

Abbott Memorial Library

Board of Trustees Draft Minutes

April 21, 2025

The April 21 meeting took place in-person at the Abbott Memorial Library and began at 7:06 pm

Present: Jim Robinson, Jocelyn Randles, Mary Worrell, Cory Smith, Doug Abbott, Betsy Rhodes, Heather Durkel

The agenda was approved.

The February and March 2025 minutes were approved.

Reports:

Librarian: *Cory Smith*

- Abbott Book Club met on Wed 4/9 for a discussion of *Come Fly the World* by Julia Cooke. 17 people attended, including the author and one former flight attendant.
- Bring on Spring! Seed sowing will continue through April while supplies last. Thanks to Mary and Jocelyn for providing seeds, egg cartons and potting soil.
- Moth-style storytelling is taking place this Friday, April 25 at 7pm. The theme is: "Just a Matter of Time."
 - Fliers for the Moth have been distributed, board members will distribute additional fliers this week.
 - Board members will provide snacks for the event.
- Betsy Rhodes and Alan Graham will offer an Invasive Plants program on Thursday May 1 at 7pm ahead of Green-up Day which is scheduled for Saturday May 3.
 - Betsy and Cory will set up for the Invasive Plants program on May 1st at 5:30 / 6:00 on May 1st for a 7pm start
- Funds from the Vermont Department of Libraries for our Summer Reading Program and Courier Grant are secure for this year. But, due to recent federal cuts of the Institute for Museum and Library Services, the availability of these grants in the future is uncertain.

- Bookstock will take place in Woodstock again this year May 16, 17 & 18, 2025 – Abbott will offer a book sale during the week of Bookstock.
- Jenny worked on drafts for a Computer Policy and Rules of Conduct Policy. Cory will review the drafts with Jenny and email them to the trustees afterward.

Outreach: *Doug Abbott*

- Doug will bring back the outdoor furniture in early May (picnic tables & two Adirondack chairs)

Development: *Jocelyn Randles*

- The annual appeal brought in an additional \$1K this year (2024 vs 2023)
 - There were more new donors as well as more donors in general
- Book Club: Jocelyn and Jenny Satterfield will meet with Cory to decide how to proceed with Book Club.
 - Betsy notes that she has heard feedback that participants would like to be part of the conversation to choose the next books.

Treasurer: *Mary Worrell*

- Mary distributed an account of the income and expenses for this fiscal year through March 31. She noted that she and the Town Treasurer agree on all entries, except there is one ECFiber payment that remains to be reconciled.
- Jocelyn will send Mary the final amount from the annual appeal
- With the recent drop in the stock market, at this time, the value of the Library's Vanguard investments has decreased since January of this year. During the next board meeting, Mary will provide more detail about the amount of the Ira Abbott Fund available to spend annually per the Library's founding deed.

Chair: *Mary Worrell*

- Reviewed ByLaws:
 - Three edits were discussed. Once we adopt the ByLaw changes next month we will post them within 14 days of approval and the voters in town have an additional 44 days to petition for a vote of disapproval.
 - We post at the Town Hall, the library and the Post Office

- Trustee Calendar:
 - Since applications to participate in the Covered Bridges Half Marathon need to be submitted early in the year, the decision to have the Library participate needs to be added to the Trustee Calendar in December.
- Covered Bridges Half Marathon:
 - Reviewed who is volunteering for the CBHM- June 1st 8am-11am
 - Board members volunteered to help with traffic and cheer runners on:
 - Jim - Cloudland
 - Mary - anywhere
 - Jocelyn - anywhere
 - Doug - High Pastures
 - Cory - anywhere
 - Betsy - anywhere
 - Covered Bridges has a new person in charge (Jen Kirkman)
 - Jocelyn filled out the paperwork & signed up for the Abbott but hasn't heard anything
- Safety Procedures:
 - Approved names and contact information. Mary will resend.
 - Added Jenny's home phone
- Accessibility: Mary, Jocelyn, Betsy and Cory met as a small group to discuss Accessibility:
 - This group proposed to have Hunter Ulf come to the Abbott for a couple of hours to go over the groups' thoughts regarding accessibility.
 - The group is looking for a more cohesive idea so we could apply for grants.
 - The group also suggests perhaps creating a town survey to see what residents want when it comes to accessibility at the Abbott Library
 - The Accessibility Group requested funding for a 2-3 hour meeting and conversation with Hunter Ulf.
 - Board approved

Building and Grounds: *Betsy Rhodes*

- After some discussion about when the furnace was last serviced and by what company, it was confirmed that it was done by Irving Energy, our current fuel oil provider, in May of 2024. So, Betsy will contact Irving to schedule an annual service in May, and the reminder for maintenance of the furnace should remain on the Trustees Calendar in April.

- Kevin Geiger pruned the crabapple trees, which he has voluntarily done for years and Betsy sincerely appreciates.
- Smoke Alarms:
 - The Library's five smoke alarms, four of which were generously provided by the Pomfret Fire Department last year, and the carbon monoxide alarm that we purchased last year along with the fifth smoke alarm have all been tested and found in working order.
- KNOXBOX:
 - Per the Pomfret Fire Department's recommendation during their walk-through of the building, the Library has purchased a KNOXBOX, which is a fireproof key box to be located on the front of the building for use during an emergency. Before installing the KNOXBOX, the Fire Department needs to verify where it should be placed. Betsy has contacted them to do so and will also ask about the best way to install it.
- Fireplace/ Furnace:
 - Chimney repair is on the docket for 2025. Dave Paul is a new mason that Betsy met with in fall 2024.
 - Paul will send an estimate to grind, point and seal the chimney from the outside.
 - There is crumbling in the attic likely because of water from the outside. Once we repair the exterior the crumbling in the attic should stop.
 - Paul is worried about breaking the slate and tiles. He will need to rent a lift to access the chimney.
 - Estimate ballpark \$2K - \$3K (subject to change)
 - Paul will get to the project in June or July when things dry out.
 - He needs to drive the lift in on a truck and will need to drive across a corner of Artistree's property in order to avoid the Library's septic system and underground pipes. Betsy will get permission from Artistree.
 - Paul also suggested maintenance of resealing the chimney every 2-3 years which can be done with a ladder at a reasonable rate.
 - Betsy is going to add this to the 3 year capital budget we can plan.
- Drainage:
 - Front walk drainage. The gravel along the road has fallen into the pipe.
 - Larger trucks with trailers occasionally drive to the end of the Abbott's lawn and park on our drainage pipe when they stop to go into Teago.
 - We will purchase snow stakes and place them along the road/lawn to deter parking over the drainage pipe.

- Keven Geiger will meet with Cory and Betsy to talk more about drainage again sometime this summer.
 - Note: The drainage pipe worked well until the new pavement was put in. Now, there is more runoff, and the road is wider, so vehicles are driving closer to the pipe.
- Streambank buffer:
 - Soil and compaction are huge challenges.
 - Cory has talked with Kevin Geiger and thinks that adding dirt, covering it with burlap or coconut mats and then securing it with sticks could help. This solution would decompose.
 - Betsy plans to plant woody shrubs ("red osier" dogwoods) near grassy area and plant native perennials in the front.
 - The water pours over the parking area now which escalates erosion.
 - We need native plants that are salt and compaction tolerant
 - Betsy and Mary will look at Mary's dogwood & we will organize a planting party accordingly
 - Jim wonders about State Highway practices - especially near overpasses where there is a lot of erosion.

Reviewed Agenda's Old Business & New Business: *Jim Robinson*

- All was covered within 'Reports'

The next meeting will be held at the library May 19th at 7pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm

Respectfully submitted by Heather Durkel, Secretary