

## MEETING LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES

Tuesday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2026, 7:30 PM

### Virtual Meeting

#### Trustees Participating

- Brian Connolly (Chair)
- Thais Bessa
- Erin Carroll
- Chris Kenney
- Sue Lepard
- Mary McKenna
- Seth Molloy
- Frank Orlando
- Tom VanLangen

#### Other Participating

- Liz Anderson (Library Director)
- Jen Carlson (Assistant Director)
- Douglas Brown (President Sherborn Historical Society)
- Martha Mahard (Sherborn Historical Society)
- Margo Powicki (Sherborn Historical Society)
- Caelum Noonan (Technology Library Assistant)

#### History Center Update (Douglas Brown)

- The Historical Society set a goal last year to raise \$250,000 in private funding for the project by the anniversary of the Battle of Bunker Hill (June 17) and ultimately raised approximately \$500,000, enabling the project to proceed.
- Architect Yugon Kim completed a cost estimate over the summer, confirming that projected construction costs aligned with earlier estimates.
- The Town issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for general contractors, receiving 11 bids, with seven bids under budget. The lowest qualified bidder was selected following reference checks.
- The selected bid was approximately \$100,000 below the project budget.
- The Historical Society, the Town, and the Library executed a Memorandum of Understanding, and a three-party lease agreement among the Town, the Historical Society, and the Library is in preparation.
- The Town Administrator is expected to finalize contract documentation with the contractor shortly.

- The contractor has provided a preliminary construction timeline, with substantial completion tentatively projected around June 17, though fall completion had originally been anticipated.
- The Historical Society plans to host a ceremonial groundbreaking event to mark the start of the project.
- Trustees noted that Sean Killeen (DPW Director) will serve as project manager for the Town, with architect Yugon Kim continuing to support the construction phase.
- Doug Brown highlighted the collaborative effort among the Historical Society, Library, and Town in advancing the project.

### **Trustee Chair's report** (Brian Connolly)

#### **Motion to approve January Minutes**

- Mary, Sue second. Unanimous vote to approve.

#### ***Town Caucus***

- The Town Caucus will be held on March 5 at 7:00 PM at the 1858 Town House, and Trustees are encouraged to attend in support of Library Trustee candidates.
- The Chair reported that Frank Orlando and Thais Bessa will seek re-election, and that Courtney Williams will run for Library Trustee; Erin Carroll will nominate Ms. Williams at the caucus.
- Brian noted that an additional potential candidate was also being contacted.
- Trustees discussed caucus logistics, including nomination procedures and candidate statements.

#### ***Board Self-Evaluation and Trustee Onboarding***

- Brian reported that 8 of 10 evaluation responses were received. Overall results were positive, with most responses averaging 4 or higher on a 5-point scale.
- Areas identified for improvement included:
  - Orientation for new Trustees;
  - Clarification of Board roles and responsibilities, including committee roles;
  - Support for ongoing Board development; and
  - Clearer understanding of the Chair's role.
- Trustees discussed the need for a more structured onboarding process for both prospective candidates and newly elected Trustees, noting that the role, committee structure, annual cycle of work, and Sherborn-specific governance context are not always immediately clear.

- Several Trustees noted that onboarding can be especially challenging during periods of major institutional activity, such as the recent renovation and litigation period, and that a clearer orientation process could help new members understand where their skills and interests best fit. It was also noted that it can be challenging for new Trustees to integrate into a Board where most members have served for many years, and that a clearer onboarding process could help new members feel more welcome and comfortable contributing earlier in their tenure.
- Trustees discussed creating a brief orientation or welcome packet, potentially including:
  - A one-page overview of the Trustee role;
  - Committee descriptions and current committee assignments;
  - The annual Board cycle (including budgeting and Town processes);
  - The distinction between the roles of the Trustees, Library staff, Friends, and endowment funds; and
  - References to existing MBLC Trustee materials and training resources.
- Trustees also discussed pairing new Trustees with an existing Trustee through a buddy system to provide a more personal introduction to the Board, answer questions, and ease transition into Board work.
- Sue offered to help draft orientation materials, with input from current Trustees on their respective roles.
- Trustees agreed to return to the topic at the April meeting to prepare materials and an onboarding approach for any new incoming Trustees in May.

**Friends of the Sherborn Library Report** (Liz Anderson, on behalf of The Friends)

- The Winterfest event in early February was reported to be successful despite inclement weather, with strong attendance. As part of the event, 12 baskets were assembled for long-stay hospital patients and donated.
- The annual book sale is scheduled for Thursday-Saturday of this week, rather than the traditional Friday-Sunday schedule.
- A Trivia Night will be held on April 11.

**House Subcommittee** (Chris Kenney, Thais Bessa)

- We continue to work with the artist to finalize a completion date for the Children's Wing mural; revisions to the agreement letter are in progress.
- Materials for the approved Teen Art Gallery project, including gallery rails and lighting, have been delivered, and installation is being scheduled.

- A memorial bench donated in honor of a former Library Trustee has been received and will be installed near the new stair plantings facing Town Hall once weather permits.
- DPW has assisted Library staff in clearing the basement in preparation for the History Center construction.
- The Safety and Security Manual has been reviewed by the Fire Department and is now under review by the Police Department.

### ***Use of Library as an Emergency/ Warming Center***

- Trustees discussed the Library's recent use as a warming center during power outages and agreed that additional planning is needed before the role is formalized.
- The Director noted that the Library has increasingly been asked to serve in this capacity during major storms and power outages, particularly now that generator upgrades allow the building to remain accessible.
- Trustees expressed support for the Library serving the community during emergencies, but raised questions about staffing expectations, especially outside normal operating hours, and whether Library staff should be responsible for opening or supervising the building during emergency events.
- Trustees discussed the need to clarify who would manage the site, whether the Library would simply provide space or whether the Town's emergency response personnel would assume operational responsibility.
- Concerns were also raised regarding security, supervision, liability, protection of collections and equipment, and the use of the building by unsupervised members of the public during emergency operations.
- Trustees noted that needs during a short-duration outage may differ significantly from a longer emergency and that different protocols may be needed depending on the length and severity of the event.
- Margo Powicki shared prior experience coordinating a warming center elsewhere and emphasized the importance of a clearly defined operational structure and assigned team, noting that such efforts can quickly become complex.
- Trustees discussed consulting with the Town Administrator and the Town's emergency management leadership to clarify roles, responsibilities, and possible alternative locations, and agreed that the Library should not independently carry the full burden of managing an emergency shelter operation.
- The Subcommittee will continue to review the issue and return with recommendations.

### **Finance Subcommittee** (Frank Orlando and Tom VanLangen)

- The Subcommittee reviewed the January endowment report (see slides below). Total endowment assets were reported at approximately \$3.4 million as of the end of

January. The main endowment account continues to be held at UBS, while the smaller “finishing touches” subaccount is being drawn down as remaining library projects are completed. Town-held library trust funds remain invested separately. The only recent endowment transaction reported was a payment for previously approved library signage.

- Trustees discussed the current investment management fee structure, including the higher fee associated with the UBS-managed account as compared with lower-cost alternatives. The Chair and Finance Subcommittee reported that the issue had recently been raised by Steve Bonder, who suggested that the Trustees may wish to review whether a lower-cost management approach could reduce fees. Trustees discussed the tradeoff between lower management fees and the additional responsibility that a more self-directed investment approach would place on the Board, including portfolio oversight, continuity between Treasurers, operational processing of deposits and withdrawals, and fiduciary risk.
- Trustees agreed that it would be appropriate to review the endowment management approach over the coming months and to raise the issue with UBS, including whether fees could be reduced under the current arrangement. Trustees also noted that any future change in endowment management would warrant communication with the Saltonstall Foundation, given the trust's significance within the endowment.

## Endowment activity

### Main Acct

#### Change in the value of your account

January 2026 (\$)

<b>Opening account value</b>	<b>\$3,340,597.27</b>
Withdrawals and fees, including investments transferred out	-5,822.48
Dividend and interest income	1,537.09
Change in value of accrued interest	2,587.63
Change in market value	64,355.42
<b>Closing account value</b>	<b>\$3,403,254.93</b>

### Sub Acct

#### Change in the value of your account

January 2026 (\$)

<b>Opening account value</b>	<b>\$179,429.63</b>
Withdrawals and fees, including investments transferred out	-1,231.31
Dividend and interest income	473.26
<b>Closing account value</b>	<b>\$178,671.58</b>

### Town held funds

beginning mkt value	\$124,983.60
withdrawals	\$0.00
mkt gain	\$2,030.43
Ending Mkt value	\$127,014.03

Filtered by - Date: 01/01/2026-02/01/2026, Activity Type: WITHDRAWAL, Money Mark:

Account N	Date	Activity	Description	Type	Amount	Friendly Account Name
JJ 38922	01/23/2026	WITHDRAWA	CHECK # 0002729234 TO Tucker Library Interior Cash		(\$1,231.31)	Sherborn Sub

- Liz reported that the next major budget milestone is the Advisory Committee public hearing on March 21.
- The Town remains in a very tight budget year, with departments being asked to identify possible reductions to close the remaining budget gap and avoid Proposition 2.5 override.
- Brian reported that a meeting with Advisory liaisons was scheduled for the following day and that additional guidance or requests were expected following that discussion. Trustees noted that the current budget draft remains slightly above the COLA-based target at the bottom line, despite increased endowment support. Advisory may again ask the Library to increase its draw from the endowment. Any revised Library budget would need to be approved by the Board before submission.

## Updates & Upcoming

- FY 27 Library Operating Budget Schedule:
  - Early November: COLA recommendation / budget draft from Deb - Done
  - December 11, 1:30-2:30pm: Budget Meeting with Jeremy, Deb and Diane (Town Hall) - Done
  - December 31, FY 27 Budget Drafts Due to the Town/Advisory – Done
  - Jan 14, Review with Advisory 7 PM
  - Advisory Committee Public Hearing: Saturday, March 21
  - Annual Town Meeting: April 28 ( 2 ½ override may be needed)

Account Name	FY23 Actual	FY24 Actual	FY25 Actual	3 Year Avg	FY26 Budget	FY27 Bud Request	2027% over 2026
LIB Library Director	105,820	104,500	108,466	107,595	111,290	114,907	3.25%
LIB Childrens Librarian	34,468	36,847	64,849	45,388	56,837	71,725	7.11%
LIB Tech Svcs Librarian	37,675	35,221	45,884	40,880	41,773	51,757	23.90% \$5176 Increase above COLA
LIB Senior Assistants	41,068	56,352	44,561	45,340	50,205	51,888	3.25%
LIB Assistants	5,560	4,582	7,813	6,112	7,080	7,290	3.25%
LIB Circulation Supervisor	0	27,064	20,613	15,892	23,543	23,043	-2.12%
LIB Teen Services Librarian	60,281	57,444	65,208	60,978	66,837	60,383	-9.66%
LIB Assistant Director	41,018	61,943	71,428	59,479	73,101	75,477	3.25%
LIB Student Helpers	20,294	21,811	17,334	19,813	15,496	17,040	9.96% \$1040 Increase above COLA
LIB Children's Assistant	0	0	0	0	22,712	27,168	19.62%
LIB Longevity	0	0	239	86	0	0	0.00%
<b>Total Salaries</b>	<b>352,185</b>	<b>405,944</b>	<b>446,053</b>	<b>401,394</b>	<b>478,854</b>	<b>500,628</b>	<b>4.35% Increase of \$6,217 over COLA</b>
LIB BLDG Landscape & Maintenance	53,938	19,256	22,588	31,927	10,304	10,304	0.00%
LIB BLDG Computer Tech Support	560	1,292	0	617	250	150	0.00%
LIB Telephone	6,879	6,043	3,090	6,004	6,000	6,000	0.00%
LIB Computer Online Services	40,565	40,611	39,325	40,167	42,000	41,788	-0.51% Reduced Books & Comp Online by \$4,625 Endowment Contribution
LIB BLDG Website Hosting	600	600	600	600	600	600	0.00%
LIB BLDG Website Maintenance	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	0.00%
LIB Minuteman Network	28,886	22,557	24,443	25,429	27,976	27,047	-3.32% Small Library Grant applied \$2,390
LIB Office Supplies	4,535	6,222	6,099	5,619	5,000	5,000	0.00%
LIB BLDG Supplies & Materials	3,679	16,590	3,114	6,581	7,500	7,500	0.00%
LIB BLDG Water	500	700	893	704	700	700	0.00%
LIB Films Books Etc.	53,178	35,762	60,588	56,509	61,483	61,897	0.35% With Books, needs to be 16% of overall budget, state requirement for
LIB Travel/Lodging/Meals	0	443	456	300	300	300	0.00%
LIB Meetings/Seminars	0	815	250	355	1,927	1,327	0.00%
LIB Insurance Bonds	0	274	274	183	274	274	0.00%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>196,940</b>	<b>169,525</b>	<b>169,315</b>	<b>178,593</b>	<b>167,914</b>	<b>166,986</b>	<b>-0.55% Decreased by \$6815</b>
<b>Total Department Expenses</b>	<b>549,125</b>	<b>575,669</b>	<b>615,367</b>	<b>579,987</b>	<b>646,768</b>	<b>667,614</b>	<b>3.22%</b>
<b>Endowment Contribution</b>	<b>69,014</b>	<b>71,015</b>	<b>76,662</b>		<b>83,519</b>	<b>91,942</b>	<b>10.69%</b>
<b>Net Requested Budget</b>	<b>480,111</b>	<b>504,454</b>	<b>529,515</b>		<b>563,249</b>	<b>575,672</b>	<b>2.21%</b>

### Policy Subcommittee (Mary McKenna, Susan Leopard)

- Several policy updates were presented for review, particularly to tighten language on Board appeals.

### **Material Selection Policy and Meeting Room Policy**

- Sue and Mary recommended adding the statement “The decision of the Board of Trustees is final” to both policies. This language was recommended as a best practice to clarify the Board’s authority in policy-related decisions.

### **Motion to approve amendments to the Material Selection Policy and Meeting Room Policy.**

- Frank, This second. Unanimous vote to approve.

### **Patron Behavior Policy**

- The Subcommittee presented proposed revisions to the Patron Behavior Policy, prompted by recent incidents in the library.
- The revisions strengthen language related to acceptable behavior and the library’s ability to respond to disruptive conduct.
- Trustees discussed whether the language should be reviewed by Town Counsel, particularly the final paragraph.
  - Trustees agreed the policy should be reviewed by Town Counsel before adoption.

### **Landscaping Gift Acceptance Policy**

- Sue and Mary recommended revisions to the Landscaping Gift Acceptance Policy. It previously contained extensive language related to the library renovation project, which is no longer relevant. The revised version removes renovation-related provisions and streamlines the policy. Trustees suggested adding the same language used in other policies, confirming that final decisions rest with the Board of Trustees.

**Motion to approve amendments to the Landscaping Gift Acceptance Policy.**

- Frank, Brian second. Unanimous vote to approve.

***Art Gallery Policy (including Teen Art Gallery)***

- Thais worked on a draft revision of the Art Gallery Policy, incorporating the proposed Teen Art Gallery. Rather than creating a separate policy, the draft integrates the Teen Gallery within the broader Art Gallery Policy while distinguishing between the Community Room gallery and the Teen Art Gallery.
- The draft:
  - Defines general guidelines that apply to both galleries, including liability disclaimers and restrictions on political or religious promotion.
  - Maintains the Community Room gallery, managed by the Friends of the Library.
  - Establishes the Teen Art Gallery, managed by library staff.
- The Teen Gallery is intended to provide teens with opportunities to display creative work, build portfolios and artistic confidence, and encourage participation in library programming. The draft policy allows library staff to determine which works are displayed and outlines procedures for submission and exhibition.
- Trustees discussed several elements of the draft, including:
  - Whether teen artwork should be permitted for sale and the potential administrative and liability implications.
  - Appropriate age parameters for the gallery.
- Trustees generally agreed that the gallery’s primary purpose should remain focused on teens, though some flexibility may be needed for younger participants involved in teen programming. Suggestions included describing the gallery as “targeted toward teenagers” rather than strictly limited by age.
- Ensuring that final decisions regarding acceptance, placement, and duration of exhibitions rest with library staff, as stated in the draft.
- The Policy Subcommittee will revise the draft based on Trustee feedback and return with an updated version for further review.

**Library Director’s, Assistant Director’s & Technology Assistant’s Report** (Liz Anderson, Jen Carlson, Caelum Noonan)

- Liz introduced Caelum Noonan, the Library's Technology Assistant, to the Trustees. Caelum works across circulation and technical services and assists with circulation desk coverage, item processing and mending, weekly technology drop-in hours for patrons seeking assistance with personal devices, and creating documentation for the technology setup in the Trustees' Room to support hybrid meetings.
- Trustees asked about the tech help sessions. Attendance varies but includes repeat patrons seeking assistance with device updates and basic troubleshooting.
- The library will hold a Staff Development Day on March 23. The proposed program includes a session on AI tools for libraries (led by a Massachusetts Library System consultant), training on the LibraryIQ analytics platform, and staff appreciation activities. Trustees were invited to attend the AI session.

**Motion to authorize closing the library to the public on March 23 for staff development.**

- Brian, Frank second. Unanimous vote to approve.
- The Director and Chair submitted the Library's Annual Report to the Town. It was suggested that recent annual reports could be included in the Trustee onboarding binder to provide historical context.
- Liz thanked Margo for assisting with the coordination related to the memorial bench for former Trustee Ed Perry.
- Staff are reviewing summer operating hours, using new library traffic data to help inform decisions about schedule adjustments.
- Library staff continue regular coordination with the Council on Aging, co-hosting approximately one program per month. Recent programs included a Downton Abbey-themed tea and a Black History program. Upcoming programs are a sourdough starter workshop and a new monthly movie matinee, beginning in March.
- The Knit and Crochet Club currently has a fiber arts display in the library through March.
- Electronic waste recycling bins are available through March 28.
- The library received multiple Sherborn Cultural Council grants, supporting programs such as a winter concert, a djembe drumming workshop, a blacksmith copper bookmark workshop, and a children's fossil program with the Easton Children's Museum.
- February school vacation week programming drew strong attendance, including visitors from neighboring communities.
- Upcoming events also include Indian dance performance, visit from children's author Jerry Pallotta, and performance by the Wellesley Symphony Orchestra.

**Motion to adjourn the meeting**

- Thais, Seth seconded. Unanimous vote to adjourn.

Adjourned 9:50pm.