



DRAFT

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Monday, September 14, 2026

Time: 7:00pm

Location: Converse Free Library

Meeting Type: Regular

Present: Alex Bortolot (Chair), John Campbell, Ann Christiano, Meg Lysy, Erin O'Donnell, Alex Nunez, Judy Russell (Director), Kim Stern, Nicole Tadlock

Absent: Philip Kinsler

Public Present: None

Call to order: 7:07pm

1. Public comments- none

2. Approval of May 4, 2026, meeting minutes and June 1, 2026, meeting minutes

- **May minutes:** Ann Christiano moved to approve the May minutes with an adjustment to the treasurer's report cash balance to \$13,100; Erin O'Donnell seconded. Approved.
- **June minutes:** Alex Nunez moved to approve the June minutes; Ann Christiano seconded. Approved.

3. Reports:

a. Library Director

- Judy circulated a comprehensive Director's report
- Update on Blisters for Books (Friday, September 25)
- Friends of the Library met on 9/14/26
 - Randy Perry needs to inspect the book return for repair.
 - Judy requested feedback on the hanging sign; Buildings and Grounds will review

- ALA Grant: community conversation did not happen; Judy secured an extension to September 30. Judy is preparing grant requests to the Lyme Foundation and the Byrne Foundation. Grant funds must be spent by April 2027
- Judy will contact Clifford Concrete for an update
- Circulation Report:
 - Audiobook circulation at an all-time high
 - Active accounts: 1,074 (newly tracked metric; measurement is complicated by family accounts)
 - Non-resident accounts continue to grow
 - The library loans 3x the number of books it receives, reflecting its role in the broader community.
 - ILL has been difficult recently — delivery is now once a week; Orford is dropped at Lyme

b. Treasurer – Alex Nunez

- June: received a \$10,000 patron donation
- The \$10,000 grant is currently in a CD earning interest but is earmarked
- August: \$500 in donations; \$614 total income for the month

c. Buildings and Grounds – Erin O'Donnell

- Fall clean-up date to be confirmed by Erin O'Donnell; October 24–25 is a likely target
- Judy will ask Matt about picking up the brush pile this year
- Air conditioners need to be removed before the clean-up date
- Annual filter replacements are due

d. Technology

- Covered in the Director's report; no additional discussion

4. Business Requiring Action or Discussion

- 2027 Library Operating Budget review A final draft of budget and board vote expected at the October meeting
- The board will ask the taxpayers to take on more responsibility for building upkeep and maintenance; the warrant article is a step toward this

b. Warrant Article

- Alex Nunez proposed “elevator pitch” language for the warrant article that offered

an explanation and justification for the request and specified the funding amount requested.

- The warrant raises awareness of low building-maintenance funds and invites town investment
- Alex Nunez recommended an amount of \$30,000, which would restore reserves to where they were four years ago.
- A lively board discussion ensued about how much should be requested in the warrant. Pros and cons for an amount greater than \$30,000 were raised.
- There is no existing policy regarding target reserve fund levels.
- Septic system was identified as a liability and future expense that could draw on funds raised via a warrant article; cost research is needed and should be added to the project list
- Discussion of pacing/strategy for future asks: If the Board anticipates we will need more than the \$30,000 requested (based on the current project list of repairs) then does it make better sense to ask for it all at once rather than having to ask more than once?
- Discussion of whether there should be an annual fundraising target: Judy does not consider ongoing, planned building maintenance a capital fundraising category, since by design, public libraries are funded primarily through taxpayer money. This allows libraries to serve at the pleasure of all members of the public without possible influence over policy from funding sources. Judy recommends any future capital-type fundraising to have a clearly defined purpose, which can be effectively marketed and explained to potential donors, and fits within the definition of “capital improvements.”
- The board does not want to request more reserve funding than is needed for the trustees and director to feel we are on good footing, particularly from a maintenance perspective
- **Process/timeline:** Board will vote on proceeding with the warrant article, and on the amount requested, at the October meeting. Early November — library presents its draft budget to the town budget committee and notes intent to submit a warrant article. A follow-up meeting will discuss the warrant article. In February, a public meeting will address questions. If the budget committee does not recommend the warrant, it still moves forward to town vote
- Discussion about the 10% rule. SPS2/Infrastructure Committee will investigate further if needed/

c. Board and Library goal setting for the year ahead

- Alex Bortolot's, Kim Stern's and Philip Kinsler's terms expire in March 2027

5. Friends Update

- The Friends group is purchasing items for the library with funds raised in their 2025 and 2026 annual campaigns.

6. Events <https://lymenhlibrary.org/events> and/or see Librarian's Report

Adjournment: 9:11pm - Nicole Tadlock made a motion to adjourn, Erin O'Donnell seconded.

Approved. Next Meeting: October 5, 2026

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