

Topsham Public Library Board of Trustees
Business Meeting Minutes
October 15, 2025

Present: Philip Dostie, James Doyle, Barbara Swiderski, Erin Arneson, Stephen Diamond, Donald Stein, Pamela Mott, Michael Snow, Laura Miller, Brian Alexander, Heather Helenora, Miles Dailey, Director Katherine Webber

Members of the Public Present: None

1. **Call to Order:** 7:01 PM by President Philip Dostie
2. **Approval of Agenda:** Barbara moved to accept the Agenda as presented, seconded by Jim. Motion carried by unanimous consent.
3. **Consent Agenda:** Steve identified two corrections in the Facilities Committee notes, and moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by Pam. Motion carried by unanimous consent.
4. **Children's Services Update:** Mariah Sewell, Children's Librarian, spoke about her accomplishments this past year. She has begun a weekly outreach program at Woodside Elementary School and the Bright Start pre-school program. The children's collection has just been "genrefied" with mixed results so far. There are 2 thriving book clubs each month and 3 Storytime sessions each week. There is a new, exciting art program for children started by gallery coordinator Kelsie Vosburgh. Her dance parties have had varied attendance, but participants seem to enjoy them. She invited everyone to a "Thriller" line dance party on October 30th at 6 PM. Her goals for this year are to expand her outreach program to Williams Cone Elementary School, expand outdoor-based programs, and to develop a home school skills library. Trustees thanked Miss Mariah for her many years of dedication to children's literacy and programming here at TPL.
5. **Treasurer's Report:** Erin explained that several items on the Budget vs Actual Report exceed the threshold for this period in the fiscal year due to payments due at the beginning of the year and the replacement of some laptops. Steve Bouchard has been added as a cardholder to the Bank of America account for back-up if Katherine is not available. Don asked if there was any plan to purchase AI software for public use. Katherine said they don't currently plan to purchase any but is open to further discussion about it.
6. **Room Use Discussion:** Following a lengthy discussion about whether we should allow a candidate running for political office to use the Community Room, what category they would fall under, and various safety concerns involved, Erin moved to allow the group to use the Community Room as a not-for-profit organization, seconded by Heather. 8 voted in favor, 1 voted in opposition, and 1 abstained. Katherine will notify the police and fire chiefs of the event as a safety precaution.
7. **Director's Report:**
 - a. The Friends book sale was the most successful ever, raising \$12,302 between sales, memberships, donations, and the birdhouse raffle. Tentative date for next year's sale is September 18-20, 2026.

- b. The audit was conducted by Amanda Schultz-Brown from Smith and Associates, with some minor glitches in a new online format.
 - c. State of Libraries - Baker and Taylor, our top book supplier, is going out of business in January. This has caused delays in receiving new materials. The library has been using Ingram and Amazon to provide additional items. The New England Commission on Higher Education has removed libraries and librarians from their standards, and Katherine referenced the email she sent the board that included her response.
 - d. Staff/General - Book groups for kids and teens, Library services presentation at the Highlands on Nov, 10th, Fiber Arts Showcase on Oct. 21st, Oct. 22nd Storytime featuring a local author and her daughter, Halloween events, Maine Poet Laureate Julia Bouwsma and Mt. Ararat student poet event on Nov. 6th, new weekly children's scavenger hunts, and Joy of the Pen Reception on Nov. 18th at 5:30 PM.
 - e. Notes from September/October Staff Check-ins - Discussions included preparing for the audit, Minerva updates, how to handle additional teen traffic and difficult patron interactions, programming, creating "What to do if I got hit by a bus" task lists, and problems with the new phone system.
8. **Unfinished Business:** Discussion on board officer roles tabled until the next meeting
9. **New Business:** Barbara reminded everyone of the Open House on Saturday, October 18th. She displayed the posters that will be on the Trustees Table.
10. **Public Comment:** None
11. **Adjournment:** Don moved to adjourn the regular business meeting, seconded by Laura. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 8:27 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Swiderski, Board Secretary