

October 21, 2025 Minutes of the Ashland Public Library Trustees

7:00 P.M.

Present: Library Director Meena Jain, Assistant Director and Director of Youth Services Katrina Ireland-Bilodeau, Chair of Trustees Claire Goss, Trustees Bonnie Mitchell, Kab Rabinowitz, Carolyn Bell, Linda Weene.

Children's Department: Quieter month so culling of books continued. Space has been freed up for more people to use the reclaimed space . The back wall now has picture books.

The staff completed major picture book weeding, such as 1000 books that were not circulating, some for ten years.

Reclassifying non -fiction books is the current project. Reader kits are now organized. The age group using the children's/teen rooms has been changed to reflect the school levels. Children's is now up to 5th grade, and middle school students may now use the teen room.

The Children's Room held 31 programs with 1082 attendees. National Pirate Day has children dressed as pirates and involved in related activities.

Laura of Teen Services and Katrina, children's director, are both leaving next Friday. They have made major contributions to the library. As a result, the library might have to close some days because of a shortage of trained staff. Subs will be important. The two positions are now posted.

The Trustees voted to keep the curation and art collector volunteer positions as one position. Claire will speak with Larry De Jong about these positions. Also the Trustees plan a recognition of Larry's many years of service to the library.

Budget: FY 26 Budget is in good shape. Using subs helps maintaining the budget. The Town Manager wants a level-funded budget, but cuts will have to be made next year. So far we do not have to cut hours. He wants to know what will have to be cut in services or materials in such case. Because of union wage increases, there will be a 5%, \$25,000 cut , which will cause a cut of one evening a week.

We can not cut more than 5 hours a week to maintain our certification and state aid. If we lose certification, Ashland patrons may no longer use Minuteman Library or take out books from other libraries.

The budget is due November 20.

The Action Plan is due December. Katrina has finished it.

The October Historical Literature Auction made \$1700 compared to the \$9500 Horror Auction last year. Almost 30 authors did not get bid on. No Zoom authors got bid on. The economy might have affected the auction.

Next meeting is November 18, 2025.

Adjourned at 8:00 P.M.

Written and submitted by Trustee Carolyn Bell