



South Burlington Library Board of Trustees

Approved Minutes August 13, 2026

The Library Board of Trustees held a regular meeting on August 13, 2026 at 5:30 pm, in the Library Boardroom, and by Zoom.

Members present: Whitney Kirzinger, Anne LaLonde, Ted Lenski, Christy Liddy-Repstad, Holly Painter, Stacey Pape, Marty Reid, Rebecca Stazi, Leslie Van Wagner, Brenda Withey

Absent: Donna Swartwout

Also present: Bree Drapa, Library Director, Merry Jones, President, Friends of the Library, Erin Davison, Outgoing Youth Services Librarian, Christine Walton, New Youth Services Librarian

1. Call to Order at 5:32 pm
2. Review of Library Exits
3. Comments and questions from the public not related to items on the agenda

None

4. Additions and deletions to the posted agenda

Chair Ted Lenski asked to add an executive session to the end of the meeting.

5. Approve regular board minutes of July 9, 2026 Board of Trustees Meeting

Upon a motion made by Trustee Anne LaLonder and seconded by Trustee Stacey Pape, the Trustees voted unanimously to accept the minutes of the July 9, 2026 Board of Trustees Meeting.

6. Welcome and Chair remarks

Chair Ted Lenski welcomed board members. He expressed his excitement about all the visibility the library has had lately and appreciation for Trustees who have participated in tabling at SBPR events this summer. He also apologized that he couldn't find a common time that worked for everyone for the Strategic Planning session.

6A. The Chair thanked Erin Davison, the outgoing Youth Services Librarian, for all she's done over the last year. She's made a real difference in the library. Trustee Stacey Pape presented Erin with a plant. Chair Ted Lenski expressed that while the Trustees are sad to see her go, they are happy for her new opportunity.

Erin thanked the Board of Trustees. She said it's been an incredible year and she's learned so much. She has valued the relationship with Bree. She said this has been one of the most challenging parts of her career and at the same time it has also been so rewarding. She expressed her gratitude for the Board, saying that the Board genuinely cares about the library, the staff, and the community.

Bree shared that the staff had a heart-felt staff meeting, consisting of a lot of affirmations for Erin and also for Sonny Spina, whose last day was yesterday. Bree said that it was Erin who got us outside the library. Her commitment to meeting people where they are in the community and the push to be at every South Burlington Night Out was all driven by Erin.

6B. The Chair welcomed Christine, the new Youth Services Librarian, and presented her with flowers. Christine introduced herself. She has 15 years working in public libraries and the bookselling industry, beginning her career in Ontario, Canada, as a Children's Library Programming Coordinator before joining Indigo Books & Music in Toronto as a Children's Department Book Manager. She moved to Vermont in 2020 and quickly became deeply involved in the state's library community, serving at various Vermont libraries since 2020 including Swanton, St. Albans, Fletcher Free, Highgate, and Arvin A. Brown libraries. She said she was delighted to be part of the team and feels like this is the right fit for her. Each Trustee introduced themselves to Christine.

7. Friends of the South Burlington Library Report (written report submitted by Merry Jones)

Bookshop sales for July 2026

Bookshop = \$308.00

Kiosk = \$585.33

Total = \$893.33

We have picked out the next season's children's book for the StoryWalk. It is The Leaf Thief by Alice Hemming, a fun, thoughtful and informative story that explains what happens to tree leaves in the fall. Erin is currently teaching our new Children's Librarian Christine Walton about the page layout and lamination process. We will be changing the story in late September.

Donations for Donuts Event – Sunday Aug. 23 from 10a.m-1:00 p.m. in the library foyer. We are in still need of good fiction books for our upcoming book sale Oct.9-11, so we are putting the word out on social media, Front Porch Forum, the Library's calendar of events, and our own website for people to bring in their book donations and join us for a cup of coffee (or chocolate milk) and a Dunkin Donut that morning. Donations can also be brought to the Bookshop upstairs or the library front desk at other times.

8. Foundation Report (Anne LaLonde)

The Foundation finished its fiscal year on June 30. They are planning to give \$32k to the library this year. Bree has already proposed some ideas for how to use the money, including the Hangout Space construction (the Foundation has given \$25k already), NYT subscriptions, Libby, Museum and Park passes, and the Coffee Bar. Anne expressed gratitude to Bree for the proactive list of ideas. Anne also mentioned that there were a lot of first-time contributors to the Foundation this year.

9. Review of the United for Libraries Conference Virtual Meeting - Donna/Marty/Leslie

Ted, Leslie, Donna, Marty all attended the virtual meeting. Ted, Leslie, and Marty reported on

some interesting themes. Illinois Heartland Library talked about the “iLEAD” program, an online training for public library trustees. Attendees also said they liked hearing about ALA’s initiative Unite Against Book Bans campaign. They referenced a tree model for libraries, where trustees are the roots, library leadership is the trunk, and the library staff are branches. Another interesting program they learned about was Meow Madness run by the Worcester Public Library where patrons can clear overdue fines by bringing in a picture of a cat. Attendees also mentioned that a library in Virginia has a self-assessment system for Library Boards of Trustees and wondered when was the last time the Board did a self-assessment? Ted said he believes that we have a stable foundation as a well-functioning team, and now we’re maturing and need to be prepared to take it to the next level. We have access to all the slides.

10. Presentation on S. 232: An Act Relating to Public Libraries and the Department of Libraries

Bree shared slides explaining changes to Act 127 (S.232), the first of two library laws she will talk to the trustees about. Act 127 (S.232) was introduced and enacted by the Vermont Legislature, effective July 1, 2026. This legislation focuses on public libraries and the Department of Libraries, making several updates to the duties and functions of the department, as well as clarifying eligibility for certain fund allocations.

This act designates the third Monday in the month of October as “Vermont Libraries Day.” This act also amends the statute governing the Universal Afterschool and Summer Special Fund to authorize the Agency of Education to allocate a portion of program funds to the Department of Libraries for subgrants to public libraries; require the Agency of Education to create a simple application and reporting process for small, community based organizations; add the State Librarian as a member of the advisory committee that supports the Secretary of Education with administration of funds; and require the advisory committee to solicit public input on an annual basis concerning grant programs and procedures related to administration of the Special Fund. This act also amends 16 V.S.A. § 4014 to expressly include public libraries as eligible recipients of funds for voluntary early education programs. This act also amends the duties of the Department of Libraries to incorporate references to both digital and physical collections of library materials and to modernize references to interlibrary loans. This act also amends 22 V.S.A. § 143 to add language that limits how that section may be construed with respect to public libraries that are privately established or incorporated. This act also amends 24 V.S.A. § 1752a to expressly reference capital improvements for public libraries as an eligible basis for the issuance of a municipal bond. Finally, this act also repeals the Audio-Visual Revolving Fund.

11. Library Director’s Report (Bree Drapa)

Bree started by sharing July’s record-breaking statistics:

- Issued **251 new library cards**, the highest monthly number since moving to this building
- **41,762 circulation transactions**, the highest by a landslide since tracking began in 2013
- **14,762 library visits**, the highest number ever
- **969 children’s program attendees**, also the highest number ever
- Summer reading sign ups were also successful, metrics not yet available
- Bree noted that Pride planning is in full swing. She has paid for the table and marching and t-shirt orders have been placed. Dice and bags are in. Whitney’s family is bagging the dice.
- We hosted a very successful event on August 1 with New York Times #1 Bestselling Vermont author Chris Bohjalian. This event was sold out and hosted in the auditorium in partnership with Barnes and Noble and Penguin Random House. Chris was interviewed

by local news anchor, Lauren Maloney. Library staff worked diligently to make this large event run smoothly.

- Construction begins August 3 on the revitalization of The Hangout, the tween portion of the KidSpace. Thank you to facilities and the Foundation for their help and support of this project.
- Summer Reading ended August 8. This has been a banner year with higher numbers of signups than previous years. Thank you for all the staff who worked so hard on this – it is a team lift!
- We are sad to see Erin Davison (August 14) and Sonny Spina (August 12) leave, but glad they are staying in the Vermont Library world. We have hired Christine Walton (starting August 10) as Erin's replacement. We will be working with HR on filling Sonny's role.
- FY26 saw significant increases in our usage stats over FY25 with visits up 15%, circulation up over 20%, digital checkouts up 40%, active borrowers up 15%. We have been busy! Sundays continue to be popular.
- The Library will be CLOSED August 16 & 17 for Bennington Battle Day and carpet cleaning.
- We are shifting collections around upstairs, creating a young adult collection that is distinct from our adult collection. This will give teens more ownership and autonomy over their reading choices – plus they are easier to find. We have also added computers to the teen space (thanks IT for the help!)
- Significant progress is being made toward our migration to Koha on September 23.

12. Committee Reports

12. A. Finance

Brenda Withey reported that she spent time with Bree prepping for budget season. She shared that the increase in library usage and library growth metrics will be taken into account in thinking about proposing reasonable budget increases. Bree thanked Brenda for all her expertise and help.

12. B. Governance and Nominating

Marty led a discussion regarding two policies, the Gift Account Policy and the Board of Trustees Bylaws. The purpose of the discussion was to get general feedback on direction, not to make any decisions at this point.

The Gift Account Policy is intended to put the Trustees in an oversight position of funds that come in from sources other than the City of South Burlington. Most gifts come from the Friends of the Library or the Library Foundation. While it was decided that the policy shouldn't be eliminated completely, there is opportunity to significantly reduce and simplify the policy. The role of the Board of Trustees is to ensure there is a system of checks and balances with the Foundation and the Friends and that all money is being spent responsibly. It was suggested that we include audit language in this policy, and that the policy was reviewed and revised in partnership with the Finance Committee. No action needed from Trustees at this time.

Marty also brought forward the Bylaws of the Trustees. Changes recommended included adding a Foundation liaison, adding language regarding the Stipend program, and clarifying Committee bodies, along with clarifying stipends and quorums with respect to Committees. The Committee names should also be revised, as some of the committees are no longer relevant. Ted recommended keeping the Evaluation Committee, as it does exist but only meets when the Trustees perform the Library Director's annual evaluation. Ted also

suggested keeping the Governance & Nominating Committee name, but plans on working with the City Council Chair on the nominating element of the committee responsibilities. Term limits were also discussed. Currently there are no term limits. Based on a review of Board of Trustee Bylaws from neighboring communities, the Governance Committee recommended three 3-year terms with the option of returning after one year. Any Trustee who has exceeded the new recommendation would be grandparented in. There were also recommendations to strengthen the language around the dismissal of a Trustee. The Committee will make edits and bring back to future meetings. Leslie suggested bringing a few topics to each of the next meetings with edits marked up on slides, to make the process of discussion and editing run smoother without becoming too tedious.

12. C. Communications

Holly Painter talked about several upcoming events, including Pride in September. She advised Trustees to be on the look out for forthcoming communications about Pride. She reported that the Communications Committee attended/coordinated Trustee presence at 12 events this summer. The Committee is tabling at 3 elementary school orientations and 1 Kindergarten playdate. The school events will be in lieu of traditional library card sign up events.

Rebecca Stazi shared that Hannah Miller is concluding their library tour in Rutland on Saturday, September 19th from 12pm-4pm. They were at our library in 2024, the 51st stop on their tour. Rebecca will send information to Trustees via email.

Anne also mentioned that the Foundation has scheduled Hannah to come to SBPL in April for an event.

Holly also reminded Trustees to continue hanging the new library posters at designated spots around the city. She asked that Trustees document poster signage on the excel spreadsheet when you hang them up.

13. Strategic Plan Development

The Strategic Plan Review was postponed, to be addressed by a smaller subcommittee focused on finalizing the plan. Whitney, Marty, Leslie, and Ted volunteered to form a subcommittee. Donna (absent) will also be included. Ted emphasized that the work should be accelerated so that we can use it to advocate to the city for what we need, considering the increased library activity and growing needs of the community.

14. Other Business

Holly Painter made a motion to go into executive session at 7:10pm. Brenda seconded.

Anne motioned to come out of executive session at 7:25pm. Stacey seconded.

15. Adjourned at 7:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Whitney Kirzinger
Acting Secretary, SBPL Board of Trustees