

Waterford Public Library
Board of Trustees
8 September 2026

Trustees present: M. Furey-Wagner, E. Boyce, L. Couture, N. Dragoli, C. Giordano, B. Kyne, J. Lehet, J. Merrill, G. Ritter, A. Robarge, A. Simpson. Also present, C. Johnson, Library Director and J. Bennett, RTM representative.

Not present: A. Rosenberg

1. A quorum was established and President M. Furey-Wagner called the meeting to order at 6:00p.m.

2. There was no Public Comment.

3. Minutes for 7 July 2026

- A motion was made by M. Furey-Wagner and seconded by N. Dragoli to accept the Minutes with no changes. All in favor, none against, no abstentions.

4. President's Report - M. Furey-Wagner

- Our Director was only out for 3 weeks with her shoulder replacement surgery. L. Erickson assumed additional duties during that period.
- Budgeting will be the focus for the remainder of the year.

5. Executive Session - Omitted

6. Committee Reports

A. Finance and Treasurer's Report - Grant Ritter

- The endowment remains healthy although inflation fears have returned, and interest rates have been rising.
- For the last 12 months, ending 8/31/26, the account gained \$498,515, or 12.45%.
- For the last 5 years, the account has averaged a return of 7.11% with gains totaling \$1,327,892.
- Asset allocation stands at 73% Equity and 27% Bonds and Cash.
- Since the inception of the account in January 2000, the account has gained \$4,027,093 and distributed \$2,084,254 back to the library.
- Because we have a professionally managed endowment, we have been able to allocate funds each year to support the library programs, professional education and conferences for staff, as well as materials.
- For fiscal year 2026, \$171,000 was withdrawn for library materials, programs, and supplies.

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B. Development and Fundraising - M. Furey-Wagner

- The Gardiner Family donated \$5,000, as the last of a 3 year commitment.
- Year to date net fundraising is \$8,597. At this time last year it was \$2,763 with the Fiscal Year is 19.23% complete.
- A meeting of the Committee to approve the annual fund letter will be scheduled for early October.

C. Facilities and HVAC project - C. Johnson

- As noted in the July Minutes, there continues to be an issue with the Children's Room on the hottest of days. The thermometer is set at 69 degrees like the other areas of the library. However, the registered temperature is higher at the staff desk, which is not optimal for patrons.
- C. Johnson and J. Merrill independently reached out to G. Schneider asking for the thermometer in only the Children's Room to be set at 66 degrees to lower the actual room temperature. J. Merrill to follow up with Gary.
- K. Hipsky met with G. Schneider, J. Robillard, M. Miceli and C. Johnson to review which wires on the outside pole and in the electrical room were actually in use vs. obsolete. Much of the equipment in the electrical closet can be discarded, as it is remnants from when the library hosted its own ILS server.
- The new connections will come through the storage room and then the electrical room. A cage will be built around these connections to secure the area. This will be a more efficient and direct way of running the conduits from the new mounted transformer into the building.
- Although the Finance Committee agreed to the Electrical work and Roof replacement, it has been put on hold until a determination is made on the grant request for Congressionally Directed funding submitted to Sen. Murphy's office.
- A decision is expected in late January to early February 2027 on which Cities and Towns will be chosen to receive funds. Until that decision is reached only design work can be done or it would negate the grant.
- If no Grant is awarded, then it would have to go back to the Finance Committee, again, for funding of the Electric and Roof projects.
- The roof continues to be an issue with leaks during heavy rainfall.
- The lower level A/C was cut out of the HVAC project, but is included in this grant request, as well.
- Note, the outside Cleaning service cleaned the LL rugs as part of the standard contract.

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D. Policy and Personnel - A. Simpson

- Since the Board Notebooks are out of date, the new updated policies will be printed and distributed.

7. Director's Report - C. Johnson

- The final FY26 Town budget report shows all budget lines coming in at, or under, budget as well as the expenditures against the grants we receive.
- Chelsea Groton Bank is providing \$1,800 to fund 20 sessions of "Let's Speak English Together", a weekly conversation circle for new speakers of English. During the ICE raids, attendance at the ESL program was down.
- Waterford Public Library was again selected by the CT State Library to participate in its grand funded GIANT Room STEM initiative. This year's program is for tweens and teens. The first Remix Station will be offered from 14 December through 8 January to make "Love Your Planet Stickers". The second, to be offered during the month of March, will feature "Friendship Keychains".
- The large meeting room projector has died. Our new equipment is on backorder.
- This was a very busy summer at the library with Door Counts, Physical Circulation, and E-Circulation all up over 2025.
- On October 3, WPL will host a special event for Dr. Jose Gonzalez, Connecticut's new Poet Laureate. He is a resident of Waterford.
- In August, the vendor completed the software installation for the new all-in-one copier/printer/fax solution. So far, it is working well.
- In mid-July, the CT State Library, in partnership with the CT Dept. of Energy and Environmental Protection, abruptly rolled out a free laptop program for public library patrons who meet needs-based criteria. Waterford will launch the program in mid-late October for qualified residents who will be able to borrow a laptop for a long-term 5-year loan. Staff are working on the details for checking them out, and installing necessary software and providing the required digital navigation training.
- The director, along with her two fellow panelists, are repeating the presentation on Memory Cafes in libraries that was delivered to the Public Library Association in April to the Mid-America Library Alliance via a webinar on September 15.
- The Memory Cafe, in partnership with Senior Services, is continuing on Friday mornings.
- J. Adams, while I was on medical leave, welcomed local veterans on Parade Day. The library, as usual, provided a tent, tables, power, staffing, and children's activities for the event.
- DPW will install a Baystate Recycle Bin for used books at the transfer station.

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8. Old Business

- A. A Stipend for L. Erickson, as Temporary Interim Director, was discussed. A motion to award L. Erickson a \$1,500 Honorarium for work above and beyond was made by G. Ritter and seconded by A. Simpson. All in favor, none against, no abstentions.
- B. Board of Trustees Annual Dinner has been scheduled for 14 October at Fat Tuna in Waterford. Please email C. Johnson by 1 October if you will be attending.

9. New Business

- A. C. Giordano has offered to graciously step out of the Vice President position. M. Furey-Wagner nominated B. Kyne as the new Vice President, seconded by C. Giordano. All in favor, none against, no abstentions.

10. Adjournment

A motion was made by B. Kyne and seconded by L. Couture to adjourn. A vote was taken. All in favor, none against, no abstentions. The meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted 9 September 2026

Joy S. Merrill, Co-Secretary