

Brownell Library Board of Trustees Meeting

Minutes

Tuesday, August 18, 2026 7:00 pm

Recorder: Helen Donahey

Present: Dottie Bergendahl, Alex Carmical, Helen Donahey, Jessica Dow, Karen Hergesheimer, Venessa Luck, Sheila Porter, Kory Riemensperger. Present online: Linda Hasan. Staff present: Hannah Tracy.

1. Agenda changes/deletion - the agenda was updated to reflect the correct date of the June minutes.
2. Public to be heard - none
3. Announcements:
 - a. Welcome Kory - new trustee Kory Riemensperger introduced himself, and trustees present introduced themselves.
 - b. Meet Me on Main will take place in EJ on Sept. 19, Sept. 26, and Oct. 3rd. Karen will send sign-ups.
 - c. Karen requests that trustees email any agenda items the first week of the month.
4. Staff Education - First Amendment auditors and limited public forum at public libraries - Hannah Tracy
Hannah shared information regarding managing First Amendment auditors and the right to privacy that exists in the library space. The library does have a policy that covers filming in the library, and staff have been trained on how to manage this should it occur.
5. Minutes of Tuesday June 16, 2026 - a motion to approve the minutes of June 16 2026 was made by Sheila Porter and seconded by Dottie and passed unanimously.
6. Financial Report - Venessa reviewed the budgets, both FY2026 and FY2027 which began on July 1. Currently on budget for FY2027. Dottie raised a question regarding the youth budget. Venessa will follow up.
Dottie raised an issue with the reporting which Karen has followed up on.
Updated FY28 budget process - the new shortened timeline means that staff will present the draft budget to the budget work group (Venessa and Sheila) prior to the meeting for trustee input.
Venessa has created a spreadsheet for tracking trustee-managed funds. Current fund balance is \$4,981.57 in cash, from funds raised at the Memorial Day book sale and due to cashing out a CD in order to free up funds for the 100th party. The budget work group will make recommendations for that cash. Venessa is working to better understand the status of the foundation's restricted funds.
Sheila moved, Dottie seconded acknowledging the financial report. Passed unanimously.
7. Reports
 - a. Library Director and Staff Reports (June and July).
 - i. Question re: how much the foundation was providing in support annually. Dottie shared that the Foundation had been contributing \$6k directly to the city which passed directly through to the library. Venessa will reach out to River regarding how this funding gap will impact library services.
 - ii. It was noted that Erna's retirement was celebrated and we welcome Sonny to a full-time position.
 - iii. Hannah spoke on how the library will be developing its role in resilient planning and preparedness around extreme weather. There will be a program in September.
8. Work Groups
 - a. 100th planning - Today was the final meeting of the 100th celebration work group. There are two celebrations still to come, the memory book (submissions encouraged - due October 1), planned to be

printed and available to buy in December. Helen and Tracy will be working on creating the book, and Ariana and River are planning the other event, an intergenerational evening of Vermont ghost stories on October 16.

- b. Sustainability - with Erna's retirement, Hannah is taking on this initiative. She gave a brief overview of the process of certification as a sustainable library. We are more than 50% of the way through the process.
- c. Mentoring - Venessa is working on an onboarding guide and will present it next month.
- d. Library Trustee background checks - Karen would like to table discussion of this item until Wendy is present. (Add to Old Business for the September meeting.)

9. Old Business - none

10. New Business

- a. Minute recorder sign-ups

Sept - Jessica

Oct - Venessa

Nov. - Kory

Dec. - Alex

Sheila moved adjournment at 8:00 p.m. The motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Donahey