

**BRAINERD MEMORIAL LIBRARY BOARD OF
TRUSTEES**

December 2, 2025
Meeting Minutes

ATTENDING: Andrew Maloney, Terry Twigg, Pam Crum, Kim Rek Thompson, Lynne Cooper, Susan Thompson, David Neal, Kaycee Blancaflor

ABSENT: Danielle Truscott-Kaufman, Deb Rutter, Mary Karkutt-Kulak

The meeting was called to order by Terry Twigg at 6:33 P.M.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

REVIEW OF AGENDA:

No changes

REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS:

Secretary's Report:

- Minutes from the October 28 meeting were approved.

President's Report:

- Terry introduced the idea of Andrew hosting the 2026 farmer's market. After a discussion of some of the issues for the library Andrew and the Trustees agreed that he should try it for a year and then evaluate how effective the market has been engaging the community and driving traffic to the library. Following are some of the issues discussed.
 - Each vendor will have to provide proof of insurance.
 - Each vendor will pay \$100 for the season. This will cover some but not all of library costs.
 - Police presence and cost need to be investigated.
 - A farmers market committee is not necessary.
 - Wellstone Farms and Haflinger's will be approached.
 - There is a goal to diversify vendors to include more produce and establish more consistent attendance.
- The annual staff gift of \$100 per person via payroll was approved.

- Terry discussed a renewed emphasis on development, including tax-advantaged giving, bequests, and legacy gifts. Donor thank you cards should be mailed prior to January 1, 2026. Margaret will divide the donor thank you list by Trustee and distribute along with library note cards. The Open House donor invitation list will be used for the mailing. Each Trustee will have approximately twenty notes to write and mail.

Directors Report:

- Andrew commented on success of the Open House with 120 recorded attendees.
- Plans for a January holiday party and a February annual staff dinner were confirmed to boost morale
- An increase in adult programming is underway. Forty-seven people attended Erik Hesselberg's November 19 author talk. Katie Tietjen was scheduled for December 3. Andrew requested Trustees mark their calendars and attend as many programs as possible. A Wesleyan professor will be giving a talk on Ukrainian politics – date to be set.

- The library will host its' annual hat, glove and scarf drive. Donated items will be displayed on two trees.
- Furniture orders for the Interior Renovation have been completed.
- Changes to the new Board of Finance were discussed. Marijean Conrad is the newly elected Chairwoman. Marijean is devoted to the library however Lynne Cooper led a discussion about how various pressures on town finances may place the amount of library funding at risk. Andrew, Terry and Lynne will soon start work on the next annual budget that is due to the town in March of 2026.

STANDING COMMITTEES:

Nominating:

- No new nominees

Personnel and Policy:

- A committee has been formed to manage the Art Wall, and policies have been approved by the Trustees. Deb Rutter will Chair the committee.

- Efforts are underway to finalize the staff handbook, which encompasses personnel policies.

Friends of the Library:

- Kaycee had several updates:
 - There has been a restructuring of the flow of books to the Book Nook. Priya Badami, a new member of the Friends, will organize and supervise sorting of books on Tuesday evenings. Another Thursday morning group will shelve the pre-sorted books into the Book Nook. This will reduce time from the library staff.
 - Friends will attend the Middle School Christmas bazaar and will offer BML spirit items for sale.
 - Friends are discussing a Spring fundraising event. There continues to be concern among longstanding members about fundraising as the central mission.
 - Friends are offered free books to veterans and active military during the month of November.

Finance:

- Lynne reviewed our financial standing.

- The library currently has a solid financial standing due to cost management of the interior renovation and a continuing bull market.
 - As of 9/30/2025 the endowment and cash on hand totaled \$2,147k. The past twelve months annual return was 9.5%.
 - No cash from the endowment was withdrawn during Q1 of the fiscal year (July-September 2025), thanks to ongoing donations/fundraising.
 - Q1 spending was slightly below plan at \$129,765 vs. \$132,598.
 - One final payment of approximately \$100k from our Interior Renovation State Grant is pending.
 - Readiness for the state audit of the Interior Renovation requires some bookkeeping adjustments for the disbursement of town funds that are not currently reflected in the library financial records. Lynne will be working with the library accountant and the town to make the necessary adjustments and notations in preparation for the audit.

- Lynne reviewed the current process for library budget approval.
 - In March the initial budget submission is sent to Ann Harter, Haddam's Finance Director. Next, it moves to the Board of Selectmen for comments and recommendations. It is then sent to the Board of Finance for approval/adjustments and included in their submission to the town budget. Finally, it is considered final when the town approves the full budget.
- Lynne led a discussion about the library's future fundraising strategy and the need for a more cohesive plan moving forward.
 - Discussions highlighted the need for a more structured fundraising strategy and clearer coding for tracking revenue from various sources.
- Lynne offered to review prior Farmers Market materials.

Building and Grounds:

- Capital planning for the roof and other long-term needs will be integrated into the town's broader capital planning process.

Development and Planning:

- No update

Strategic Planning:

- Discussion of the Strategic Plan will begin in January.

Capital Campaign:

- No update

Interior Renovation:

- No update

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 P.M.

The next meeting date is Tuesday, January 27, 2025, at 6:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted:

Margaret Adams, Secretary