

Meeting of The Essex Free Library Board of Trustees

February 18, 2026

Present:

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

Remote:

Emily Gibbs, Allan Ramsay

Call to order: 7:00PM

1. **Agenda changes** - none
2. **Review and Approve Minutes** - Marie moved to approve and Janet seconded. All approved.
3. **Announcements** - none
4. **Public to be Heard** - Kristen MacIntyre attended remotely for a short period
5. **Reports** -

Library Director's Report -

- The fabulous staff is at it again! All are involved in Vokal committees and learning new things.
- As of this morning the intercom system is up and running. It includes a non-recording video feature so staff can see who is requesting entrance. As of now, someone goes to the back door to let folks in but if money allows, in the future, there will be the addition of an automatic door opener.
- We are currently involved a one year pilot program with 4 other local libraries. Rather than use the State inter library loan program, there is a currier system to deliver books between these libraries. Currently there is no extra currier charge but this may change in the future depending on the success of the pilot program.
- The select board has approved \$7,500 for purchase of the ADA complaint tables. This will cover the cost of the tables needing to be replaced.
- The internet is still having problems and it is a mystery. The equipment is at the public works building currently and has worked in the past for the library as well. There may be a need for new equipment specifically for the library. The Town IT folks are investigating.

- Kanopy and Comics Plus are newer apps patrons can access with their library card.

Thinking about ways to let folks know they are available and how to access them.

6. **Business -**

1. Library Incident and Working with Police and Howard Center

- ✦ There were 4 separate incidences involving the same individual
- ✦ The police and Howard Center were contacted during the 4th incident
- ✦ Many things were learned by the staff and police regarding how to best handle this type of situation
- ✦ Sargent May from Essex PD came for a debrief and then the library staff had their own debrief after this.
- ✦ There is now a plan in place that all feel comfortable with which includes an updated Patron Code of Behavior. The Code document now includes a signature line for a patron to sign acknowledging they have read the document.

2. Review of Patron Code of Behavior

- ✦ Pam moved to accept the Patron Code of Behavior with changes. Ellen seconded. All approved.

3. Review of Who May Use the Library Policy

- ✦ Pam moved to accept Policy with changes and Marie seconded. All approved.

4. Preparation for Town Meeting

- ✦ Monday 3/2 at EMS. Set up 4-5pm. Showcase of all Town departments from 5-7:30.
- ✦ Soup dinner from 5:00
- ✦ Anyone welcome to come sit at the table. There may be questions regarding the vote on the new Town Center which could incorporate a new library. Caitlin may put together a visual stating some facts regarding the current library and its capacities for serving the community.

7. **Friends update**

- Will be meeting with Karen for clarification on 501C3 status. There may be changes with regard to check writing and cashing.

- New book collection system for annual book sale to start this week. Will be 3 days in February, April and the week before the sale.
- The next Friends meeting will discuss the garden tour and book sale.

8. **Adjourn** - 7:56pm