Pembroke Public Library Board of Trustees Minutes – August 19, 2026

PEMBROKE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Board of Library Trustees

Regular Meeting Minutes

August 19, 2026

I. Call to Order

Chair called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. and noted that the meeting was being audio recorded. All Trustees were present.

Trustees Present

Sharon Stearns, Chair

Stephanie Ciciotti

Larissa Curley

Erin Petti

Kathy Benvie

Erin Columbare

Library Leadership Present

Julia Nee, Library Director

Stephanie McBain, Assistant Director

II. Friends of the Library Report

The Friends of the Library have agreed to sponsor a one-year subscription to the Library Speakers Consortium virtual author talk series. Upcoming talks include Lucy Foley on August 27, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. and Veronica Roth in late September. Recordings are available to registered patrons after each talk.

The Friends' silent auction will run from September 21 to October 17, 2026, followed by the Book and Bake Sale on October 17. The Friends' Annual Meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 13, 2026.

The Friends and the Director are meeting with a new vendor for the signage project after difficulties with the previous vendor.

The Trustees thanked the Friends for their continued support. No action was required.

III. Foundation / Expansion Committee Report

Trustee Sharon Stearns, the Board's liaison to the Foundation, and the Director provided an update. The Board agreed that $50,000 remains an appropriate sponsorship amount for the Young Adult Lounge, reflecting higher construction quotes; no vote was required.

A check presentation is being planned for a Select Board meeting in September or October to recognize expansion project earmarks from Senator Dylan Fernandes, Representative Kenneth Sweezey, and Representative Kathleen LaNatra. The Foundation also plans to transfer approximately $1,000,000 to the Town for project management. A grant writer funded by resident Jeff Stone will pursue grant opportunities.

Approximately $250,000 remains to be raised [confirm figure]. The project may go out to bid in January 2027, with construction beginning as early as March 2027.

No formal action was taken.

IV. Approval of Minutes

The Board reviewed the June 17, 2026, minutes. Corrections were requested to note that the Adult Services and Director's Reports were not voted on because figures were under review, and to fix a minor typographical error.

Motion: To approve the June 17, 2026, meeting minutes with the corrections as noted.

Motion by: Stephanie C.

Seconded by: Erin C.

Vote: Unanimously approved.

V. Monthly Reports

May 2026 Adult Services Report (revised)

The report was revised to add an omitted Baking Club event, which reconciled the program totals.

Motion: To accept the revised May 2026 Adult Services Report.

Motion by: Stephanie C.

Seconded by: Erin P.

Vote: Unanimously approved.

May 2026 Director's Report

The Director confirmed the report's figures, including non-resident borrowing, were accurate and unchanged.

Motion: To accept the May 2026 Director's Report.

Motion by: Stephanie C.

Seconded by: Sharon S.

Vote: Unanimously approved.

June 2026 Youth Services Report

Youth Services held 37 programs attended by 2,965 people. More than 300 participants registered for the Summer Reading Program in its first week. Highlights included grant-funded wool spinning and butterfly exhibit programs.

Motion: To accept the June 2026 Youth Services Report.

Motion by: Stephanie C.

Seconded by: Erin C.

Vote: Unanimously approved.

June 2026 Adult Services Report

Adult Services held 22 programs attended by 159 people, including a performance by Hungrytown. The monthly genealogy program concluded, and staff are planning standalone fall programs with a family history specialist.

Motion: To accept the June 2026 Adult Services Report.

Motion by: Stephanie C.

Seconded by: Sharon S.

Vote: Unanimously approved.

June 2026 Director's Report

Hoopla usage has doubled over the past year, significantly increasing overall costs. No changes will be made this summer. In the fall, staff will consider options such as reducing the monthly borrowing limit from eight to five or six items, which Trustees favored. Library Aide Pam retired after nearly ten years. The SAILS Library Network will transition to the Aspen Discovery catalog, funded by a state grant.

Motion: To accept the June 2026 Director's Report.

Motion by: Erin C.

Seconded by: Stephanie C.

Vote: Unanimously approved.

July 2026 Youth Services Report

Youth Services held 28 programs attended by 2,228 people, including Junior Zookeeper and Pembroke Cultural Council–funded programs. A popular children's music performer will return monthly from October through March.

Motion: To accept the July 2026 Youth Services Report.

Motion by: Stephanie C.

Seconded by: Sharon S.

Vote: Unanimously approved.

July 2026 Adult Services Report

Adult Services held 12 programs attended by 106 people, including a book-folding craft and an introduction to xeriscaping.

Motion: To accept the July 2026 Adult Services Report.

Motion by: Stephanie C.

Seconded by: Kathy B.

Vote: Unanimously approved.

July 2026 Director's Report

Patrons borrowed 101 museum passes, saving an estimated $6,677, and the new study pods recorded 51 uses. Youth Services Librarian Ms. Melissa departed, and Griff joined as a Library Aide. Online resource statistics are pending, and the new card registration figure (listed as 14, likely 140) will be confirmed.

The Board agreed to table acceptance of the July 2026 Director's Report until the September meeting. No action was taken.

VI. Financial Report

The Director reported that the budget is in reasonable shape, although early-year percentages reflect large one-time charges such as the SAILS network assessment of approximately $27,000. Capital project balances are pending final FY26 figures from the Town Accountant. The state financial report is due in mid-October.

Motion: To accept the financial report.

Motion by: Sharon S.

Seconded by: Stephanie C.

Vote: Unanimously approved.

VII. Old Business

Building Updates

A mouse damaged the generator transfer switch, disrupting electrical, internet, and alarm systems; the issue has been repaired. A new pest control company has identified entry points, which a handyman will seal while also replacing damaged ceiling tiles and installing new bulletin boards. The Department of Public Works removed the trees around the flagpole garden, and the Board thanked DPW for its work.

The Director plans two FY27 projects: reorganizing the communications and electrical room, and a $5,365 security camera upgrade. The camera upgrade would replace four older cameras, double recorder capacity to 32 cameras, and extend recording retention.

No formal action was taken.

Study Pods

The study pods have been well received, with 51 uses in their first partial month. A dedication ceremony honoring the six donor families is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, September 26, 2026.

Tween and Teen Services

The Teen Room now has light covers in the lounge area and a nearby staff desk to improve supervision. Staff continue to address daily behavioral issues. The Director, Chief of Police, and Community Services Director prepared a letter to parents to be distributed through the schools before the school year begins. Trustees supported the letter and suggested also sharing it through school PTOs.

No formal action was taken.

VIII. New Business

FY26 Annual Report

The Director presented the FY26 Annual Report, which Trustees praised. The Board agreed to table acceptance until the September meeting to allow time for review. No action was taken.

Youth Services Staffing

The Director thanked staff for maintaining youth services during the Youth Services Librarian vacancy. With the Town Manager's support, Cory will become a full-time Assistant Librarian I next week. The Youth Services Librarian posting has drawn 14 candidates, and interviews are underway. The Town Manager has encouraged hiring toward the lower end of the salary range due to budget concerns.

Custodial Services

The Director reported that daily custodial visits promised earlier this summer has not yet occurred, and the Town's custodian position remains open. The Director has raised the issue with the Town Manager and will also follow up with the Community Services Director.

No formal action was taken.

Delayed Opening for Staff Training

The Director requested a delayed opening on Friday, October 9, 2026, for staff training with the Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services. The Library would open at 12:00 p.m.

Motion: To approve a delayed opening on Friday, October 9, 2026, for staff training.

Motion by: Erin C.

Seconded by: Stephanie C.

Vote: Unanimously approved.

IX. Upcoming Library Events

The Summer Reading Program ends on August 28, 2026, and a drop-in sand art program will be held on Tuesday, August 25, 2026, at 1:30 p.m. Regular youth programs, including story times, will continue in September.

X. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted