

**BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES**

Neal DeChillo – Chair, Johannah Morgen – Vice Chair/Treasurer, Debbie Friedlander – Secretary

Attendees: Jean LaVasque, Cookbook Club. (Email: jelebarn5@gmail.com)

MAY 5, 2025

**MINUTES – May 5, 2025**

The Trustees of the Swampscott Public Library will hold a meeting on Monday, May 5 at 5:30 pm. The meeting will be held in the Director’s office of the Library, 61 Burrill St, Swampscott, MA.

**Agenda – May 5, 2025**

1. Call to Order: Meeting called to order: 5:31PM
2. Approval of Minutes: Minutes of April, 20025 will be tabled till next meeting. Minutes of March, 2025 are approved.
3. Director’s Report:
	1. Director’s Activities: Jonathan had a very productive meeting with Karl of JuiceBox the library’s website design/build firm, regarding the Museum pass platform. The Library is testing the alpha version. Updated timeline to go live is mid-May. If accessed in-person, inside the library, there’s no need for staff to validate the procedure as the staff will already doing it for them. Additionally, Jonathan will be working with JuiceBox designing a new “forms” system to prioritize Swampscott residents. Juicebox is preparing a proposal for the Town to review which would provide Town wide access to use the system. Working on a new grant via the The Massachusetts Municipal ADA Improvement Grant program which provides up to $250K to construct a ramp for the children’s room. Application opens May 1st and closes June 1st. Jonathan is presently compiling the requisite data required to complete the application. Monies will be awarded by the fall, 2025 and must be disbursed by June 2026. Architect Ray Guerin and his team were on-site Saturday, May 3, 2025, for additional measurements.
	2. Department and Staffing News: Sending out email this evening, May 5, 2025, regarding major scheduling changes starting this summer due to the expected higher attendance, especially in the Children’s Room. Every staff member will be required to work at least 1 night a week. Jonathan has been in constant touch with the Union. They are in alignment with the schedule changes.
4. Other News and Updates: Working on a year-long advocacy program. In info gathering stage for the ARIES report so to be able to hit the ground running. Looking at different databases to ascertain numbers for all the different programs and public relations.
5. Old Business:

Programming and Display Discussion: Summary of previous conversation from 4.7.2025 BOLT Minutes: *The Cookbook Club has been active for fifteen years and has had up to 25 members at various points. The library’s support for the club included: reserved space, provision of paper goods, librarian liaison who picked the cookbook and ensured there were sufficient copies for participants.*

*The pandemic caused the Cookbook Club to enter a hiatus.*

*The Cookbook Club members report there was no notice of the club being formally ended in terms of library support and are requesting reconsideration of that decision on the following grounds:*

* *Public health shared a preference for cooked food not being shared in the library, but this is not a policy and the pot luck exemption would likely apply.*
* *The library is a familiar and safe location for club meetings.*
* *The club builds commitment to the library and has successfully led to friendships and connected members to other library activities.*
* *Sharing food builds community.*
* *Draws in participants from neighboring communities and creates a sense of belonging.*

*The cookbook club is requesting:*

* *Space*
* *Librarian liaison*
* *Publicity on the website.*

*The library has offered:*

* *Collaboration to set up space for club meetings in the senior center which has appropriate facilities for food.*
* *A librarian liaison to assist with accessing the cookbooks.*
* *Assurance that the senior center will be staffed during the early evening meeting time.*

*Concerns named with the Senior Center location:*

* *Is it truly inter-generational or solely focused on seniors?*
* *Safety of parking lot and building in early evening.*
* *Level of welcome in the facility.*
	1. In Jonathan’s response to the Cookbook Club, he noted the Town wishes for the library to partner more with other departments. He explained the additional library staffing requirements and the concerns highlighted by the Health Department. Jean did note members are careful about food safety. By partnering with Heidi Whear, MPH, Director of Aging Services at The Senior Center there’s the option to bring in an actual local chef. Johanna advised most libraries do discourage food in a library, while at the same time affirming some libraries do allow Book Clubs. She went to point out the benefits of the Senior Center’s ability to offer a broader set of capabilities. Jean is open to receiving Jonathan’s proposal, which he is coordinating Heidi.
	2. Poet Laureate Discussion: Jonathan read Steve Iannaccone’s proposal for a Town Poet Laureat. The proposal requests for this new endeavor to be under the jurisdiction of The Library. For the library, there are issues regarding time and resources. The library staff cannot undertake this additional responsibility in total. Though they can take on the PR lift. But the poets must take on the major part of the work. Setting up the criteria for judging for instance. After discussion the Trustees suggested perhaps the entire endeavor should be the purview of an Arts Committee or Arts Council. The Trustees believe this would instill the proper importance and stature to the role of Poet Laureat as well as providing a broader scope.
	3. Renovations Update:
	4. FY26 Budget: Article 14 in the Town Warrant askes for an increase in the Library’s revolving fund which presently stands at $$3500. Requested increase to $5,000. For instance*, ink prices,* especially are rising significantly. Jonathan has requested the way a change in how the library’s budget is noted in the Town’s Budget Book. As an example, different line items don’t match the real budget. Employment contracts will not be fully negotiated and completed till the new Town Administrator is hired. However, Gino Cresta, the interim Town Administrator did say employees are getting a 2% CODA.
1. New Business:
	1. General Policy Updates – Possible Vote Needed: Officially NOBEL does not have a lending policy regarding decertified libraries. Working one for shared e-book collections with decertified libraries. NOBEL is considering notifying decertified libraries will not have access to the e-book collections. It does appear as if NOBLE will vote to not allow any lending to decertified libraries. The Trustees passed a motion The Swampscott Library will not, in any capacity to any decertified libraires.
2. Miscellany & Adjournment: Neal DeChillo was re-elected to the Board of Library Trustees and elected our BOLT officers: Remaining the same.

Meeting adjourned: 7:04PM

**UPCOMING MEETINGS:**

June 2, 2025

July 7, 2025

August 4, 2025

September 8, 2025

October 6, 2025

November 3, 2025

December 1, 2025