

Vernon Free Library Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting Minutes
January 28, 2026

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Cassie Sailsman, Chair
Julie Nevins, Vice-Chair
Kristin Bratton, Clerk

STAFF:

Jean Carr, Library Director

GUESTS:

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Nikki Deyo, Secretary

REGULAR MEETING

Cassie Sailsman called the meeting to order at 5:52 pm.

CHAIR'S REMARKS:

No remarks.

OPEN MEETING—PUBLIC COMMENTS:

No comments from the public.

AGENDA ADDITIONS/CORRECTIONS:

No additions or corrections.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- No quorum for approval. Tabled until next regular meeting.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

FINANCIAL

- FY 25/26 – Expenditures from tax appropriations is at 46.69%. We're 55.89% through the fiscal year.

ANNUAL APPEAL

- No further donations have been received since December 30. Total received is \$720.
 - Trustees discussed the need for an additional form to post next year's appeal.

BOOK PURCHASING

- I'm still exploring options to order books with processing. One stumbling block is getting processing customized to the way we do things. Set-up fees can be thousands of dollars.
- Even with ordering books unprocessed, my last order from Ingram took 7 weeks to arrive.

ANNUAL PUBLIC LIBRARY REPORT

- With the closure of Baker & Taylor, VT LIB set up a new format for submitting statistics.
- It's totally different from how we did it previously. Report is due March 6.

SUMMER READING PROGRAMMING GRANT

- 2026 theme is “Unearth a Story”.
- Grant application has opened. I will be submitting an application once I have the updated paperwork I need from the Treasurer’s office. Application due February 23.

HUD CAPITAL PROJECT GRANT

- Available through VT LIB. Application due February 8.

NEW BUSINESS:

Grant Opportunities

- The Vermont Department of Libraries launched the application process for \$9.6 million in competitive grant funding through the Public Facilities Preservation Initiative Grants for Small, Rural Public Libraries in Vermont. This funding, from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), is intended to complete capital projects necessary to maintain, repair, or improve existing library buildings. Applications are due March 31.
- This federal funding will help public libraries address existing maintenance and repair needs, thereby ensuring they can continue to serve Vermonters well into the future. This funding is intended to address critical repairs needed for existing public library buildings including: building system repairs or replacement; building envelope repairs; and structural repairs. This funding is also intended to improve the accessibility of existing public library buildings, including: internal ramps; external ramps; lifts; and accessible restrooms. The Department aims to support public libraries across the state by awarding capital grant funds from one of its two programs to at least one public library in each of Vermont’s 14 counties.
- For more information see: <https://libraries.vermont.gov/capitalprojectgrants/public-facilities-preservation>
- The Trustees agreed to move forward with an application, based on the Feb 2024 Capital Grants application for U.S. Treasury Department funding. The grant proposal is to replace all 13 library windows, to install an automated door opener, and to install mini-splits for air conditioning (which the library does not currently have).
 - By February 11, Cassie Sailsman will obtain updated quotes for all proposed work.
 - Julie Nevins will request to be on the Selectboard agenda for their Feb 17 meeting to discuss the grant application.

Brooks Memorial Library Director Retirement

- The Brooks Memorial Library Trustees announced the Library Director is retiring April 25: <https://brattleboro.gov/blog/library-director-to-retire>
- The Vernon Trustees agreed to email the BML Trustees about their planned process and resources

Recruiting Trustees

- The Library Director will post another announcement regarding the open Trustee position to Facebook

OLD BUSINESS:

Vacation Time Approval

- Not needed at this time

Gift Fund Policy

- The Trustees discussed the gift fund policy. Julie Nevins will email language for Trustees to review before final discussion and approval at the February 11, 2026 Regular meeting.

Budget Updates

- The Selectboard reviewed our budget proposal and the article is ready to be voted on at Town Meeting.

Annual Appeal Updates

- Addressed during Library Director's report

EXECUTIVE SESSION

No Executive Session needed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/INFORMATION:

The next regular meeting of the Vernon Free Library Board of Trustees will be held Wednesday, February 11, 2026 at 5:45 p.m. This will be a hybrid meeting.

A motion was made by Kristin Bratton to adjourn the meeting at 7:01 p.m. Seconded by Julie Nevins. Carried 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Julie Nevins, Vice-Chair