

**Whitefield Public Library**  
**Board of Trustees Minutes\***  
**May 11, 2026**

Call to order at: 10:00am

Attendees: Cathy Atwood, Mary Ellen Cummins, Sondra Brekke, Judy Gessner, Katy Kopp, Diane Ash, Stephanie Mailhot joined as a potential Trustee Alternate.

Approved minutes from April, 2026. No changes, no additions. Cathy moved, Katy approved.

**Librarian's Report**

**Facilities**

- Our construction manager, Conneston Construction has resigned. The overwhelming reason is the intense complexity of federal grants and the required paperwork. They currently have four other projects with this type of funding, but not so complex as ours. Ours was the last to start, so they pulled.
- Meetings are happening with all funders and North Country Council to determine how to best move forward.
- All documents are ready to go to bid for a new firm, and five are already interested in bidding. Waiting on the okay from USDA.
- Next meeting with Stuart is 5/13 at 8:30am.

**Financial**

- Grants update:
  - We have been awarded 7 grants (4 WPL; 3 WOLF) totalling \$38,730.
  - 10 are pending decision totaling \$272,654 with most of this being for the building (solar, historical preservation)
  - 4 in the works
  - WOLF could use help with Summer Programming donation requests.

**Programming**

- One of the grants we received is from the **National Endowment for the Arts Big Read Program**.
- This grant is complicated in that it requires multiple partnerships and activities, and it must focus on one particular book out of their prescribed list AND somehow address the theme of the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Courtney, Lyn, Teresa, brainstormed in January. We landed on "PoeTober," utilizing the *Great Tales and Poems* by Edgar Allan Poe, one of the books from the list.
- We have tons of opportunities to do cool things here. We will kick off the celebration at Community Day with a book giveaway of the text (purchases made with grant money).

We can use this book (and other Poe-adjacent books) for our various book groups, and we can allow local schools to be part of the discussion, too. I would love to have a “gala” event (murder mystery? masquerade?) on Halloween weekend. We cannot pay for food with this money, but we can rent space. This would have been easy if Lloyd van Horn was still at MVG, but now we need to make new connections. Or we do something else. Mary Ellen, Diane and Stephanie are interested in helping to plan event.

### **Professional Development**

- We have been selected to attend a convening of 150 librarians from around the country in Washington, DC to receive special support and professional development around the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. All costs will be paid for by the Institute of Museum and Library Sciences (IMLS). They have a grant to cover staffing substitutes, which I will be applying for. Lyn declined, so Courtney will be going. It's June 9-12. There is a special full day of workshops on 6/10 grants and library facilities.

### **Community**

We received wonderful letters of support from ACHS and North Country Health Consortium for one of our most recent grants.

### **Board:**

- Mary Ellen is attending the NHLTA conference on May 27.
- Stephanie Mailhot was invited and is present as a potential alternate to replace Jeannie.

### **Other Business**

- **Bookmobile-** We need to find a way to be mobile if we want to fulfill the requirements of this grant. We *can* return this grant in whole or part if we don't think we can really make it happen. In that case, we could ask WOLF to expend the \$1000 to purchase the Lyndonville vehicle, and then we would be beholden to no one. The Trustees discussed at length. Cathy moved that WOLF buy the Bookmobile for \$1,000 and then we discuss the grant acceptance with Courtney. Sondra seconded and all were in favor.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Sondra presented the treasurer's report. Mary Ellen moved to accept it, Cathy seconded, and all approved.

We discussed the Monday hours on the front lawn sign and decided to table until next month.

Mary Ellen announced that NH Gives is June 9, 5pm to June 10, 5pm. It was suggested that Lyn add a blurb about this in her newsletter.

Next Trustee meeting is June 8, 10AM.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:33am.

\*These minutes are draft until approved at the next meeting.



