

Meeting of The Essex Free Library Board of Trustees

November 19, 2025

Present:

Janet Watts, Marie Froeschl, Pam Blake, Ellen Knowles, Caitlin Corless

Remote:

Emily Gibbs, Mallori Longevin, Allan Ramsay

1. **Call to order:** 7:02pm - note: remote access spotty until 7:15. Caitlin used cell hotspot to fix issue.
2. **Agenda changes** - none
3. **Review and Approve Minutes** - Ellen moved to approve and Marie seconded. All approved.
4. **Announcements** - Janet and Marie attended the Selectboard meeting this week. Discussed Accessibility study, changes to the budget, size of new library. Marie discovered she taught Ethan Lawrence PE back in the day!
5. **Public to be Heard** - none
6. **Reports** -
 - Library Director's Report -
 - Can not say enough about the fabulous staff! All are involved and motivated to learn beyond the walls of the library.
 - The evening programs have not been well attended. Having these kinds of programs was a request that was mentioned frequently in the community survey so unsure of why they are not well attended. Will continue with them for the time being.
 - Baker and Taylor was an automatic book buying subscription that has now closed. This was unexpected so there was a scramble to set up something new. This is now in place with Ingram.
 - Increase in both physical and digital books so the budget will be evenly distributed for these purchases.
 - Library card system recently cleaned up so library membership may look like it has decreased but it is just the removal of inactive accounts.

7. Business -

1. ADA Assessment

- We look pretty good for a Vermont Library
- 1st time in 20 year history to have this assessment done with a written report
- Accessible entrance being worked on by Town Maintenance staff.
- Intercom system discussed. Possible “RING” product could be used
- Most important is replacement of tables. Caitlin researching. Suggestions of requesting Friends money, applying for a grant or local furniture builder. Perhaps upstairs round tables could be lifted in some way. Large table on the main floor will need to be replaced.

2. Budget Review

- Biggest increase is for additional staff hours. Safety and coverage are currently issues with existing staff hours. After reviewing original budget submission with Karen, the increase was decreased from 19.5 hours to 9.5 hours. This will be presented to the Selectboard.
- Other major addition is for ADA compliant tables based on the assessment

3. Review Bylaws

- Changes to conference attendance and order of business at meetings
- Pam moved to accept Bylaws with changes and Ellen seconded. All approved.

8. Friends update

- Cozy Nook Craft Fair was a great success! \$1450 from crafters, \$325 from bake sale, \$401 from raffle

9. Adjourn - 8:00pm with reminder of no December meeting. See you in the New Year!