

AMHERST TOWN LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES

Attendees: Dave Hallenbeck, Nancy Baker, Amy Lapointe, Steve Mantius, Gretchen Pyles, Nancy Head, CJ Bulter, Jim McGinness, Jackie McKnight, Elisabeth Larson, Toni Dinkel (remote)

Monday, August 18, 2025

Nancy Baker called to order 6:05pm
Reviewed minutes from June 24

Move to approve Liz Larson, Steve Mantius second all approved

6:09 Nancy Head and Gretchen Pyles arrived

Statistics: Active patrons 5,348 represents a good portion of town population. Circulation and door count were up from prior July.

Summer reading was huge success. 507 kids registered, up 20% from prior year. Reading hours were up too. Fabulous old-school events and lots of great energy.

Virtual programming continues to work well for adults. Joint programming with Groton and Tewkesbury have been good partners.

Running Girl - local student from Ukraine who wrote a book and coming to give reading.

New boiler installed, LeBlanc heating did it and were absolutely wonderful. Elevator is next on the docket either for repair or replacement.

Closed Labor Day weekend. Sunday hours resume after Labor Day.

New pages are in place. All trained and ready to get started.

State budget still looking like will have budget cut next year, which will include NH State Library.. HB 273 (relative to parents access to minors records of current outstanding physical materials) signed into law, effective January 1. Will require some policy and procedure changes.

IMLS funding recommendation from Senate Appropriations Committee basically level..

New gifts: \$1,000 gift from Amherst Junior Women's Club. Gretchen Pyles moves, Dave Hallenbeck second, all approve

Treasurer's Report

Overspent budget by \$35,000, primarily due to personnel wages, health insurance (budgeted by town), benefits and NHRS. Lengthy discussion how to safeguard against going forward.

New wage scale increased some wages in January. Final pay period straddled fiscal years and might have all been applied to FY25.

Town contributes to HSA in July and January, but still HSA contribution is already over budget. Annual GMILCS dues paid in July (which is majority of software line) distorts percentage spent..

Investment account in order.

Review of Collection Development Policy

- Limit patron purchase requests to 10. Discussion around if 10 is too high? BOT suggested 6.
- Update around self published materials.
- Attempt to curate a collection that avoided AI generated and/or AI narrated materials.
- DH presentation raised issues around enforcement, narrow definition of AI, censorship, popularity of collection potentially at risk.
- Acknowledged that AI section in particular will require periodic review.
- BOT lengthy, spirited debate.

Review of Request of Reconsideration Policy and Form

- Must be an Amherst resident and cardholder to make a request. Material can only be reviewed once every 3 years. Committee to review is staff and one trustee.
- We have never had a request for review.

Steve Mantius move to approve to vote on and approve the policy and the form. Elisabeth Larson second all in favor. Nancy Baker requested review in 6 months, particularly section on AI..

2026 Holiday Schedule

- Staff appreciated 3pm close on holidays. Will continue.
- Halloween strategic opening for restrooms, respite and trick or treat.
- 11 paid holidays, commensurate with town.

Gretchen Pyles move to approve, Steve Mantius seconded. All in favor to approve policy.

Review of budget timeline for town.

Strategic plan review at BOT 9/8 at 6:30 and 9/9 at 3pm. Amy will let us know what night she presents.

Dave Hallenbeck made proposal that wants 15 minutes per meeting of future analysis at board meetings.

- Nancy Baker asked if could provide with some article/podcast on what is happening in library world to provide focus
- 1 month trial; keeping staff time/prep in mind. Focus next month: early literacy

Nancy Head and Jackie McKnight need to talk to Sarah Leonardi about forwarding ATL email to preferred email address.

Nancy Head move to adjourn, Steve Mantius seconded, unanimous 7:55pm

Next scheduled meeting September 22, 2025 6pm

Respectfully submitted, Elisabeth Larson, Secretary