Brownell Library Board of Trustees meeting minutes
Kolvoord Community Room
6 Lincoln Street, Essex Junction, VT
Tuesday, October 21, 2025

Attendees: Trustees: Karen Hergesheimer, Dottie Bergendahl, Jeanne Grant, Helen Donahey, Sheila Porter, Jessica Dow, Christine Packard, Alex Carmical, Venessa Luck (remote).
Teen Trustees: Gabby Stevenson, Rhiannon Adams
Staff: Wendy Hysko (remote), Alison Pierce

Meeting called to order by Karen at 7:03

1. Agenda changes/Deletions: note taker is Jeanne, not Christine
2. Public to be heard: Liz, a Foundation member, thanked the Trustees for helping at the monthly Book Donations
3. Announcements: Wendy had a Budget meeting with Regina and Jess: there will be a new carpet installed in the mid- and lower-levels of the Library.
4. Minutes of Tuesday, Sept. 16, 2025: Sheila moved we accept as written, Dottie seconded, all in favor
5. Financial report: $2023.52 in Trustee checking; $2946.04 Trustee CD. Budget approximately where we expect: most line items at around 25% and we're through 25% of year. Buildings budget : some items over due to one-time project but overall fine. 6 HVACs need to be replaced, one or two immediately as they failed this summer. Will be in 2027/2028 Library budget. Sheila moved to acknowledge, Alex seconded, All in favor.
6. Reports: New cleaner going well: On-line ticketing and responsive. Wasp situation resolved. Karen doing study on how long it takes Staff to get Trustee monthly reports together . Looking for input from Trustees: Are all items in report useful in our roles in supporting Library and is info presented in best way. Looking to possibly streamline data and narrative so it is more efficient for staff to gather and present. Discussion ensued. Alison open to providing yearly stats in August as she used to if Trustees find it useful. Different staff people put together different parts of report. Venessa suggested saying formal goodbye to Erin in Nov. meeting.
7. No committees
8. Work Groups: 100th planning: first party January 10 2:30-4:30 (make sure this doesn't overlap with City wide budget discussions that are held in January.) Kick-off to Year of Samuel Brownell. Food, music, tshirts. $ from Adult budget. July 18 party hosted by Trustees. Like Meet Me On Main but Meet me at

Brownell. Food trucks, activities for kids, B & Js. July 20 cake and balloons in Library to celebrate Samuel Brownell's birthday. Historical society will do events as well. Plan to put book together featuring community members' stories about Brownell; perhaps interviews and videos as well, photos, artwork, children's drawings.

9. Sustainability and Diverse recruitment. Tonight focused on SLI Goal I.2. Trustees approved using draft included in meeting packet with amendments: removing "elected" under #1, 2nd bullet; removing "recruit" under #2, 2nd bullet; adding develop robust onboarding process under #3. Helen moved to adopt as amended; Sheila seconded; all approved. Will pass this on to Erna to submit to SLI certification. Next steps: review job description Alex developed and Jeanne and Karen tweaked; then review Equity statement and determine how and where to present . Ongoing discussion. Ideas: focus groups with people who are not active library users. Have written materials describing Trustee roles and responsibilities to hand out at events. Creating decorum and norms in event Brownell is presented with challenges to Collection, policies or staff.
10. Budget work group: Budget submitted on Sept. 22 and we have no new information. If we flat fund we will have to make cuts. Regina concerned about Brownell having to flat fund. Karen is putting together a presentation on what flat funding means and will mean in the future. What are the losses at 3%-5%? Discussed statewide library stats.
11. Foundation: Work date to clean up Booksale Room: Nov. 8, 9-12. Discussing holding fewer Book Donation days. Concern about how to dispose of books that are old and not moving, particularly Discards. Concern about Foundation mail opened by Library staff with Foundation mail being sent to 6 Lincoln along with Library mail. The Foundation does have their own PO Box. General difficulty with communication btw. Foundation and Staff and policies and procedures being developed. Also intend to have yearly meeting with Staff, Foundation and Trustees.
12. Old business: Roof update: original company who accepted job backed out, 2nd company that was chosen has signed on and completion date should be June 1, 2026. Repair cafe very successful and positive; Meet Me On Main very successful and positive. Group norms: will go on next month's agenda.
13. Adjournment: Sheila moved to adjourn, Christine seconded. All approved. Adjourned at 8:45.

Minutes submitted by Jeanne Grant