

First meeting

Julia Lanter, Sherry Kostenbader, Susan Feltus, Cathleen Toomey

- 1) History: Julia provided an overview of the fundraising efforts in the past, primarily focused on the annual appeal. The appeal was a letter mailed to about 2,000 people, including prior donors and new residents and generated 9-10,000 prior to 2020. After the library's renovation, that number trended down to be \$4-6,000. In 2025 no letter was mailed due to cost (\$2,000) and the appeal went out via email (which is no longer allowed by new law) and we generated less than \$4,000.
- 2) Need: Julia reviewed the need which is to ensure we have a safety net. The two covers 98% of the budget, but there is no contingency in the case of infrastructure issues, of which we have had many this past year. The HVAC, plumbing, elevator and fire suppression systems are all 40 years old.
- 3) Goal: Julia identified a long-term goal of having the library build a savings account as a safety net; and for establishing systems that will be cost effective. She would also like to diversify the library's source of income so that it can be less reliant on town coffers. Possibly creating a Foundation to help with that.
- 4) Market: We need to reach beyond patrons and Friends to build our fundraising effort. To do that we have to communicate the viability and importance of the library for those who are non-believers.
- 5) Partners: Julia will work on a spreadsheet to identify possible partners and connections for us to make that will help us expand our market for potential supporters and donors.
- 6) Brainstorming: We all began brainstorming and the following were ideas to pursue:
 - a) Cathleen will reach out to designer friend to create a logo and tagline that says Exeter Read Free that we can use on merchandise to sell and as our focal point for this year's campaign
 - b) Susan will reach out to Minuteman Press to determine cost of an oversized postcard, perhaps perforated for a bookmark as the annual appeal communication.

- c) Julia will reach out to Portsmouth library to see what they sell in their shop, what their markup is, and what they generate, to see if we can mimic that and produce; T shirts, candles, tote bags, mugs, European car decals, pens, etc. to sell as “pop ups” as a way to generate income.
- d) Susan mentioned hosting an event as a fundraiser.
- e) Cathleen will reach out to The Word Bard, and to the Midnight Wrens to see if we could host a concert there during the first week of October for Banned Books Week. There may be costs involved
- f) Julia is going to ask the librarians for their story on why EPL changes lives, for content for the text of the annual appeal.
- g) Julia mentioned Sarah Koss and asking her to create a woodcut of the library /river that we could reproduce.
- h) We discussed a possible concert at the library that may involve drinks and the Colgate 13 (correct name?).
- i) Julia suggested we join the Chamber to expand our market reach. Susan suggested the Friends cover the \$400 fee.
- j) We discussed reaching out to local organizations such as the Hospital, and local corporations.
- k) Julia will research the laws about putting up signage for any corporation that donates \$\$.
- l) Julia will send out committee some facts that we can review for possible use in the appeal, such as the 3,000 DVDs that were each checked out at least 3 X (except 45 of them)

NEXT MEETING: JUNE 22 at Noon at Library