**Abbott Memorial Library**
**Board of Trustees Minutes**
**Monday, September 21, 2026, 7pm**

The September 21 meeting took place in-person at Abbott Memorial Library and on Zoom. It began at 7:04pm.

**In Attendance:** Cory Smith, Heather Durkel, Jocelyn Randles, Jan Salstrom, Mary Worrell, Jim Robinson, Katie Brickner

The September agenda was approved.

The August meeting minutes were approved.

**Reports** _____

**Librarian:** *Cory Smith*

- On Friday, Aug 28, at 7pm, 28 people gathered for The Moth Storytelling event. Many of the same people as in past years told stories, but a few new people attended as well, including some from as far away as Pittsfield.
- The Vermont Sampler Stories event took place on Saturday, Sept. 12, with 15 people in attendance. Michele Pagan talked about samplers, the girls who made them, and their Vermont Revolutionary War ancestors. This was an excellent connection to Vermont 250.
- The Fiber & Craft group has been meeting monthly, with two people attending in August and two in September.
- The book club will meet on Tuesday, October 6, for a discussion of *Confederates in the Attic* by Tony Horwitz.
- The library will participate in Artfest on Saturday, Oct. 3. The library will be open 10-2, and will host crafts and a tea party. We could use volunteers for both. We'll put a donation box and sign on the tea party table.
- Cory and Heather reserved a Storywalk kit from Hubbard Library in Montpelier through interlibrary loan. The featured book is called *We Went Looking* by Aileen Fisher. It's about looking for a badger and all the things you might find along the way.
- The Summer Reading Program is winding down.

**Treasurer:** *Mary*

- The quarterly Vanguard report will be available at the end of September. Mary will start drafting the budget and will meet with Cory in the next few weeks.
- The 2025-26 income/expense report is available here.
- The vendor expense report is available here.

**Outreach:** *Heather*

- We are waiting for *We Went Looking* to arrive. Heather discussed why it's a good choice to have a pre-made kit for our first Storywalk, helping us get a feel for what's needed if we want to make our own in the future.
- Heather made the flier for Vermont Sampler Stories and confirmed that she will do so as needed for other events in the future.

**Development:** *Jan*

- Jan wrote a first draft of the annual appeal, Katie edited it, and then Jan sent it to the group. We reviewed the letter during the meeting, and, after incorporating requested changes, Jan will send a clean draft for Jenny to review.
- Cory has the address list for people to review. Once everyone has done so, Jan will update the file.
- Stamps are currently $0.82. Jan looked into rates for bulk mailing but there is a minimum of 1,000 for benefits. We discussed ways of shaping/trimming the list based on who regularly gives. This conversation was part of a tandem discussion about starting a Friends Group, which would look at other types of fund raising.
- Cory asked about adding photos to the letter and Jocelyn cautioned that doing so would increase the price. Jocelyn estimates that it was $150-$200 extra for color printing.
- Jan bought high quality paper, large envelopes, and small envelopes. She hasn't submitted receipts because she hasn't purchased stamps yet.
- Outgoing labels will be printed at Staples, and we'll print the letters in house, assuming the print quality is good.
- Everything will be printed before the November Trustees meeting. Cory proposed that the group can plan to sign the letters on Nov. 14 and mail them the following week. The staff will pre-stamp with return addresses.
- Jan asked that everyone review the address list by October 10.

**Building and Grounds:** *Jim*

- Dead River will service the furnace on Oct. 20. Jim will be available from 8-10 and Cory will be available from 10-12 to let them in.
- Mary said that we were billed for heating oil in August. Jim said they delivered it in July but it was paid in August.

**Old Business** _____

**Chimney repair:**

- Mary will ping the contractor to make sure the repointing happens before it gets too cold.

**Site Survey:**

- Mary explained that the surveyor won't provide a rate until he knows how long the project will take, but he estimated around $10,000. Hunter Ulf said that rate seems reasonable since there is no existing survey. Cory suggested approaching Walter Hastings from South Royalton and Katie suggested Holt Gilmour.

**Thomas Ware Painting Conservation Appraisal:**

- At the suggestion of Matt Powers, Katie reached out to Darlene Bialowskia about arranging an appraisal. We're waiting for details.

**New Business** _____

**Friends Group:**

- Mary offered to write the application for developing a Friends Group. The application fee is $265-600, depending on the forms filed. Then we'd need to file articles of incorporation with the state for $125. These tasks can be completed before we find members.
- Three members could be library trustees. We'd need seven total and would need to meet four times a year. Mary has talked to several people who are interested in joining.
- Mary suggested that another option would be a monthly deposit into a checking account. She offered to talk with Ellen about this before moving ahead with the Friend Group.
- Jocelyn thought it would be prudent to have both.

**Library Records:**

- The Trustee calendar specifies a review and purge of library records in September. We discussed what this might mean and Cory suggested that we investigate a box left by Susan Burgess.

**Lantern Walk:**

- Katie asked whether the library will host a lantern walk this year. Cory said it could be on December 3rd, 8th, or 10th. We'll confirm the date closer to December.

**Action Items** _____

- **Artfest:** Cory will email the Trustees to confirm who is able to bring food/drinks. During the meeting the following people volunteered:
    - Cory: Cucumber and cream cheese sandwiches
    - Cory: Hummus
    - Heather: Scones/small cookies
    - Katie: Raspberry/peppermint tea
    - Seltzer (leftover from The Moth)
- **Annual Appeal:**
    - Jan will revise the letter.
    - All Trustees should review the address list by October 10.

- **Lantern Walk:** To be scheduled.

The next meeting will be held at the library and on Zoom on October 19, 2026, at 7pm.
The meeting adjourned: 8:23.
Respectfully submitted by Katie Brickner.