

Groton Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 8, 2025, at 7:00 pm, in Community Room

Approved, 8/12/2025

Attending in Person: Library Trustees Helena Altsman, Mark Gerath, Jennifer Petersen, Heidi Robes, Kristen von Campe, and David Zeiler.

Library Director Vanessa Abraham and Assistant Director Sarah Breen also in attendance.

Absent: None.

Call to Order

Chair David Zeiler called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.

Vote Summary of Tonight's Meeting

- Approve June 10, 2025, Meeting Minutes (as amended). Moved by Heidi, seconded by Mark. 4 ayes, 0 nays, 2 abstentions.
- Adopt 2026 Trustee Goals. Moved by Heidi, seconded by Mark. 6 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions.
- Approve up to \$10,000 allocated from LIGMEG for the water fountains project work (walls, framing, plumbing, and electrical work). Moved by Heidi, seconded by Mark. 6 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions.
- Adjourn. Moved by Heidi, seconded by Mark. 6 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions.

Action Items from Tonight's Meeting

- Vanessa will create a draft of the graphic design process.
- Vanessa will correct the inaccurate data from Collins Study Report and share it with Town.
- Vanessa will further review study information in anticipation of putting together a budget increase request for salaries to present this fall.
- Vanessa will work with Mark on salary objectives and data to present based on market survey and Collins Study Report.
- PPP will finish its review of policies and bylaws.
- Vanessa will forward her self-evaluation to the Evaluation Committee.
- The Evaluation Committee will begin the evaluation process with Mark's assistance (Zoom meeting to be scheduled).

Monthly Report from the Director and Assistant Director

- The summer reading program is off to a great start and has approximately 450 kids signed up.
- The library mini golf program was a great success.
- Federal funding decreases are affecting library databases, causing them to be capped and/or cut. Patrons are able to use the Boston Public Library's databases.
- Debbie Ladue, the Library's caretaker for 25 years, has decided to retire this fall, so a replacement needs to be hired as soon as possible.
- All Trustee Minutes going back to 1891 have been scanned and digitized.

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Action Items

- Approve the Minutes from June 10, 2025 Meeting
 - Completed, see vote summary.
- Review Trustees' Calendar for Current Month
 - All calendar items reviewed.
- Review Trustees' Action Items for Current Month
 - All action items reviewed.
- Report on Action Items from Previous Meetings
 - All action items reviewed.

Trustees' Items

- Review Trustees Goals for the Past Year (FY2025)
 - Advocate for a library budget that fully meets the needs of the community and the GPL.
 - Prioritize physical space updates and technology upgrades to accommodate the 21st century library patron. Develop a plan to meet those needs, including thoughtful and prudent funding options.
 - Develop and implement a comprehensive marketing initiative highlighted by a robust, dynamic, and lasting social media campaign.
 - Continue to define the role of the GPL in the Town of Groton as various civic groups continue to expand services.
 - Explore alternative means of staffing to optimize services.
- All goals met or on the way to being met.
- Establish Trustees' Goals for FY2026:
 - Advocate for a library budget that fully meets the needs of the community and the GPL.
 - Prioritize physical space updates and technology upgrades to accommodate the 21st century library patron. Develop a plan to meet those needs, including thoughtful and prudent funding options.
 - Assess staff compensation and classification in light of the recent compensation study.
 - Continue to define the role of the GPL in the Town of Groton as various civic groups continue to expand services.
 - Explore alternative means of staffing to optimize services.
- FY2026 Trustees' Goals reviewed and adopted. See voting summary above.

Budget & Finance

- Review Monthly Bills
 - All library bills reviewed.
- Review FY2025 Nearly Final Budget Reports
 - FY2025 final budget within \$500.
- Other Budget & Finance
 - The Town paid \$7,290 for the three new water fountain units.

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- A state aid funding request was made for up to \$10,000 for related water fountain project work (drywall, framing, plumbing, and electrical work)
 - Vote to approve up to \$10,000 from LIGMEG for water fountain construction work. See voting summary above.

Building & Equipment

- Monthly Project Tracker
 - Project tracker reviewed.
- Other Building & Equipment
 - New Art Acquisition of “Deidre” by Mary Minifie for GPL’s permanent collection has been finalized and signed contract reviewed.

Policy, Personnel, & Planning

- Updates on Reviewing Policies, Bylaws, etc.
 - Small changes are being made, and a draft of amended bylaws will be sent out to Trustees for review.
- A Library Director Evaluation Subcommittee was appointed
 - Kristen and Jennifer have been appointed to handle this year’s evaluation.
- Other Policy, Personnel, & Planning
 - None.

Library Business

- Collins Center’s Classification & Compensation Study: Library Data & Findings
 - The library has some of the lowest paid staff across all town departments.
 - Vanessa will prepare a request for an increase to the library’s salary and wages budget.
- Other
 - None.

Other Business

- Other
 - Groton Garden Club is interested in working with the library to maintain and improve its green space.

Next Steps

- Review of Action Items from Current Meeting – see above
- Review Upcoming Meetings & Events

Adjournment at 8:34 pm – see vote summary.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Petersen, Secretary