
 7. This is a more realistic ask from the town. There is no additions to the budget, just what is needed to run the library. It does match the town's increase for staff of a 4% COLA increase.
 8. If warrant article doesn't pass for the building maintenance fund, there are some funds budgeted for difficulties, but there may be some loss of services.
 9. The board has been trying to open the library on Sundays for a half day, but this will have to wait until 2027 at the earliest.
 10. Barbara motioned to accept the 2026 preliminary budget.
 11. Cathleen seconded.
 12. Motion passed
- ii. Hoopla will be dropped down to 3 checkouts starting in October to save money.

- iii. Meetings with Budget Committee & Subcommittee
 - 1. September 29th @ 6:30PM- Select Board Preliminary Budget Meeting
 - 2. October 1 @ 6:30 PM- Budget Committee
 - 3. November 5 @ 6:30 PM- Budget committee
- c. Building, Grounds, Technology
 - i. October 23 Grand Opening Friends Podcast Room- 4-7 PM drop in
 - ii. November 13 Riverwoods Conference Room Plaque Presentation 4-7 PM drop in
- d. Finance and Fundraising
 - i. Authorize Jenny Medlock & Julia Lanter as authorized admin for Citizens Bank for Minutes
 - 1. Kathy motioned for Jenny Medlock and Julia to be authorized admin for whatever bank the library will be using.
 - 2. Lisa seconded.
 - 3. Motion passed.
 - ii. Authorize Barbara Young, Julia Lanter & Operation Manager Chandra Boudreau for Credit Card for Minutes
 - 1. At this time only Denise Fears is authorized.
 - 2. Lisa motioned to add either the chair or treasurer, Julia, Chandra as authorized users of the credit card.
 - 3. Cathleen seconded.
 - 4. Motioned passed.
 - iii. Change Library's Bank (Currently Citizens as is Town of Exeter)
 - 1. Options T.D. Bank, Stratham or Newburyport Bank, Exeter
 - a. Discussion about Newburyport Bank being good partners in the community.
 - 2. Barbara moved to move fund to Newburyport Bank as soon as possible.
 - 3. Sarah seconded.
 - 4. Motion passed.
 - iv. Bookkeeper
 - 1. we need to hire one
 - 2. Affinity Booking Plus LLC (used by other Seacoast Libraries including Greenland & Plaistow) or a local Exeter Bookkeeper Liguori Accounting
 - 3. We previously have had a bookkeeper. This helps future-proof the library.
 - 4. In the budget, a bookkeeper counts as a vendor, not an employee.
 - 5. Affinity is located in Dover and Hampstead. It may be helpful to work with them as they already work with other libraries. Julia interviewed them and they demonstrated awareness of libraries.
 - 6. Barbara motioned to go forward with Affinity as soon as possible.
 - 7. Cathleen seconded.
 - 8. Motion passed.
 - v. For the 2024-2025 annual appeal, online donors increased from 12 the year prior to 44.
- e. Long Range Plan
 - i. Committee meets next on October 9th at 5:15 PM
 - ii. So far there have been two meetings with Jenny, Julia, Shelby Lennon, and Chandra.

- iii. We have been working on inviting community members and some accepted thus far.
 - iv. Some communities we have been asking are the hospital, the schools, youth, and younger adults.
 - v. The committee will be creating a 5-year plan by next fall. They will survey over the winter and analyze data in the summer.
- f. Personnel and Policy
 - i. New Library Card Policy Letter to State Attorney General for Guidance
 - 1. This is a fact finding mission with the hope for guidance.
 - 2. This letter is regarding HB 273. Libraries have been asking law-makers for guidance since it was proposed. We have been struggling to write the policy to meet these new regulations.
 - 3. When asked, NHLTA advised consulting lawyers.
 - 4. Nashua wrote a policy for NHLA's lawyer to review. The lawyer said it is likely going to end up in a court, which will eventually provide clarity.
 - 5. This letter is being shared with NHLA so other trustees may use.
 - 6. There is a concern for front line workers, who are not legal experts.
 - 7. The library will also post new law, so the public can be aware.
 - 8. This conversation will need to continue to determine what support can be given for front line staff.
 - 9. There is also concern that the law could put patrons in danger.
 - 10. There is no clear answer and we need to consider what we will do.
 - 11. This law will likely go to courts.
 - ii. SAU 16 Student Card Update (Exeter, Stratham, Brentwood, East Kingston, Newfields)
 - 1. We have been in communication to establish t similar policies across the board for CMS and HS students, allowing clarity for card users.
 - 2. Parents and students get confused and a little disappointed having to move libraries, just because they've gone up a grade.
- g. Friends
 - i. They are discussing creating a fundraising committee.
 - ii. They are talking to partner with the Stratham Friends for an author event.
 - 1. Cathleen suggested contacting the Portsmouth Music Hall for Writers on New England Stage for reduced tickets. This may save money while still offering opportunity with authors. The library could have events ahead of time as a tie-in.
 - iii. There was also a proposal to donate funds for storage in Craft Room.
 - iv. Include Friends minutes in monthly packet
 - 1. This would make it easier to access for the board and public.
 - 2. Barbara motioned to include.
 - 3. Lisa seconded.
 - 4. Motion passed.
 - v. Next meeting October always looking for new members
 - vi. The Friends have been selected for NH Charitable gaming from October 3-12 at Ocean Gaming in Hampton.
- h. Social
 - i. September 17th Staff Appreciation Day

1. Thanks for helping and organizing.
2. Thanks from the staff for hosting.
3. It was a great opportunity for the staff to connect with trustees.
5. Continuing Business
6. New Business
 - a. Need new Vice Chair & name for new Library Trustee
 - i. Sarah happy to step up as Vice Chair.
 - ii. Cathleen willing to be secretary.
 - iii. Barbara motioned for Sarah to be Vice Chair and Cathleen secretary.
 - iv. Kathy seconded.
 - v. Motion approved.
 - b. 2025-2026 Annual Appeal
 - i. All of the thank you cards have been written for 2024-2025. There was some trouble with digital donations, but we have found a way.
 - ii. Question of how worked last year
 1. We advertised with posters, the library newsletter, the website, social media, Exeter TV. No mail was sent out.
 2. We can only send emails to those who have given before.
 3. The theme for last year's annual appeal was not as appealing. It brought in slightly less (less than \$1,000 difference) than years past, but there was no expense.
 4. This year we should have a trustee talk to town newsletter. Cathleen said she would be willing to.
 5. This year we should include facts of the library self-funding and budget report. Help people realize how much does for town and how much prices are today.
 6. Theme: fund at different levels
 - a. Be a book donor with average
 - b. Be a book shelf donor
 - c. Be a book case
 - d. We should have a chart to fill and update with donations.
 - e. Staff to come up with title
 - c. Committee reorganization proposal by Sarah James
 - i. Tabled until next meeting
 - d. Official vote to have closing Hours for Holidays to match Town of Exeter Employee Appreciations Days,
 - i. 2025 Appreciation Days are as follows: Wednesday, November 26 close at 12, December 26 closed all day, December 31, closed at noon
 - ii. Barbara motioned to adopt the appreciation days as stated.
 - iii. Lisa seconded.
 - iv. Motioned passed.
 - v. Note this adoption includes closing at noon
 - e. October 25th NHLTA meeting in Barrington 10:30AM – 12:30 PM
 - f. Next meeting October 28, 2025 6 PM @ Exeter Public Library
7. Closed session if necessary (RSA: 91-A: 3 Executive Session)
8. Public comment
9. Adjourn

- a. Barbara motioned to adjourn.
- b. Sarah seconded.
- c. Meeting adjourned at 7:44 PM.