Approved August 19, 2026

BLAKE MEMORIAL LIBRARY TRUSTEES MEETING
6:00 pm June 17, 2026
At the library

Trustees present: Rob Rinaldi, Tania Aebi, Ginny Adams, Shirley Montagne, Catherine Tudish, Dean Packard. Also present at the library: Layna Moysich, Library Director
Present by Zoom: Dina Dubois

Rob called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Rob asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Dean moved, and Ginny seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Rob asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the April 8 meeting. Shirley moved, and Tania seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Shirley went over the bank account balances, noting that as of June 1 we are 42% through the year and slightly behind in collections. Once we receive payments due from the Northeast Investment Fund and the Blake Fund, our budget will be on target. Expenses are running slightly ahead of the budget due to the cost of electricity and a temporary increase in payroll because of cross training between Directors Jen and Layna. Other expenses running higher than anticipated at this time of year: liability insurance, which is paid at the beginning of the year; generator service for cleaning and servicing the generator; and postage/delivery. The June 1 YTD deficit will be alleviated by several fundraising activities, the December 2026 appeal, donations, and investments.
Shirley reported that the BNY Bank that administers the Blake Trust notified us that the value of the trust ($179,000) has fallen below the State of Massachusetts threshold for managing trusts. Consequently, they can terminate the trust and send the proceeds to us. In conversation with Tania and Rob and the finance committee, it was agreed that these monies would initially be deposited into the Northeast Investment Fund. Further discussion will follow.
Rob asked about why the electricity is so high. Shirley said she has talked with Green Mountain Power, and their only suggestion was to lower the temp one degree in winter and raise it a degree or two in summer. Layna said the upstairs thermostat is set at 74 for the summer.
Rob suggested finding a grant to install solar panels, but he pointed out that there is not enough room on the library roof.
Tania asked about a solar tracker. Rob and Dean said a tracker is not an efficient solution.
Rob suggested building a pavilion high enough not to be in the shadow of the library building and put panels on that roof. According to previous research, the cost of a pavilion would be approximately $80,000, which would require grant funding.

Tania moved to accept the Treasurer's report, and Dean seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Director's Report:
In addition to maintaining its regular operating hours and services, the library offered several special programs. These included a seed starting workshop, an accordion books workshop led by Erica Venuti, an author reading and discussion by Catherine Tudish, and a slideshow and talk by photographer Ian Clark.
On June 11, at an outdoor children's story and play hour led by a guest from Four Winds Nature Institute, children tinkered with science tools, bugs, a mud kitchen, giant bubbles, a water wall, and a variety of thematically related books. Layna said she is hoping for more frequent opportunities for kids' play outdoors.
June 13 was the kick-off for the summer reading program that featured Alyx the Magician, as well as ice cream and water balloons—to the delight of both children and adults.
Looking ahead, Kimberly will invite a dowser for a fall program, and the library will sponsor a program for the 250th—perhaps involving Abenaki history in the region.
Layna noted that ongoing tech hiccups are taking up extra time.
Dean explained that the new systems are linked to Microsoft, which makes it more complicated to reboot and restore.
Tania suggested having an outside tech person come in and recommended Jason from The IT Pathfinder, a consultant who has been used by several people in town.
Layna suggested that the outside consultant could investigate the network.
With the Board's approval, Tania emailed Jason from the meeting. He agreed to stop by and evaluate the situation and meet with Layna on June 18.
Layna mentioned that she would like to get a list of all the hardware that has been ordered.
Tanis moved to approve the Director's report, and Ginny seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Fundraising Committee:
The Spring Rumpus on May 23 was a success, with many adults and children coming to enjoy games, plants, books, and pizza. Shirley reported that the event brought in $1,200 in plant, book, and card sales, and an additional $600 in pizza sales.
The next major fundraising event is the Secret Garden Tour on June 27, featuring six exquisite gardens in Corinth and Topsham. Committee members have been busy organizing and publicizing the tour in local media outlets and posting flyers. The library will be open during the tour, from noon to 5:00 pm, when participants can stop in for lemonade and cookies and use of the restrooms. Ginny generously volunteered to make gluten-free cookies to add to the cookie selection.
Dean motioned to approve the fundraising committee report, and Shirley seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Buildings and Grounds:
The upstairs toilet has been running slowly. Carl tried clearing out the passage with a probe, but that may not have solved the problem.

Rob suggested calling in a plumber.
Tanis recommended Jim Boudreau.
Shirley said there is money in the budget, and she volunteered to call Boudreau to check it out.
Rob asked how the new phone set-up is working, and Layna said it is working well.
Layna noted that cables connecting various devices are missing labels that show what they connect to. She will be labeling cables going forward.
Shirley moved to approve the Building and Grounds report, and Tania seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Governance discussion:
There is currently no policy being enforced for delinquency of overdue Interlibrary Loan (ILL) items, although some items have been "overdue" for more than a year.
The library's guidelines state that: "Anyone who is consistently late, will not be able to use ILL."
Linda Weiss, who manages ILL for Blake, has suggested having a consistent, enforceable policy in writing.
Tanis suggested amending the ILL policy.
Rob asked Layna to work with the Governance Committee to write up a policy to present to the board's next meeting.
There was a discussion of patrons downloading digital books through Libby or Palace.
Layna noted that use of Libby was declining.
Shirley mentioned the potential drawback of a long waiting period to receive a requested book.
Dean said he is using an AI app that suggests books he might be interested in reading, based on what he is looking for.

Association Meeting:
Rob said he finds the Association cumbersome and perhaps unnecessary. Meeting once a year to elect board members is their only job, and fewer people seem interested each year.
Shirley stated that the library's charter, drafted in 1902, requires an Association of community members of at least 30 people, but not more than 100.
Rob asked if we could change the charter.
Shirley replied that It wouldn't be easy. There are many hoops to jump through.
Rob wondered if there might another way to keep community involvement.
Shirley said the Association represents a governing process that is important to maintain. "Technically, we need a governing body," she said.
Board members said they would read the original charter and see what changes might be allowed.

The next meeting will be August 19.

Shirley moved to adjourn, and Ginny seconded. The meeting adjourned at 7:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Tudish, substituting for Carl Demrow