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By City Clerk at 8:17 am, Sep 18, 2026

Amesbury Public Library Board of Trustee Meeting
Location: Cultural Center, 37 Millyard, Gallery Unit., Amessbury, MA 01913
Wednesday, May 13, 2026
7:00 PM

In attendance: Makeighlee Marstaller, Mary Chatigny, Alex Matthews, Alyson Osgood, Jane Siebecker, Marsha Pease, Ann Langlois

APL staff present: Aimie Westphal - APL Director

Call to Order - 7: 10 pm by Mak

1. **Secretary's Minutes** - Mary made a motion to approve 4-8-26 minutes, Jane seconded. Unanimous by all present at the April meeting.
2. Communications - none
3. Friends of the Library update -
    a. The Friends met the night before, May 12th. Sales of Friends' Stacks satellite location at Barewolf Brewery continue to be successful.
    b. Fundraising goals for the coming fiscal year are to raise $20,000 from the Annual Appeal and $8,000 from Memberships
    c. The group is revisiting where they can cut costs to maximize donations
4. Budget Report -
    a. There is 1 ½ months left in this budget; some monies will be moved from one line item to another to cover overexpenditures, e.g. higher heating costs than budgeted for, but lower electrical.
    b. Aimie explained the Association of Rural and Small Libraries grant she applied for and was granted in the amount of $15,000 for the ramp. The funds are waiting to be accepted by the City Council.
    c. We received our final allotment of State Aid ($23,146) for this fiscal year.
    d. The City's CFO has resigned so currently there is no one assuming those duties.
    e. Budget reports confirm the continued and increasing hours necessary for Administration to cover the Public Desks in order for staff to keep up with their regular work. ***April required 24 hours of Admin time, an increase of 10 hours from March.***
5. **Facilities Report and Capital Projects Update** – Aimie presented her monthly Facilities Report to the Trustees for April. This document is included in the addendum. (Addendum 1)

a. We continue to wait for maintenance on the shed to be completed (Summer Programming started April 23)
b. There is $600 currently left in the Facilities' funds; Aimie has been trying to get the anticipated cost of a final cleaning supply order from the cleaner
c. We discussed the lackluster cleaning the current company does; they are paid about $18,000 yearly for the library and the library is on the City's contract with other buildings
d. The chip in the front step will be taken care of by the mason who repaired the steps; work schedule is dependent on weather
e. Estimated cost to replace the ramp is $60,000; total will be combination of multiple funding sources $15,000 from grant, $21,000 awarded in FY27 capital and the mayor's office requested a state earmark of $25,000 that we will hear about in the fall
f. The birch trees have been pruned.

6. Director's Report – Aimie presented her monthly Director's Report to the Trustees for April. This document is included in the addendum. (Addendum 2)
    a. The Amesbury High School Promenade was the past week. 150-175 students came through the library. Photographer Laura Kozlowski took photos and Aimie has shared them with the school.
    b. We are coming to the end of the Strategic Plan. At the first community forum there were 5 people, at the second 10 and at the virtual 2. The survey is out until the end of May.
    c. Aimie presented a *Proposed Building and Staff Hours Schedule for FY27* (Addendum 3). She and her Assistant Director have been working on scheduling due to the budget since last October.
        i. With the proposed schedule there will be no change to the number of hours the library is open (53 per week).
        ii. The library will be closed Monday nights.
        iii. The library will open 30 minutes earlier, at 9am, each day. Currently the staff arrives at 9am and the Library opens to the public at 9:30am during which time the staff prepare the building for opening including turning on lights, getting the bookdrop, pulling hold requests that came in since the previous day's closing. This work will now be completed while the library is open, some of which requires staff to be away from service desks. Administrative staff will assist as needed.
        iv. The staff has been creative and generous to make this work for the city. An example is if they need a Saturday off, they need to find another staff to swap with rather than request the day off (to avoid any overtime).
        v. The highest concentration of patrons come through the door Saturday mornings.

d. Mary made a motion to accept the proposal as written; Ann seconded. Unanimous by all present.
e. A point of comparison: Newburyport's population is roughly the same as Amesbury's. Their library has 3x the square footage as ours ; their circulation is about the same. Their staff is double ours.

7. Sub-Committee Updates -
    a. Fundraising Subcommittee- planning to expand the base of the Annual Appeal. Last year's raised just over $15,000 by about 100 donors.

8. Old Business -
    a. May 26th joint meeting with Trustees and City council confirmed for 6pm to confirm one of two candidates to fill the vacant Trustee position.

8. New Business -
    a. The July Trustee meeting is scheduled for July 8th which is 2 days after the 4th of July holiday. Let's think about changing it to the 15th either virtual or in person. Vote will be taken at the June meeting.
    b. Our Capitol requests are
        i. Replace the carpeting on the stairs up to the Children's room
        ii. Install new carpeting in second floor stack wing
        iii. 2nd phase of masonry work for front steps
        iv. Repairing and replacing mortar
        v. Portion of the cost to replace the ramp
        vi. Funds from the sale of the School Street property will be distributed and used for the gutter/roof project. Any leftover to go towards the ongoing window project.
        vii. Our Summer Reading Theme is: "*Plant a Seed, Read"*

9. Matters not reasonably anticipated in advance of the meeting - none

10. Public Comment - none

11. Adjourn – Mary made a motion to adjourn at 8:00 pm and Jane seconded.

Addendum 1

AMESBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Facilities Report to the Trustees

May 13, 2026

Custodial Duties Performed by Staff

- Normal daily duties.
- Director changed filters on two dehumidifiers in Archives storage areas.

Completed Facility Projects Since Last Meeting

- Annual fire extinguisher check completed.
- Annual insurance company inspection of boiler completed.
- Quarterly visit from pest control, some ant activity in break room addressed.
- Fountain turned on for season, stopped working shortly after. Jay has plan to address it.
- 4/13/26 hot water heater had puddle of water, Jay reviewed. No discernable issues at this time. Continue to check it every few days, no water since that instance to date.

Facilities Projects Actively Working On

- **Ramp Replacement:** Received $21,000 in FY27 capital and a grant of $15,000. State earmark request was also made by Mayor's Office, predicted to hear later this year. Need to work on procurement. Asphalt and concrete under base need to be addressed in this project, have discussed with Jay. Bookdrop also needs to be addressed related to these foundational pieces as frost heaves from winter caused major issues with staff access door to book drop.
- **Front Steps:** small chip in new repair area, mason waiting on weather to permit fix.

Facilities Projects Actively Working On – No Update Since Last Meeting

- **Lightbulbs out:** handful of bulbs out in building. DPW replaced some on November 2025, have a few more need to do. Additional lights have gone out while waiting for them to return.
- **Water Spigot Driveway Side:** there is a water spigot on the building facing the driveway side that the EcoGardners requested be reactivated (had discovered the line was cut) to facilitate the garden they are creating on the lawn where the shed used to be. Plumber came out to review and gave us a budget number that was feasible with our miscellaneous facility funds. Waiting to get work scheduled.
- **Shed Move / Fence Replacement:** Additional work that is needed to complete this project are new roof to be installed, a ramp built into the shed and for the shed to be painted. Asked Jay to complete by April 23 when outdoor programming began.
- **Smell in Lower Level:** Smell has not reappeared since he put in the temporary fix. Unknown if permanent fix put in. Mentioned to Energy Mngr recently and he plans to review.

Facilities Projects – Stalled for 1+ Years

- **Stone wall by ramp compromised**

Capital Projects

- **Window Restoration ($37,375 awarded in FY21; current balance $10,184):** front six windows on south elevation have been completed with the exception of UV film and storm windows. Carpenter measured need to be ordered.
- **Emergency Lighting ($25,000 awarded in FY24; current balance $22,760):** exterior lights were installed on 6/6/24. Interior have been on hold due to lack of staffing capacity but were a main area of focus for the building inspection. The building inspector walked an electrician through January 21, waiting on quote.

Addendum 2

AMESBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Library Director's Report to the Trustees

May 13, 2026

Visitors in April = 5,252

Staffing (FTE level = 10.50 / 10.56)

- Non-admin staff time spent working outside department in April = 35 hours

General Library News

- **Services**
  - Reference has been busier than ever. There have been multiple instances when all five public PCs were in use and additional people were waiting or chose to leave and come back later. This hasn't happened in the memory of any reference staff currently here, so not since before Covid.
    - April computer sessions (record high this FY) = 338 sessions
- **Interesting reference questions:**
  - Someone said they were having eye troubles so asked for audiobook recommendations.
  - Someone called asking for major cities between Albany, NY and Schenectady, NY.
  - Someone called asking what a gum doctor is called and where to find one nearby.
- **Collections**
  - 524 new items added to the library in April
  - Recent increase in the number of items Amesbury cardholders have checked out at another library; March = 2,150 and April = 2,185 items (average usually 1,700)
  - Recent increase in Items borrowed in Amesbury by other MVLC cardholders; March = 1,088 items and April = 1,157 items (average usually 840)

Behind the Scenes

Snapshot of regular youth services staff work most completed while on desk:

- Planned programming for vacation week, late spring and summer programming
  - Research and book performers
  - Set up passive programs (writing instructions, creating signs, and ordering supplies)
  - Each program requires a calendar entry, social media post, flier, entry into external online calendars for promo
- Maintain the collection
  - Put together Book Bundles which are subject themed bundles of picture books for families to grab and go: 25 created so far this year.
  - Create displays for kids and teen sections which includes pulling books and creating signage for 12 different areas of display that change either bi-weekly or monthly
  - Weeded the Young Adult fiction section.
    - Different staff do different parts of this process. Head of YS runs reports and evaluates items, pulling books to withdraw based on variety of criteria (see Collection Development Policy). The YS Assistant withdraws the items from our library software and determines if sent to donation center, recycled, or thrown away. The YS Assistant or teen volunteers stamps the item as discard and brings them to their final destinations by the bagful.
  - Reorganizing series section as we get new series or the ones we have grow bigger
  - Replacing/relabeling or repairing Library of Things kits. On average we get 10 kits a month to fix and often creating a backlog due to other work taking priority or to wait for replacement parts.

    - Ordering items for the collection includes reading reviews, entering titles, pricing lists, and placing orders.
    - Started the process of stickering Young Adult books according to genre by creating a list of what sticker each book will need based on topic.
- Manage volunteers
    - Coordinating teen volunteer schedules and training
    - Oversaw teen intern and teen volunteers doing projects such as putting together StoryWalk, organizing felt story collection, designing and painting windows in the Kids' Area, creating library decor for summer, packing craft kits, marking new games for circulation, and organizing shelves.
- Manage the room
    - Cleaning out storage spaces including puppet closets and storytime/programming closets from items that we no longer use or creating different storage option.
    - Inventorying craft closet to make sure we have supplies for the spring/summer

Library Closings/Delays

- April 2 – delayed opening of 10am for staff meeting
- April 20 – closed for holiday

Addendum 3

Building and Staff Hours Schedule Proposal for FY27

The **two goals going into FY27** given constrained budget and risks to certification:

- Limit use of overtime as have very limited funds
- Exhaust all reasonable possibilities to stabilize Saturdays with our current staff and hours

Proposed Plan

Summary: Adjust staff and building open hours to ensure there are four people scheduled all day Saturday. This adjustment reduces the number of hours when we have the contractually required minimum of three people scheduled, from 12hr/week to 3hr/week.

Plan: Change FT Circ staff (Susan) schedule to work every Saturday with Monday as swap day (new schedule Tuesday-Saturday 9am-5pm). This causes a critical circulation coverage shortage on Monday. To address it, we propose changing the building hours to move more staff to the Monday day shift to fill that gap. We propose the following modified schedule:

Day	Hours	Change
Monday	9am-5pm	Open 30 minutes earlier, closed 5-8pm
Tuesday	9am-8pm	Open 30 minutes earlier
Wednesday	9am-8pm	Open 30 minutes earlier
Thursday	9am-5pm	Open 30 minutes earlier
Friday	9am-5pm	Open 30 minutes earlier
Saturday	9am-1pm & 2-5pm	Open 30 minutes earlier

No change to total hours open per week (53/week). The three Monday evening staff would shift their 5-8pm hours into the daytime to stabilize the circulation coverage.

The Assistant Director's (Stephanie) schedule would also change to be added to the Saturday rotation. She will take Susan's spot in the Circulation department rotation. Her swap day would flex in the week prior as coverage demands. This allows us to maintain all department rotation schedules as-is mitigating the disruption to Fridays which is the swap day for Saturday shifts.

The Head of Archives (Meghan) schedule would change to include one Saturday per month to accommodate research appointments that are highly in demand. Her swap day would flex in the week prior as need demands.

How We Got Here

Library Director worked for multiple weeks with Assistant Director and department heads to come up with options to stabilize Saturdays with our current resources. After much discussion it was determined there was no way to move forward that did not affect all staff schedules. In particular on-call workflows were discussed and subsequently discarded based on a variety of inputs including statistical analysis of hourly use and staff feedback. Therefore, it was decided a change must be made and all staff would be affected.

Ideas to increase amount of staff scheduled Saturdays:

1. **Rotation alteration idea – 4 on Saturdays** (ref rotation remains every third, circ/ys rotation switches to every other)
2. **Rotation alteration idea – 5 on Saturdays** (everyone's rotation changes to every other and AD and Head of Archives now work one Saturday/month)
3. **Adjusting one staff person's schedule** to be every Saturday, removing them from a day during the week (would mean every third Saturday we only have three people)
4. **Using State Aid** to hire a part time circulation assistant working 9am-1pm Saturdays
5. **Change building open hours** (many iterations)