

Keene Public Library Trustee Meeting Minutes

Date: 4/28/2026

Board Present: Bill Stroup, Paul Henkel, Jane Pitts, Kathleen Packard, Pam Russell Slack, Karthik Gowda, Donald Caruso, Hollie Seiler, Justin Somma, Jennifer Friedman, Sam Temple, Susan Mathews

Staff Present: Marti Fiske, Library Director and Susan Bloom, Assistant Library Director

Guests: Rylan Christen, Library Aide and Katie Montgomery, Reference Librarian

The meeting was called to order by President Bill Stroup at 5:05

Approval of minutes: Pam Russell Slack made a motion to accept the March minutes. The motion was seconded by Justin Somma. **The Board unanimously approved the March minutes as written.**

Committee Reports:

▪ Finance

- Sam Temple is the new chair of the Finance committee
- General Finance business
 - The Finance committee will present budget recommendations at the May meeting. Jane Pitts made a request to committees (that have budgets) to send projections for the year ahead.
- Treasurer's report
 - Jane Pitts presented the Treasurer's report.
 - Jennifer Friedman made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report. The motion was seconded by Pam Russell Slack. **The Board unanimously agreed to accept the Treasurer's report.**
- April donations
 - Carol Ripley - \$250 (donation in memory of Pam Bernard)
 - Helen and Patrick Heneghan - \$25 (unrestricted donation)
 - Peter Espieffs - \$100 (unrestricted donation)
 - Allen and Ellen Mendelson - \$50 (donation in honor of Judith Putnam's retirement from the Keene Library Board of Trustees)
 - Kathleen Packard made a motion to accept all donations. The motion was seconded by Jennifer Friedman. **The Board unanimously agreed to accept all donations received in April.**

▪ Building and Grounds

- We are expecting the estimate for the lighting project to come in over budget. Because of this, the Library is considering doing the project in stages.
- Two windows in the children's room (Winter St. side) have been replaced.
- Some uneven concrete outside the Library was fixed.
- Necessary landscaping that will happen this fall that will be split by the City and the Library.

- **Community Outreach**
 - There are several opportunities to volunteer this summer. Please reach out to Amy Kraemer for scheduling a volunteering shift.
 - Friday, June 19 (4pm-8pm): Juneteenth, at the park outside the rec center
 - Saturday, June 27 (11am-2pm): Pollinator Palooza, Ashuelot Park
 - Saturday, August 8 (10am-3pm): End of summer reading party
 - Amy is also planning to have a storytime at the Farmers Market either Saturday, August 1 or Saturday, August 22.
- **Long Range Planning Committees** (Did not meet)
- **Fine Arts**
 - The success of the middle school exhibit has inspired more ways to display art in the Library. Justin Somma is doing research on how we can potentially display more art in the future. The next step is to collaborate with Buildings and Grounds.
- **Policy**
 - The Policy committee has been busy reviewing and refreshing the Trustee bylaws.
 - The new bylaws will be dispersed 14-days prior to July's board meeting, and the Trustees will vote on its approval at the July meeting.
- **Friends of the Keene Public Library**
 - At the time of the Trustee meeting, preliminary totals were over \$17k in proceeds from the book sale.
 - Fall's book sale will be the third week of October. **Trustees are very encouraged to volunteer.**
- **Horatio Colony Museum** (Did not meet)
- **Cheshire Literacy Coalition** (Did not meet)

Director's Report:

- Rent from the television studio is paid quarterly and this quarter's rent has been deposited into the Heberton Fund.
- The public hearing for the budget was originally May 12 but may be rescheduled. Marti will share when a new date is determined.
- The Trustees discussed the Library's non-resident fee. Last year there were 1,167 adult non-resident memberships issued, and 669 youth memberships issued. It has been two years since we raised it. The current rates are:
 - \$40 for 6-month membership
 - \$75 for 1-year
 - \$65 for seniors
 - The City would like the Library to reassess our non-resident rates to be closer to the tax rate assessed for each patron of Keene. (\$104)
 - An idea was presented to add another tier for those who qualify for government assistance.

- An idea was presented to add an alternative pricing tier for physical material goods only.
- **Paul Henkel made a motion to increase the rates by 5 dollars for both the 6-month and 1-year rates. Kathleen Packard seconded the motion.**
 - **Paul Henkel made an amendment to add an effective date of July 1. Kathleen Packard seconded the amendment.**
 - Bill Stroup, Paul Henkel, Jane Pitts, Kathleen Packard, Karthik Gowda, Donald Caruso, Justin Somma, Jennifer Friedman, Sam Temple, and Susan Mathews voted yes. Hollie Seiler and Pam Russell Slack voted no. **The motion passed by a majority vote.** Increased rates will go into effect on July 1.

Old Business: (No old business)

New Business: (No new business)

Possible Executive Session: (No session)

Meeting Adjourned: 6:39 p.m.

Meeting Minutes by: Hollie Seiler