

Pembroke Public Library Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes for June 18, 2025

Meeting Called to Order at 7:04pm Stephanie C.

In Attendance: Stephanie Ciciotti, Stephanie McBain, Julia Nee, Sharon Stearns, Larissa Curley, Erin Columbare, Bob DeMarzo (Pembroke Public Library Foundation), Erin Petti

FRIENDS NEWS:

Friends are going to sponsor passes to four different museums at Harvard. Pass is for four people, 50% off. This is an inexpensive pass program which expands resources for science museums for adults. It will be added next month.

July 1st starts the silent auction. Items to sponsor and support the library.

FOUNDATION NEWS:

Bob DeMarzo provided an update, beginning with gratitude for Julia's wonderful cooperation.

970K remains after 50 k was paid to the architect. This has been paid for by the Pembroke Public Library Foundation trust fund, with approval from trustees – a separate fund specifically for the new addition.

The Foundation plans to auction off naming rights in new addition. There is still progress that needs to be made on personal fundraising.

Bob notes that he hopes we have 25 k coming from state representatives. Julia and Bob worked to gain 40k under education umbrella through senator Fernandez's office. A space for ELL tutoring in the alcove is a potential second project.

Bob has received a \$5,000 private donation in memorial.

Timeline: Thanksgiving 2026 goal. Start March 2026.

Julie Thompson, who has previously aided with AV, is bringing in a no-cost consultant and will put together a proposal.

Architect notes that the bathroom needs be installed in accordance with the new plumbing code.

Scott Chaharyn from the Historical Society/ Historic District Commission/ Historic Commission – has proposed creating space to store historic documents – a local history storage/ local history research room. Potentially this would cut into the space allotted to the storage room.

Bob notes that they could likely use community preservation money for this aspect. Bob is presenting before historical commission on July 7th

Meeting Friday w/ architect. Estimate of cost coming soon.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

May 21, 2025

One correction – April Director’s report. Julia is not joining the SAILS Board as as a Director serving a community with a population in the 10,000 - 25,000 population group but as an at large Director.

Larisa made a motion to accept the Minutes of the May 21, 2025 Meeting as amended, Sharon seconded, and it was so voted.

REPORTS:

May Youth Services Report

1003 attendees including the popular alien escape room program.

Melissa attended the MLA conference, presenting the Read and Bead program to youth services workers in MA communities.

Lots of excitement for summer reading. 140 readers signed up on the first day of registration.

Erin C. made a motion to accept the May Youth ServicesR, Erin P. seconded, and it was so voted.

May Adults/Reference Report

135 attendees at 17 events –

Low attendance at the History through Song program due to the overlap with Town Meeting. Those that did make it enjoyed it.

New library volunteers interviewed and onboarded – 3 new at least who started in June.

Sharon made a motion to accept the May Adult Services/Reference Report, Larissa seconded, and it was so voted.

May Director’s Report

Museum passes and hotspot loans trend up. There is a new reservation system and new hot spots.

Passports are trending down, but that is to be expected and continues trends from previous summers.

Discarded item number is large, a reflection of the collection maintenance project Stephanie is spearheading. Staff is getting ready to shift adult collection.

The budget was passed at Town Meeting.

Erin C. made a motion to accept the May Director’s Report, Sharon seconded, and it was so voted.

Financials

Due to Kathy's overlap the director's salary is over, which causes us to be over on the bottom line. This has been approved by Bill. Projected over by 11k.

Over on telephone line in General Expenses. This is out of our control and can be covered – increase in fy26.

Over on facilities and maintenance, but no longer over on purchase of services line. HVAC invoices have been covered by the town's capitol funds. Larissa and Sharon reviewed these warrants.

Larissa made a motion to accept the May Financial Report, Erin C. seconded, and it was so voted.

OLD BUSINESS:

FY26-FY30 Strategic Plan (vote)

We are all pleased with how it turned out. Great resource for the next 5 years. Gratitude to Julia!

Sharon made a motion to accept the FY26-FY30 Strategic Plan, Erin C. seconded, and it was so voted.

We all signed hard copy, and one copy for Julia. Stephanie C. will reach out to Linda to get her signature.

Display/Exhibit Policy (vote)

Julia mentioned adding this policy a few months ago. The policy covers meeting room display space and glass cabinets in the cubbies. Displays will serve Library, town needs, Individual crafters/ collectors/ etc. We are already using these spaces, just without firm guidelines which this policy establishes.

There was discussion about whether there is clear enough guidance on how suitability is determined. All agree that the application process should be in-house. Library staff and leadership will have final say in whether exhibits are displayed.

Erin C. made a motion to accept the Display/Exhibit Policy, Sharon seconded, and it was so voted.

Building Updates

Julia spoke to Bill about the rooftop unit and roof project. No date on rooftop unit. Monday – he got a notice that the shipping process has begun. It will arrive and we will not have a lot of notice for installation. We will be closed until noon on the day that the installation occurs. We anticipate that the installation will take from 7-10am for work but set open time for 12pm. There will be heavy machinery involved.

This will be announced on website and socials when we know what the date of the work will be. Also, posted at Community Center.

Potentially, it will be prudent to put orange cones around. The roof project will happen after installation. It does not need to happen before July 1st and it has already been paid for. Probably around the end of June/ beginning of July and then bidding will begin on new roof. Uncertain whether closures will occur when new roof is installed.

FY26 Budget

823,746K – The library will be thoughtful with spending. Not renewing Niche because of 5% uplift fee. SAILS has begun to put training resources online so the loss is manageable.

Capital projects for FY 26: Julia's Top priorities: Front door repair, Restroom partitions–stall repairs, Water fountains. Secondary priorities: Carpet (probably have to closed for installation), painting in the spring – exterior.

Network has decided not renew Novelist. The use isn't justifying the price for renewal. There will be a decision at the next meeting about what to do with that money. They could spend on other databases or ebook content. It is a loss with database use – state databases, niche, and novelist are gone.

Note: Everyone can get an ecard to the Boston Public Library and Boston will be subscribed to some of the databases that we are losing.

DID YOU KNOW that you can extend your check out time to 21 days by clicking a button on check out?

Town Website, Library Trustees Page

Julia has sent out changes to the page. Bill plans to revamp the management system for the website so they would not like to make any big formatting changes, or structural changes. Revamp will happen later this year.

NEW BUSINESS:

Library Trust Funds

Sharon reports: We have 7 trust funds that fall under us, but there are four that we do not know who should have authority over them. Most of these from the 70's and 80's.

The Town Manager's office gave Sharon names that aren't on our list.

There has been some complicated communication. Sharon sent an email to all three contacts asking for clarity. She notes that one fund has a yearly transfer of around \$500 but we do not know where it originates from and how long it will continue coming. There doesn't seem to be any documentation on this

Funds are expended from two Lydia Drake funds and we don't know who is in charge of spending them. There's no way to know how much we can actually spend. Letters are inconsistent.

Sharon is trying to find data – what are the procedures? What are the amounts? How much is really available?

This information is important to know in face of shortfalls. How strict are they with materials? What are the parameters?

It doesn't look like anything has been spent by them in the last 5 years.

Contacts: Kathleen McCarthy and Michael Buckley accountant, and Sabrina Chilcott – assistant to the town manager.

Goal – if we could spend 3k from funds next year, Julia thinks that will be very helpful. Material-focused.

Darlings should be considered for contributing funds to the new children's space – their trust fund.

Board of Trustees Bylaws

Julia cannot find bylaws, or reference to bylaws. Nothing was ever on record being voted on or submitted. We have clarification of roles and responsibilities but there are no bylaws. We are under the town manager act – a hypothesis that this takes the place of bylaws.

Julia will reach out to AI, trustee advisor for MPLC. Do we have to have bylaws? Stephanie will reach out and bring results to the August meeting.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Summer reading kickoff on Monday

Teens are doing challenge with dragon cards

1000 books before kindergarten

Unique adult programs: Professional headshot program for adults

Flower arranging class

Kids: Musical petting school on July 11th – playing instruments. Springfield Symphony Orchestra

Family movie June 27th – Paddington in Peru

NEXT MEETING:

August 20, 2025

FY25 Annual Report to be presented at meeting!

Stephanie C. made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 P.M. and it was so voted.

Respectfully submitted,
Erin Petti, Secretary