

**Topsham Public Library Board of Trustees**  
**Business Meeting Minutes**  
**February 18, 2026**

**Present:** Philip Dostie, James Doyle, Barbara Swiderski, Erin Arneson, Stephen Diamond, Laura Miller, Pamela Mott, Heather Helenora, Miles Dailey, Don Stein, Director Katherine Webber, Adult Services Librarian Emma Gibbon

**Absent:** Mike Snow, Brian Alexander

**Members of the Public Present:** None

1. **Call to Order:** 7:00 PM by President Philip Dostie
2. **Approval of Agenda:** Pamela moved to accept the Agenda as presented, seconded by Don. Motion carried by unanimous consent.
3. **Consent Agenda:** An error was noted under the consent agenda in the minutes of the January meeting as well as several errors under the birch grove section of the Finance Committee notes. Barbara moved to approve the Consent Agenda as amended, seconded by James. Motion carried by unanimous consent.
4. **Adult Services Librarian Update:** Emma's presentation focused on collaboration and challenges in her department. The most successful program was the Highland Green playwright, who presented two plays over two days, with 136 people in attendance. Bowdoin Community Concert is always a big draw with 74 attendees. The Halloween Thriller Dance, co-hosted by Mariah, brought 20 dancers to the Library. Joy of the Pen this year had the largest submissions thus far with 89 entrants and 37 at the reception. Music in March is always popular. This year's line-up is Songwriters Giff Jamison and Nancy Sferra, bluegrass and country blues band Steamboat Ridge, Castlebay with their Celtic Harp and wind instruments, and bassoonist Lindsey Wiehl. The programs with lower attendance numbers can be very impactful for the folks who attended: memoir writing, tea workshop, Death café, curling enthusiast David Florig, poet laureate Julia Bouwsma, and Bling Date with a Book, to name a few. Social media posts have created an explosion of engagement, which is exciting. The only challenge is with Ingram book supplier, but things are slowly getting better.
5. **Treasurer's Report:** Budget presentation to the Town/Selectboard went well. Financials are on par for this period in the fiscal year. The Finance Committee decided to keep the CD with Norway savings for now as Katherine was able to attain a higher interest rate than what was originally quoted. The accountant is preparing to begin our tax return and an extension with the IRS has been obtained. Stephen is monitoring the process of a class action lawsuit over transaction fees charged by Discover Card from 2007-2023. The Finance Committee approved the transfer of some funds from the gallery budget to be used for art programming, which is proving to be quite popular.
6. **Patriots Day Holiday:** Katherine requested the Board consider making Patriots Day a holiday for Library employees. The Town already observes this holiday as does many other entities in the state. It is only a holiday in Maine and Massachusetts celebrated on the third Monday in April. Heather moved to add Patriots Day as a Library holiday, seconded by Don. Motion carried unanimously.

7. **Committee Participation:** It has been noted that some committees have more trustee participation than others. Katherine reminded everyone that all committees are allowed to include community members except Governance because that committee works on Library policies. Members were asked to review the list of the committees. Anyone interested in joining another committee should contact Katherine, Phil, or the committee chair.
  
8. **Director's Report:**
  - a. Monthly Statistics: show an overall positive trend
  - b. The Friends: selected a speaker for their annual meeting on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, and the Library will promote it on social media and the program calendar.
  - c. Music in March: discussed earlier in Emma's presentation, every Saturday in March at 1:00 PM
  - d. State of Libraries: Katherine provided testimony for LD2106 that would require a judicial warrant before libraries, schools, hospitals, and childcare staff may allow law enforcement into nonpublic spaces. Congress passed a \$1.4 million increase for library programs run by IMLS, and \$30 million for the school library-focused Innovative Approaches to Literacy. The FY27 budget cycle begins at the end of February, and big cuts are expected by the administration. Contact our senators and congresswoman to ask for their support in opposition to the anticipated funding cuts.
  - e. Staff/General: Interviews have begun for the Circulation Supervisor position and will hopefully be filled by March. AARP has added Fridays in March and April to their tax help due to popular demand, with most spots filled already. The Vibe board is currently broken and may need to be replaced if not repairable. Phil volunteered to look at it to see if he might be able to fix it. Mariah and Lindsey attended Battle of the Books at Mt Ararat middle school and were enthusiastically greeted. Model train display will be here on Friday, and the Portland Camera Club will be here on Saturday for a presentation.
  - f. Staff Check-ins: Storage solutions, storytime substitute, staff moving cubes in staff area, Access to Canva and social media, non-fiction weeding, expanding art programming with additional funding from the gallery budget, delivering calendars/flyers to area businesses including a local pediatric office, the middle school food pantry, and daycares were topics of discussion
  
9. **Unfinished Business:** Erin asked about the status of making the website ADA compliant, Katherine stated that the person who had agreed to do it has not responded to her. We will need to explore another avenue.
  
10. **New Business:** There is a hearing on Thursday, March 10 at 6:00 PM when the Selectboard and the Town Finance Committee will review our budget. Katherine has requested some trustee attendance for support.
  
11. **Public Comment:** none
  
12. **Adjournment:** Laura moved to adjourn the regular business meeting seconded by Heather. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 7:56 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Barbara Swiderski, Board Secretary