

Meeting of The Essex Free Library Board of Trustees

April 15, 2026

Present:

Marie Froeschl, Pam Blake, Ellen Knowles, Caitlin Corless, Mallori Longevin,
Allan Ramsay

Absent:

Emily Gibbs, Janet Watts

Call to order: 7:00PM

1. **Agenda changes** - none
2. **Review and Approve Minutes** - Allan moved to approve and Mallori seconded. All approved.
3. **Announcements** - none
4. **Public to be Heard** - none
5. **Reports** -

Library Director's Report -

- Everyone is busy at the Essex Free Library! In addition to regular work responsibilities all are involved, one way or another, in Vokal sub-committees. Caitlin shared she is a part of Aspen, which is the web building app committee and is finding the learning quite fun.
- Victoria did a tour for folks from Mansfield Place. They will be busing over once a month. A few even signed up for library cards!
- Emily has all the children's Summer programming scheduled. The theme is "Dig into Reading" and is full of dinosaur fun. She is also in the process of interviewing teens for the summer internship program.
- The internet is still a mystery. Latest word is that new equipment, specifically for the library, will be installed by mid June. Fingers crossed!
- All interior windows were washed today and the outside is scheduled for tomorrow.

- 2 people have expressed an interest in being a master gardener for the library. Their project needs to be approved by the master gardener program. Other outside maintenance and lawn care is taken care of by the town.
- May 13 is the volunteer breakfast. Donuts!!

6. **Business -**

a. Town Meeting & Budget vote

- ✦ Meeting went well
- ✦ Budget passed. Very little change from last year. Additional items were: advertising money to use for marketing programs, 4 more hot spots, and the approved ADA money for the tables.

b. First Amendment Auditor Discussion

- ✦ Caitlin explained this is a person who goes into public spaces with a camera and takes pictures, just to prove that they are within their rights to do so. They do this to primarily stir people up. A municipal employee can not have the expectation of not having their picture taken BUT a patron of the library can say they do not want their picture taken. If the “Auditor” does not comply, it could be considered harassment and the police could be involved. Advice from the police, “Keep calm and be boring.”

c. Determine schedule for policies to review

- ✦ There are currently 11 policies. It was suggested to review the oldest first. Caitlin will include 2 for next month.
- ✦ Allan asked if we were continuing: the COVID tests -no, Gun Locks - ending this fall, Harm Reduction Packs - Dept of Health still supplies them and we have plenty.

d. Convene evaluation team for Library Director’s evaluation

- ✦ Marie indicated that this was something Janet would be heading up. When the email for input is sent to everyone, please remember to just reply to Janet. Do not “reply all” as that would be a violation of public meeting law.

e. Update on monetary donations

- ✦ A bit confusing right now. Folks from the town along with Caitlin and Friends representatives are reviewing the policy. Has to do with being a

501C3 and how checks are written out whether the money goes to the town or to the Friends.

- ✦ As an aside, Allan asked about a donor list. He felt it could be a valuable tool to help raise money.

f. Friends Update

- ✦ Starting tomorrow is the next book donation weekend.
- ✦ Marie expressed a concern about making sure people collecting the books were trained regarding what we will take and what we will not.

Adjourn - 7:50pm