

Groton Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, August 12, 2025, at 7:00 pm, in Community Room & Zoom
Approved, 9/9/2025

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

Assistant Library Director Sarah Breen was also in attendance.

Attending Virtually: Library Director Vanessa Abraham

Absent: Helena Altsman

Call to Order at 7:05 P.M.

Vote Summary of Tonight's Meeting

- Approve July 8, 2025, Meeting Minutes (as amended). Moved by Kristen, seconded by Heidi. 5 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions.
- Adjourn. Moved by Kristen, seconded by Heidi. 5 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions.

Action Items from Tonight's Meeting

- Vanessa will forward her self-evaluation to the Evaluation Committee by August 31.
- Vanessa will further review study information in anticipation of putting together a budget increase request for salaries to present this fall.
- Vanessa will contact the Town Manager to advise him that a warrant article may be submitted to the Select Board.
- Vanessa will put together a table of proposed wage action and bases and post for comment by close of business Thursday, August 14.
- Vanessa will post a notice of Trustees' meeting on Wednesday, August 20.
- Vanessa, Mark, and Kristin will draft presentation materials and proposed warrant and will forward them to all Trustees by noon on Wednesday, August 20.
- Kristen to obtain salary data for comparison.
- Trustees will meet via Zoom on Wednesday, August 20, at 7 pm to discuss the warrant for Fall Town Meeting.
- PPP will continue policy review.
- Vanessa will reach out to Babin to schedule garden upkeep services.

Monthly Report from the Director and Assistant Director

- It was a challenging month with the Library Director on medical leave, but the Library Staff have all stepped up – and were especially helpful during the week of the Assistant Director's vacation.
- Several building repairs and maintenance issues were addressed in the past month, including the alarm system which was sounding false alarms (fixed); the doors (awaiting parts); the new water bubblers (completed on all three floors); and the air conditioning in the Historical Room (repaired).
- Statewide databases including those subscribed to by the GPL were drastically reduced when federal funding cuts went into effect, so the library is promoting Boston Public Library (BPL) e-cards and resources to patrons, where they can find many of the same or comparable online resources.

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- Will Cullen, the new Senior Center Outreach Coordinator, attended the monthly library staff meeting to share about services the COA offers the community.
- On July 10 the staff received a report from a patron indicating that the day before he witnessed a male secretly recording teenage girls in the stacks on the third floor. He confronted the male who left the building, but the incident was not disclosed to library staff by the patron or the girls. Upon learning about the incident from the patron, the Groton Police were contacted and a report was made. Patrols of the area in the library will be stepped up.
- Sarah updated how Hoopla is now being authenticated for use to ensure greater restrictions so we are paying for Groton residents only. Some non-resident patrons who lost access are being re-directed to the BPL.
- Head of Circulation Services Nicole decided to offer a Summer Reading Challenge for library staff, so those providing the program to others could also have some SRP fun.
- Over 770 participants are enrolled in the summer reading program.
- A new teen helper began last week.
- The fall newsletter is going to be sent out soon.
- Vanessa is working remotely half-time during her medical leave.
- A new Groton Town Clerk has been hired to replace Dawn Dunbar.

Budget & Finance

- Reviewed the July 2025 Monthly Bills.
- The final FY2025 financial reports reviewed.
- Final Shed Repair Financial Allocation: \$900 was recovered from the patron who damaged doors and the additional \$1,100 cost reflecting an improvement to the shed was drawn from the existing maintenance and repairs budget.
- The Endowment Budget had \$4,000 remaining at fiscal year's end, even after the art purchase.

Building & Equipment

- The Monthly Project Tracker was reviewed.
- The public and staff copiers were repaired.
- The Historical Room air-conditioning was repaired by Nashoba Air.
- The Water Fountain (Bubbler) Project cost more than anticipated due to the plumbing bill; the project is now nearly complete.
- With Vanessa on medical leave for the past month, and half-time the rest of this month, there will be some project delays.
- The new carpeting is still scheduled to be installed the week of September 8.

Policy, Personnel, & Planning

- Library Classification & Compensation was discussed, particularly the deficiencies revealed by the Collins Study and Vanessa's additional study with a deeper dive into staff pay and where they land not only in the Town but also within their own pay ranges.
- Trustees will meet via Zoom on Wednesday, August 20, 2025, at 7 pm to discuss

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submitting a warrant for Fall Town Meeting to rectify pay shortfalls all at one time.

- Other Policy, Personnel, & Planning Items
 - Director Evaluation - Vanessa will submit her self-evaluation to Trustees by 8/31.
 - Debbie Ladue Retirement - Vanessa asked the Governor's Office for a citation to honor and acknowledge her exemplary 26 years of service to the town in caring for the library.

Other Business

- The garden needs tending.
- Vanessa will reach out to Babin to schedule garden upkeep service because it is needed.

Adjournment at 8:25 P.M.– see vote summary.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Petersen, Secretary