

**Bedford Free Public Library  
Library Trustees Minutes  
Tuesday, September 9, 2025, 7:00 PM  
Hybrid Meeting**

**In attendance:** Gyasi Burks-Abbott, Padma Choudry, Rachel Field, Elizabeth Hacala, Renae Nichols

**Other attendees:** Jaclyn Powers, Library Director, Alyssa Staples, Assistant Director, Terrence Parker, Select Board Member, and Dorothy Bergin, Editor of the Bedford Citizen

**Call to Order:** Padma Choudry called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm.

**Public Comments:** None

**Secretary's Report**

Jackie offered to do the minutes from the recording in the absence of an Administrative Assistant.

In the last paragraph on the second page, the word *trial* was misspelled as *trail*.

Elizabeth moved to accept the minutes as amended. Rachel seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0-1

**Director's Report**

**STAFFING**

Emily Douglas resigned from her part-time children's position. In her place, a part-time teen librarian (Shay McGroarty) has been hired who will work under the children's department. Current teen librarian Pam Aghababian will transition to managing adult programming.

Marie Kelley resigned effective August 29. We have received 28 applications for the administrative assistant position in less than a week. The board discussed the skills that may be important for the new hire.

**PROGRAMMING**

The Friends have agreed to fund the first year of Library Speakers Consortium membership. This will mostly take the place of the virtual program offered in partnership with area libraries as attendance was very low from Bedford residents.

The Board discussed various other in-person programming ideas.

Rachel would like to make sure we are reaching out to Hanscom to offer services and see what might be needed in that community.

## STATISTICS

Statistics were provided for July but not for August. Jackie included a draft of a proposed new spreadsheet that provided less granularity but more context. More detailed statistics will be provided occasionally throughout the year.

## EXPENDITURE REPORT

July was provided in the old format; it has been reorganized for August. An overtime column has been added and other lines have been rearranged. Spending in a given month is no longer included.

Jackie and Alyssa will be working to create a replacement schedule for technology to better predict future expenses so they can be budgeted for accordingly.

## OTHER

Rachel asked for an update on capital. Jackie met with Facilities and the Assistant Town Manager; currently carpet is the only item on the list for FY27. A new roof is expected in FY31. Jackie will provide a list at the next meeting.

Rachel noted that we are planning for a new website in FY27, Padma discussed calendar reminders (or the lack thereof). Jackie will look into our options in Assabet.

Renae noted that the high school is currently without a school librarian and would like to ensure we're offering our services to students. Padma noted the Lane School also does not have anyone teaching library classes, though students still have access to the books.

Renae moved to accept the Director's Report. Gyasi seconded the motion.

Vote 5-0-0

## **Unfinished Business**

**HVAC Project update:** nothing new. The meeting room is still not open to the public as electricians are still in and out, but by and large the project is mostly completed.

**Strategic Plan update:** Jackie is putting together a Strategic Plan Advisory Committee; the board had suggestions for other organizations to include.

The board approved using their November 18 meeting to complete the strategic plan SOAR exercise. There was discussion about whether it would need to be posted as a public meeting and/or if it would be conducted in executive session. Jackie will confirm with the attorney general's office.

**Charter & Bylaws update:** Terrence Parker from the Select Board provided an update. The bylaw committee recommended changes which would give the Town Administrator supervision over the Library Director. The Board is not in favor of these changes; Rachel spoke to this effect during the public comment portion of the Select Board meeting. The Select Board indicated they were not inclined to pursue the change further but felt obligated to present it as it was the recommendation of the committee.

### **New Business**

Gyasi was elected to be the board's representative on the Strategic Plan Advisory Committee.

Solicitations and Posting/Distributing Materials policies: the board would like to consider these longer and will take them up at the next meeting. There was discussion about including for-profit organizations that offer cultural programs/events.

Padma brought up tutoring in the library and related, advertising for tutors.

Rachel recommended tabling the discussion on honoring library service given the late hour but did suggest memorials could be considered as a singular entity (e.g. a memorial garden/area outside). There was discussion about the logistics and responsibility of upkeep. The board offered other ideas for recognizing service but agreed to revisit the topic.

The board discussed appointing a replacement for Abby Hafer. This person would serve until the next election. The group agreed that someone should be appointed even for just six months given that we are in the process of creating a strategic plan. Several names were suggested as potential appointees; the topic was tabled until October.

### **Other Business**

The board confirmed its intention to host a meet and greet in October just before the next meeting. Emily had volunteered to help arrange it, Padma said she would be in touch with her to work out the details.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm. Elizabeth made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Renae seconded the motion.

Vote  
5-0-0