

PLAISTOW PUBLIC LIBRARY

MEETING OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Thursday, May 14, 2026

The Plaistow Public Library Board of Trustees held a meeting at the Library on Thursday, May 15, 2026 at 9:30 am.

Present: Randall Mikkelsen, Chair
Rosemarie Bayek, Treasurer
Megan Lee, Secretary
Dolores Quirk, Trustee at Large
Michelle Sykes, Trustee at Large
Mary Gori, Alternate

Absent: Kathleen Slade, Alternate

Others Present: Christine Muir, Director
Susan Johnson, Note Taker

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 am.

Secretary's Report:

Minutes of April 9, 2026 were reviewed. Motion to accept these minutes was made by Michelle Sykes, seconded by Rosemarie Bayek. Motion accepted: Ayes 5; Opposed 0; Abstentions 0.

Chair Report:

The chair asked the Select Board Chair, Bill Coye, what the library could do in light of the recent failure of the town to approve the library's request for additional funds into the capital reserve fund. Bill's advice is that the library should publicize more about the activities, programs, and services it provides so that the Budget Committee has more information to make future decisions. Christine will plan to attend future Budget Committee meetings.

Treasurer's Report: Presented by Director Christine Muir

The monthly Budget Report will be amended to show two columns only; one being the Year to Date amounts and the second being the Budget amounts. The percentage used of the budget will be added for each item.

The budget is over right now on maintenance and repairs, on-line services, tech services, programs and utilities, but the over-all budget is on track. Money may be taken from Memorial Funds for programming only.

Motion was made to approve Treasurer's report by Megan Lee, seconded by Michelle Sykes. Motion passed: Ayes 5; Opposed 0; Abstentions 0.

Correspondence and Communications:

Letter from Peter Bealo thanking the library for hosting IRS preparation days. It was very successful in terms of turn-out and results. He would like to be invited back next year. Christine had a conversation with him regarding the conflict of the space with the yoga classes. Christine will look at scheduling and see what can be done.

Friends of the Library: Presented by Michelle Sykes

The Staff Appreciation Luncheon will be May 28, 2026 from 12-2:00 in the Nelson room.

The money from the Plant Sale has not been totaled yet. The yard sale that was scheduled for the same day was postponed due to rain.

Scholarships for Pages. There is only one graduating page this year. In the past, one person could not get both scholarships. They have decided they will no longer go through the school for scholarship recommendations. Dolores and Rosemarie will work on a combined application/selection process to be used by both the library and the Friends next year. Scholarship to be awarded at Staff Luncheon. A photo may be submitted to the Tribune and posted on the web site.

Motion was made to approve awarding the library scholarship to Owen by Dolores Quirk, seconded by Rosemarie Bayek. Motion passed: Ayes 4; Opposed 0; Abstentions 1 (Megan Lee).

Director's Report: Presented by Christine Muir

Gas odor. There was a gas odor last Friday that required evacuation of the library and the fire department was called. Nothing was found at the time. The next day there was again the odor of gas. HVAC and plumber came in on Monday and tested a high level of carbon monoxide in the boiler. Dampers were not working properly and were opened on the boiler and ceiling. Also, there was an odor of sewage due to water evaporation in some sewer traps. Water was added but it may happen again.

HVAC. The EPA has approved a new coolant that must be in place in all HVAC systems by 2036. The new coolant requires a larger coil and more space around it, meaning it won't fit in our current air handler unit (AHU) on the second floor. The current system is old and parts may not be available for much longer. Unitil has an incentive program that may provide rebates or financing options for upgrades that improve energy efficiency. They conducted an initial energy audit on Monday but results are not in yet. Our HVAC service company, ENE, is also exploring options for cooling. A new boiler could cost around \$100,000 but isn't necessary yet. Other options will likely require an engineering study that could also cost up to \$100,000. The trustees feel strongly that it makes more sense to plan for these costs than to have to incur them on an emergency basis, if some part fails unexpectedly.

Field Project. Tyler from Charest Builders has quoted \$16,550 for walkway and stone. Jill Senter from the Conservation Commission is concerned about the width of the path and the potential need to shore up the wetlands. Conservation Commission is donating \$25,000 for project. Plantings this year should fit within the Conservation Commission budget. \$1,000 is to be earmarked for a bench in honor of a long-time Conservation Commission member. Christine has found one at Freshwater Farms. Tyler, Jill and Christine will have a meeting regarding the path and quote.

Action List:

Google Suite to be discussed at June meeting.

Old Business:

Library Funds Policy. The board decided to wait on revising the wording for exceptions on limits or targets, and to wait on voting to put an exception in place now.

Motion was made to approve Draft of Library Funds Policy dated 12/10/2019 by Rosemarie Bayek, seconded by Michelle Sykes. Motion approved: Ayes 4 (Megan Lee left meeting at 11:00); Opposed 0; Abstentions 0.

Water Pump. ENE quote to replace is \$8,230. Payment will come out of maintenance and repairs. Funds may need to be replenished. No vote necessary since it's in the operating budget.

New Business:

Carpeting. Christine presented a quote for replacing the carpet, with walk off carpeting in the entry vestibules and possibly more supportive flooring behind the circulation desk. The trustees asked Christine to pursue additional quotes for comparison. The project will be paid out of the Scott fund as part of the "refresh" project.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:20AM.