Whiting Library, Chester, Vermont

Regular Meeting of Board of Trustees

Meeting Notes – Tuesday, July 21, 2026

In attendance in Community Room: Matt Gorsky, Polly Montgomery, Donna McNeill-Hudkins, Lyn Smith. Staff: Kale Burr, Carrie King. via Zoom: Penny Benneli. Absent: Linda Diak, Lora Cokolat.

Matt Called Meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

Additions to the agenda – Will discuss Lora leaving Board, or at least the Treasurer Position and the Scarecrow under New Business

Meeting Minutes from June 16th. Motion made to approve minutes. Minutes approved. No discussion.

TREASURER REPORT – Lora had submitted the Treasurer's Report via email to the board earlier in the week, she let Matt know that she was not going to attend tonight's meeting as she is away with her family.

Report is year to date through June 30th. Matt went through Lora's summary sheet.

Total Revenue through June 30, 2026: $15,355

Total Payroll Expenses through June 30, 2026: $57,712

Total Operating Expenses through June 30, 2026: $19,020

Assets:

Petty Cash: $100

Due To/From Other Funds (Operating Fund): $27,291.02

M&T CD: $30,293.27 (Maturity Date: 07/16/2026, 2.71%)

M&T Wealth Management Account: $209,949.65

Total Assets: $267,766.87

Revenue Highlights:

- Book Sales: $2,046
- Copier: $422
- Non-Resident Fee: $190
- Fundraising: $3,380
- Donations: $979
- Grants: $7,095

On the expense side, some items to highlight:

- Administration: $152 (Budgeted: $1,200)
- Fundraising: $0
- Supplies: $937 (Budgeted: $1,445)
- Books & Materials: $5,161 (Budgeted: $10,550)

- Professional Development: $2,138
- Postage: $726 (Budgeted: $1,620)
- Programs: $1,969 (Budgeted: $3,050)
- Copier: $1,031 (Budgeted: $1,500)
- Equipment & Technology: $919 (Budgeted: $2,288)
- Telephone: $1,746 (Budgeted: $3,510)
- Repairs, Maintenance: $683 (Budgeted: $1,000)
- Cleaning Charges: $3,325 (Budgeted: $7,800)

The M&T Bank CD matured on 7/16/26. Here's the information received from Deb Epler. The current 6-month rate is 2.71% APR / 2.75% APY. Lora sent Chuck Sharp, VP of M&T Bank an email asking what a 12-month rate would be and what the final dollar amount of maturity is. We need to inform Julie Hance on how we want to proceed.

Wilmington Trust Fund: For 2026, quarterly distributions in the amount of $2,514.35 are provided in the form of a check on the 17th of the following months: February, May, August, and November.

We will receive an overview about the library's trust fund at our August meeting. We will have Remus Preda join us.

The rest of the Reports are available upon request.

Wilmington Trust will join our meeting in August to review.

We have not received the funds from Andover yet. I believe we receive the funds from them in August (in the summer). We received the funds from Chester in October. Does Andover have a Town Manager? No, just a selectboard. We can ask the Town Clerk when the funds will be distributed. (Action for Treasurer)

We need to focus on non-resident Fees. This is low. When we do the budget, we should base the figure on past income from the non-resident fees. This year's budget was over-estimated. To clarify, the non-resident fees are for those who do not live in Chester, or Andover and want a Library Card with us.

Our current non-resident fee is $35.00; that is much less than surrounding communities. This is based on our tax rate. Kale is also planning to have Seasonal Cards for less, maybe $20.

YOUTH LIBRARIAN & DIRECTOR REPORTS - Available upon request. Highlights follow
Carrie reports that June was a blockbuster month. The best she's ever had as a librarian in the sense of the positive reception. Adopting the dinosaur was a big hit. Carrie wanted to give a "shout out" to Kim Leonard at Chester Andover Elementary School, she made arrangements for Carrie to go in and spend a few minutes in each classroom to discuss the Summer Reaching Challenge and promote the Library. It was very well received. She will take a look to see if she can see how many library cards we got in response to the dinosaur program.
Carrie also said that the scavenger hunt along the Brookside Trail was very successful. She was helped out by Gary King and Arnie Jonynas.
Carrie reported that someone who uses the trail every day said they heard the excitement in the kids while they were on the trail. He spoke to the kids and they all reported on the scavenger hunts from the Library! Good promotion.
Nature Museum comes once a week during July. Things will slow down a bit as people go on vacation.

DIRECTOR REPORT - Kale reports that she is working with Springfield Library and trying to develop other partnerships.

The Staff have established monthly staff development mornings which are fun and informative. The new substitute library assistant is trained and is on stand by for when we need her. Have worked out a good schedule for her since she juggles a couple of jobs. The Director will be away at the ARSL conference in September and a board member may have to come in and sit if needed.
Kale has developed a good rapport with Steve at the Town facilities dept. and has opened a good line of communication, so if anything goes wrong, he will fix it. He's been very helpful. Working on a leak in the roof that they don't seem to be able to find as it's intermittent.
Lyn suggested that while the town is looking at the roof, they should put up those clips that direct the snow away from coming down on the wheelchair ramp and over any doorways.
People really like the hydration station that was set up.
Kale has not been working on grants in June as she's been trying to get the website up and working again. A lot of technical issues (being helped by her favorite Tech volunteer).
Confirmed two Vermont Humanities speakers coming in on the 3rd and 11th – these will coincide with events that are happening on the Green.
As we did have quite a few technical issues with a WordPress update that went… broke bad. And so that… that should be resolved. We… we… I talked quite a bit with WordPress about it, like, they're in Bluehost with their technical support, and they say it's solved, so we've started uploading things again to it, but there was about a week and a half where we could do nothing on the site. This delayed some programming that was about to premiere in July.
Virtual Author talks did well.
We have had multiple people sign up for volunteer service.
Developing a Home-Schooling Collection of educational videos. Hoping it will be popular as we have many home-schooling parents. Could also get homeschooler parents from other towns.
Still receiving items as donations. Some are hard to catalogue. More people are learning about our "Library of Things". We have a better system now to locate where the things are in the Library, thanks to Nikki.
We discontinued BiblioPlus. Not worth the $500 cost. The funds can be redirected elsewhere.
Moving on with planning the Art Benefit. Moving it up to the 12th of September. She discussed using a service for the online purchasing. She had some reservations. Town will get back to Kale on that. The complication is because of that we're splitting, the revenue. 50 goes to the artist, 50 goes to the Library. We have to clear up how we do that.
New Library Card sales went up in June and has brought in revenue. It's coded under donations. Sold about 10 so far.
Several upcoming events on the green, and Julian mentioned that it might be a good time to do some sort of book sale. We can do the one on September 19th, perhaps just do it one day instead of two.
There is an event on the Green, the big Chester event is the 19th & 20th down the road.
We will have a Scarecrow for the Oct.3 & 4th. Should we do an outside book sale at that time too?
Kale is looking for help creating a scarecrow! It has to survive rain.
We are also almost done with establishing our own Friends of the Library group. It will be registered as a 5013c May be doing fundraisers by Christmas! Library is a liaison, but not directly involved in it.
Library Board would like to get together with them to meet once they are established and set up.
Trying to set up a collaboration with other libraries to have a "one card". i.e. whatever library participates, you can go in and say I'm not from this town, but I'd like to borrow this material and I will return it here.
Working on professional development classes for all. Lora coming in in August to teach about genealogy research. Kale attending the ARSL in Montgomery, AL
Looking to reintroduce weekly adult programming.
Looking for help in setting up for the Art benefit. Should we have reception first? Perhaps a silent auction? Discuss. The Art Benefit could be an annual thing.
FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE
From August last year to July this year we've received $18,633 in donations. Interesting to note that most of the donation funds came from just 14 donors. During this same timeframe last year, we had

over 30 donations, but brought in less money as most of those donations were in response to the mailing we did, and most of the donations were $20/$25.00. We did the smaller targeted mailing with cards and basically doubled what we took in last year at the same time.
We should do a fundraiser to local businesses for giving Tuesday in November. Will put together a list of local companies and send a mailer to them. Perhaps do a scale, if you donate $xxxx then we put a plaque on a book shelf or table in the Library . . .
POLICY – WE all had a chance to review the Personnel policy. Made some type-o suggestions and a word here and there. Otherwise, we discussed clarification of points. Penny will update with changes and we will vote on it at next month's meeting.
NEW BUSINESS –
Board needs a new Treasurer. Lora has to resign from handling that responsibility, if not the entire Board. Donna has said she's willing to be Treasurer if someone else steps up to be secretary.
Donna and Lyn will be Treasurer and Secretary,
Nomination for Donna as Treasurer, and seconded. For now, Donna will be Treasurer and Secretary with help from Lyn.
Motion carries. Donna now has the onus of the money. Yay.
PUBLIC COMMENT: Carrie & Kale are the public. Nobody else joined.
Motion to Adjourn, seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:06 PM
Next meeting is Tuesday, August 18th, 2026 at 6:30 PM