

Brooks Free Library Board of Trustees
Wed. July 2, 2025 at 7 pm
Thornton Room, Brooks Free Library
739 Main St., Harwich MA 02645

AGENDA

1. Call to Order/Attendance
2. Public Comment
3. Vote to Approve Regular Session Minutes of June 4, 2025 Board of Trustees Meeting
4. Reports
 - A. Chair
 - B. Library Director
 - C. Review of Staff Reports and Other Information in Meeting Packet
 - D. Building & Grounds Committee
 - E. Personnel Committee
7. Correspondence
8. Old Business
9. New Business
 - A. Vote to Accept Donations
10. Trustee Reports and Requests for Next Meeting's Agenda
11. Upcoming Meetings/Events
 - A. Library Board of Trustees - Aug. 6, 2025 – 7 pm
 - B. Library Board of Trustees - Sept. 3, 2025 – 7 pm
12. Executive Session
 - A. Pursuant to MGL c.30A section 21 (a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the Town's bargaining or litigating position: Harwich Employees Association (HEA) - discussion and possible votes
 - B. Pursuant to MGL c. 30A §21(a)(7) to comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements, the Open Meeting Law, MGL c. 30A §22(f), (g) to review, approve and or discuss the possible release of executive session meeting minutes dated May 7, 2025, March 5, 2025, Jan. 8, 2025, Dec. 9, 2025, Dec. 4, 2025, Oct. 2, 2024, Sept 30, 2024, Sept. 9, 2024, Sept. 4, 2024, July 10, 2024, June 5, 2024, May 1, 2024 and March 11, 2024.

Authorized posting officer

Posted by

Virginia A. Hewitt

Brooks Free Library

Town Clerk's Office

Agenda submitted for electronic posting to Town website.

* Per the Attorney General's Office: Boards/Commissions may hold an open session for topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours in advance of the meeting following "New Business." If you are deaf or hard of hearing or are a person with a disability who requires an accommodation, contact the Library at 508-430-7562 or brooksfreelibrary@clamsnet.org.

**Brooks Free Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
739 Main Street, Harwich, MA 02645
Wednesday, June 4, 2025 7pm**

1. Meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm. Members present: J. Brown, J. Wheeler, B. Waystack, L. Cebula, P. Murray, W.Crowell (7:08) J.McCarty (7:11) Members absent :none Also present: V. Hewitt, Director
2. Vote to Approve Regular Session Minutes of May 7, 2025 Board of Trustees Meeting
Motion: Wheeler 2nd.Waystack V. Unanimous
3. Public Comment: none

Rft45

4. Reports:

- A. Chair informed Board of newly reorganized Select Board, liaisons TBD
- B. Library Director as submitted with the following additions: good news- things are running more smoothly and nice to see. Friends Meeting is Wednesday, 6/18 due to the holiday on 6/19. Opening for Circulation Supervisor, there is plenty of coverage until it is filled. Monomoy High SHORE program students made cards.
- C. Staff Reports as submitted
- D. Building & Grounds: New outside furniture has been delivered and placed as of today.
- E. Personnel Committee: nothing other than vacancy for Circulation Supervisor mentioned in Director's report above.

5. Correspondence:

- A. Mass Board of Library Commissioners sent a status update 5/20/25

6. Old Business:

- A. None

7. New Business:

- A. Vote to accept the following donations:
John & Tsesan "Kitty" Shaw in memory of Len Sarver. \$100.00 from
& Elizabeth Johnson (annual donation). and \$500.00 from Edward
M. Cebula
2nd. McCarty V. Unanimous
- B. Annual evaluation of Library Director: Ginny will have her self-evaluation, and will send the evaluation forms for us to work on.
- C. Reorganization of the Board. The slate was approved to vote Bernadette Waystack, Chair; Tricia Murray, Vice Chair; Linda Cebula, Secretary and William Crowell, Treasurer.
M. Cebula 2nd. McCarty V. Unanimous
Personnel and Building & Grounds will remain as they are.

8. Trustees Reports and Requests for next meeting's agenda
None

9 Upcoming meetings and events

Library Board of Trustees Wednesday, July 2, 2025 at 7 pm

Library Board of Trustees Wednesday, August 6, 2025 at 7 pm

Motion to adjourn the regular session at 7:36 pm

M. McCarty 2nd. Brown V Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Bernadette Waystack,

Secretary, BFL Board of Trustees

Library Director's Report
for the July 2, 2025, 2025 Meeting of the
Brooks Free Library Board of Trustees

Prepared 6.24.25

Personnel News

- The internal job posting for Circulation Librarian closes on July 2nd.
- Senior Library Technician Pam North has resigned her permanent part-time position but will stay as a Library Assistant, which provides a lot more personal flexibility as it's a substitute/irregularly scheduled position. While we're happy we aren't losing Pam entirely, her knowledge and experience will be very much missed on her regular shifts at the Reference Desk and Circulation Desk.

The internal job posting for the part-time Senior Library Technician will be open soon. We will also be seeking to expand our pool of Library Assistants this summer.

- The end of the fiscal year is a busy time personnel-wise, as a number of staff members have anniversary dates in May and June or on July 1st, so they are due performance evaluations. In the past month I have completed two evaluations and have a third that is being finalized. We also need to process new temporary appointments for Library Assistants for July 1· 2025 through June 30, 2026.

FY25 Year End Accounting

- As previously reported, the FY25 budget for utilities has been insufficient to cover those expenses. Electric and Gas lines have been extraordinarily high this year, despite no increase in usage. The Water Dept. reported this year that our water meters had not been properly recording the gallons of water used. They replaced the meters and, as a result, expenditures for water use have increased.
- In Feb., I requested an increase to our FY26 budget for these 3 lines, which was approved, so unless market conditions change the FY26 budget should be sufficient.
- In Feb. I made Town Administration and the Finance Dept aware that our FY25 utility expenses were expected to exceed the budget and we were advised to plan to request a Year-End-Transfer from Salaries and Wages to Expenses line.
- Year-End-Transfers for individual departments and the overall Town budget must not exceed certain municipal accounting law guidelines and must be approved by the Select Board. The Finance Dept. has been maintaining our pending request on the list of potential transfers.
- With the fiscal year coming to close, I have completed an estimate of the funding necessary to cover the utility costs. Some bills have yet to arrive, so the final amount will differ, but this will give the range of what is anticipated. As of 6.23.25 I am projecting the following lines will be overspent by:
 - Electric - \$10,277
 - Gas - \$1455

- Water - \$399.
- With a projected positive balance of \$1045 in the other Expense lines, the overall Expense budget is estimated to be over by \$11087.
- The Salary & Wages line is projected to end the year with a balance of \$56217.
- After the transfer to cover the shortfall in Expenses, the Salary and Wages line will have a balance of \$45130, which will be returned to the General Fund.
- I have advised Town Administration and the Finance Dept of the updated estimates. They will provide the needed forms, if any, which I will submit once the fiscal year ends and the amounts are finalized.

FY26 Finances

- At their meeting on June 23rd, the Select Board approved a 4% Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) for non-union employees, i.e., those in the Personnel Bylaw.
- Library staff members affected by this are the Library Director, Deputy Library Director and the Library Assistants.
- A potential 2% COLA was included in FY26 budgets so additional funds will need to be transferred into department's budgets to cover the additional 2% cost for this COLA for Personnel Bylaw employees.
- The Town and the Harwich Employee's Association have not yet reached an agreement for FY26. This means the remaining Library employees will not receive a Cost-of-Living increase until a contract is signed.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia A. Hewitt
Library Director

Library Deputy Director's Report
For the July 2025 meeting of the
Brooks Free Library Board of Trustees

Circulation Meeting:

On June 10th I led a very productive, well attended (10+ staff), circulation department meeting. I wanted to get everyone on the same page so we can all get through our busy summer and move forward together. I got a lot of positive feedback from this meeting and I feel confident that our strong staff will get through the summer just fine with the resources we have in place now. I am now quickly trying to become more familiar with the numerous procedures and integrities of the circulation department so that I can step up in that lead role while preparing to train our next Circulation Librarian.

End of fiscal year/start of summer:

More than foot traffic increases here in summer. Some other tasks that fall to me include communication with the public about meeting room spaces, local author submissions, possible programs, and various types of donations. A new copy machine has been delivered and I should have it fully set up soon. Many thanks to the Friends and particularly Barbara Obrig who assisted me with the numerous details of setting this up.

New tabletops have arrived in time for our end of fiscal year and soon we will have 5 new-looking flip-top tables to replace our broken and worn ones. I am working with the vendor to find a time for him to put them together in our busy Thornton Room.

We were successful in spending our materials budget that I managed this year in a timely fashion without added stress at the end of the year. I have started a draft of next year's plan continuing to make changes based on the circulation and holds data as well as trends related to the various formats of materials.

ARIS:

I have signed up for ARIS training for July 9 and many things are changing this year on this state-wide report so that training will be important. I will start cleaning up our data soon and looking to track down any missing statistics that have not been added to our spreadsheets.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenifer Pickett, Deputy Director

Reference Librarian
July 2025
Report to the Trustees of Brooks Free Library

Technology

This month I began initial upgrades from Microsoft Office 2019 to 2024, as Office 2019 will no longer be supported after October 2025. I have a tracking sheet of all computers that need to be updated, 22 in all. I am also making my way upgrading all computers to Windows 11, and as of this writing I have completed 10/22. I ran into issues downloading Microsoft Office 2024 on the Reference computer, and after a couple days of troubleshooting I managed to find a way to resolve the issues. I updated instructions for staff and I also upgraded the future Youth Services stations to Office 2024 and next plan to upgrade the word processing computer.

On June 2nd I spoke at the Select Board meeting to notify the town about the meeting room upgrade, added information and instructions on our staff website, and trained staff and patrons on the new system. Later on in the month we had some connectivity issues with the new projector, and notified Carlson Audio Visual which resolved our issues. I also updated our staff procedures and instructions for the meeting room.

Reference

Senior Library Technician Pam North has decided to step back into the Library Assistant role, which will require more coverage on the Reference Desk this summer. I do think we will manage with Gavin, Alan, Christine, and I covering most shifts. On June 18th I met with a representative from WeCan and learned about the services they offer, which was much more than expected. They will be another resource we can refer patrons to if they need guidance starting a new business, free legal advice, and more. On June 24th I met with a patron to train them on Windows accessibility, a combination of VITAL and Book-a-Librarian programs. On June 26th I attended a webinar on supporting library patrons with re-employment needs through MassHire, which will help us assist patrons with additional resources.

As of July 1st several databases will no longer be available due to federal funding cuts. I have updated our handouts at reference to reflect these changes and provided staff with this information so they will be ready for patron questions.

Future Work

I am skipping this month for OverDrive/ebook purchasing as we are out of funds for this fiscal year, but will be making a large order in July. I will also be continuing Microsoft updates and handling the additional rush of patrons for the summer season. We have already seen an increase in assistance.

Respectfully submitted,
Jamie Thornton
Reference Librarian

Youth Services Report
June 24, 2025

School Visits

The HES preschool, all second grade classrooms, all third grade classrooms and one kindergarten took walking field trips to the library in May and June to learn about the library and the summer reading program. I talked about the summer reading program to the first and fourth graders during my usual Monday visit. I also visited Monomoy Regional Middle School to speak to about half the fifth and sixth graders (Meghan Kemp from Eldredge Public Library spoke to the other half of the fifth and sixth graders) about the summer reading program and using our electronic resources during the summer. While at MRMS I also met with a group of ELA students to form connections in the hopes that they will visit the library during the summer.

Special Summer Programs

The Friends of the Brooks Free Library have fully funded our slate of special performers for the summer, as voted on at their April meeting. The total was \$2,970 for 10 performers who range from magic to science to animal education. We will also have nine staff-led special programs such as an egg drop challenge, origami, and slime making. We have five regular weekly programs during the summer run by myself or Shift Supervisor Shanaz Petty: Tuesday Storytime, Thursday Storytime, Friday Craft, Teen Art, and Middle/High School Food and Fun, as well as Legos which is a passive program that does not need staff supervision.

Summer Reading Program

Every time a young person reads (or is read to) for 2.5 hours they can receive a free book and a small prize. As of June 24th we had 125 people signed up for the program, which is about a third of what we expect by the end of the summer.

Collection Development

In April, May, and June youth services staff ran reports to curate and withdraw books in the areas of children's fiction, picture books, board books, young adult fiction, early readers, and young adult graphic novels. I put in orders with Ingram for physical books, with Playaway and Vox Books for physical audiobooks, with OverDrive for ebooks and audiobooks, with MidWest Tapes for DVDS, and with Amazon for video games and materials for kits.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Carpenter
Youth Services Librarian

Staff Librarian - Programming
June 2025 Report for
July 2nd, 2025 Trustees of Brooks Free Library Meeting

Programming

Throughout June, I worked on placing posts on our social media feeds and am working on putting together the newsletter for patrons - the July newsletter will be sent out on June 30th. I am also working on coordination of monthly Cape Cod Chronicle library columns (and communication to the Chronicle about events, along with other BFL staff) and of the bimonthly column for the Harwich COA newsletter. Ann Carpenter submitted a column to the Chronicle on upcoming children's programming for the summer. I am also continuing to work on getting programming planned, now for after the summer months (given focus on children's programming and on serving an increased number of patrons). I met with members of the Friends' Sunday Series programming committee to discuss their upcoming fall/winter event plans and ensure coordination/preventing overlap of programs. I am planning a fall gardening program, along with other informational and music programs. Jamie Thornton and I are still planning to continue my training on BFL website management and other functions I will be carrying out in coordinating programming and outreach.

Circulation and Other Activities

Given staffing changes in Circulation, I have spent more time assisting in covering the desk and also worked on making some needed updates to the Museum Passes (and will continue to manage the passes for the time being).

Personal Development

I completed my Adult Services course for my MLIS (San Jose State University) in May, which was relevant to my current work at BFL. I will be registering for my next course (likely Reference Services or Collection Development) and starting it in August. I also continue to plan on taking advantage of any other relevant online trainings offered by CLAMS, MBLC and other organizations, as time permits.

Respectfully submitted,
Gavin Williams, Staff Librarian - Programming

FY25 Budget Balances

As of 6.27.25

AREA OF EXPENDITURE	Appropriated Amt	Spent	Remaining Balance	Percent Spent
Advertising	\$180.00	\$0.00	\$180.00	0%
Dues, Subs & Travel	\$3,400.00	\$3,394.80	\$5.20	100%
Library Materials	\$185,935.00	\$185,925.05	\$9.95	100%
Electric	\$32,000.00	\$42,277.16	-\$10,277.16	132%
Employee Fringe Benefits	\$756.00	\$0.00	\$756.00	0%
Gas	\$10,550.00	\$12,153.43	-\$1,603.43	115%
Library Supplies	\$13,300.00	\$13,288.28	\$11.72	100%
Other Purchased Services	\$6,500.00	\$6,487.69	\$12.31	100%
Maintenance & Repair	\$5,962.00	\$5,897.25	\$64.75	99%
Office Supplies	\$7,850.00	\$7,847.50	\$2.50	100%
Professional & Tech	\$51,655.00	\$51,652.69	\$2.31	100%
Water	\$1,170.00	\$1,064.09	\$105.91	91%
Total Library Expenses	\$319,258.00	\$329,987.94	-\$10,729.94	103%
Wages & Salaries	\$853,139.00	\$777,422.22	\$75,716.78	91%
TOTAL	\$1,172,397.00	\$1,107,410.16	\$64,986.84	94%