

Library Board of Trustees
Somers Public Library
April 21, 2026

Members Present: Ann Levesque, John Kelleher, Jack Kertenis, Marybeth Marquardt, Gene Grayson, Jason Snukis, Bob Socha, Lori Bourgoin, Mike Gruber
Also Present: Joanne Nichting, Library Director
Todd Rolland, Director Public Works

Meeting called to order at 6:32 p.m. by Mr. Grayson.

Guests: Mr. Rolland presented information, and discussed with the board the following topics:

Landscaping:

Mr. Rolland and Bruce Urban from the DPW, representatives from Frank's Landscaping, and Mrs. Nichting met previously to discuss landscaping ideas that could reduce maintenance costs. Thoughts included a "phase 1" project that would take care of the center island in the parking lot. The trees would be removed, two new trees would be planted, the memorial tree from the courtyard would be moved there, and grass would be put in. Frank's Landscaping submitted a proposal which included costs for excavation work. Mr. Rolland said that the DPW could do that to reduce the cost. "Phase 2" was discussion about the area at the front of the library. Thoughts were to consider adding more concrete and grass and removing some of the existing shrubs and plantings. "Phase 3" was the courtyard area where we hope to add the pavilion. Thoughts were to either put concrete from wall to wall and remove the existing plantings, or leave the plantings and just put in concrete inside the existing pavers. The Trustees, Mrs. Nichting, and Mr. Rolland went outside to view these areas. Mr. Rolland said that the DPW would like to remove the kidney shaped island in front of the doors as well. This would significantly help make winter snow removal easier. Suggestions were made by the Board to add large planters in front of the library for color, and include benches in the front of the building as part of the redesign. A motion for the DPW to work with a landscaper, up to a budget of \$10,000, was made by Mr. Socha and seconded by Mr. Kertenis. All were in favor and motion was approved. Details for any concrete work were tabled for next month when Mr. Rolland will bring new proposals forward.

Additional security cameras:

Mr. Rolland provided pricing on the preferred vendor, Spot AI. Previously, the board decided to maintain the current vendor, Sonitrol, until 2029, to avoid paying out the existing contract. New Spot AI exterior cameras will be added in the meantime. Motion to approve the lease of four cameras and installation costs was moved by Mr. Gruber, the motion was seconded by Ms. Marquardt, in the amount of \$7,501.60. Mr. Socha abstained from the vote. The remaining trustees were in favor and the motion was approved.

Pavilion:

Reviewed the proposal from Klotter Farms for the Pavilion. The price for concrete and electricity was not included. Mr. Rolland will work on the RFP document and present it next month to the board.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes from the March 17, 2025, meeting were presented and reviewed. Mr. Socha moved to approve the minutes; the motion was seconded by Mr. Kertenis. **Vote:** All were in favor. Minutes approved.

Correspondence: None.

Treasurer's Report: Ms. Nichting reviewed the details of the Treasurer's Report. A \$1,200 donation was received from the Somers Congregational Church in memory of Lois Lindell. Ms. Nichting suggested that we add this to the endowment to go towards construction of the pavilion and name the pavilion after Mrs. Lindell. Ms. Nichting further advised that the annual BorrowIT funds for \$1,735 and the Public Incentive Grant for \$1,337 from the CT State Library are forthcoming.

Financial Business: Ms. Nichting presented the FY26 year-to-date financial report. Spending is at approximately 74% of the budget at this point in the fiscal year. We may likely return some budget dollars to the town, but this is yet to be determined. The FY 2027 budget proposal has been approved by the Selectmen.

Committee Reports: Two revised policies were drafted by Ms. Nichting and approved by the Policies Committee: Bulletin Board and Study Rooms. Mr. Socha moved to approve the Bulletin Board policy; the motion was seconded by Ms. Levesque. **Vote:** All were in favor, and the policy was approved. Ms. Marquardt moved to approve the Study Room policy; the motion was seconded by Mr. Kertenis. **Vote:** All were in favor, and the policy was approved.

Old Business: Ms. Nichting presented an update on the S. Prestly Blake Trust. The Trust is prepared to release the \$500,000 donation to the library. Ms. Nichting discussed the process of working with Mr. Blake's attorneys and the town Finance Director to release the funds to the endowment. More information will be provided next month.

New Business: A new town Special Project Committee has been established, and the town would like one Library Trustee to be a member. Mr. Socha and Mr. Snukis noted their interest in the volunteer role. The board interviewed each candidate and voted. The majority selected Mr. Socha for the position. Both were very strong candidates.

Director's Report: Ms. Nichting presented her Director's Report, which included updates on library operations, program attendance, circulation statistics, meeting space usage, and upcoming events.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m. by Mr. Grayson. The next meeting will be held on May 19, 2026.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Bourgoïn

MINUTES NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED AT SUBSEQUENT MEETING