

MINUTES OF THE PEABODY INSTITUTE BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES MEETING

Wednesday, March 11, 2026 – DCAT Building

Present: Noelle Boc, Jessica Cargile, Julie Curtis, Michael Hagan, Donna Hopkins, Noah Leavitt, Kenneth Yoon Lee, Cory Ryan

Absent: Irene Conte, Charles Desmond

Call to Order: The March 11, 2026 meeting of the library trustees was called to order by Chairperson Donna Hopkins at 7:05 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance: Was led by Chairperson Hopkins.

Public Comments: There was no public attending the meeting to offer public comments nor were there any public comments submitted for the trustee's attention.

Vote to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2026 meeting: A motion was made by Jessica Cargile and seconded by Kenneth Yoon Lee to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2026 meeting as written. Motion passed unanimously.

Trustee Reports:

Chairperson's Report – Chairperson Donna Hopkins handed out the proposed Library Trust Fund Mission Statement and asked the trustees to review it and contact Chair Hopkins with any changes they deemed necessary. It was asked that the last sentence of the first paragraph dealing with whether the trustees should be indemnified or not be held until Chairperson Hopkins could get a response from the Town Attorney on if the Trustees needed to be. And the last sentence of the last paragraph dealing with maintenance of the grounds should be building and grounds.

Treasurer's Report – Treasurer Cory Ryan offered the following treasurer's report.

February 2026 report

Beginning Balance	721,805.48
Deposits	0.00
Income	1,046.97
Withdrawals	(4,000.00)
Expenses	0.00
Change in Value	7,248.46
Ending Balance	726,100.91

At the end of the treasurer's report, a motion was made by Julie Curtis and seconded by Noah Leavitt to approve the February 11, 2026 treasurer's report as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Friends of the Library Update - Director Boc reported that eighty people attended the Music for Many Occasions Ensemble which performed African Spirituals on Saturday, February 21st. The Friends are planning new events for the summer. There is a Beatles presentation scheduled for the Fall. Memberships have increased and are already where they were last year. The Open House was a success and it has been suggested it be moved to March. The Friends book sale

will be held the second week of June. Twenty museum passes have been purchased and the Friends are still requesting suggestions. Jessica Cargile suggested selling tote bags as a fundraiser and suggested holding a public competition for the design. Cory Ryan added she saw a company that designs school tote bags and donates a portion of profits to organizations.

Director's Report: Director Boc reported the following:

Building – Due to the snowstorm the Library was closed on Monday and Tuesday, February 23 and 24th, following the decision of the Town Manager to close offices. There was a significant leak through the ceiling of the second floor at the top of the back (Sylvan Street) staircase, wetting the landing and several stairs. The DPW determined it was an HVAC unit issue, and were able to turn off the valve to stop the leak.

Budget – The Selectboard Budget Review is on Saturday, March 7th in the Town Hall Toomey Room starting at 9:00 am. Boc thanked Trustees Julie Curtis, Charles Desmond and Noah Leavitt for attending in support of the library. Our budget passed unanimously. Our budget includes a 7% increase due to the contractual negotiations for the Collective Bargaining Agreement. The compensation and class study which "right sized" the pay scales for library employees was completed in 2025 and the associated pay increases are included in the 2027 budget. The library was asked to look at any possible cuts it could make. The Library's budget does not include any extra "padding" to it, but Director Boc offered \$5,000 be cut from our General Supplies budget and that was accepted. Boc offered that any future budget cuts would most likely result in cutting hours of the library Boc suggested having a survey to see what the public wants regarding the library.

Programs and Outreach – Boc is working with Julie O'Neill, art teacher at Danvers High School, to display student art work of mandalas in the Standing Room from mid-March to mid-April. Boc is working with Jorge Sanchez-Salazar from the Human Rights and Inclusion Committee and Amanda Lane of HAWC on potential programming to be held at the Library on the topic of preventing abuse against women. We are still brainstorming ideas of what that programming will be, but we are excited about the collaboration. There is also a possibility of a collaboration with the Danvers Police Department around offering RAD training at the Library. Several staff members across different departments are working on ideas to celebrate National Library Week in April. The NOBLE Library Legislative Breakfast at Melrose Public Library was well attended. Thanks to Trustee Cory Ryan for attending, and to our staff member Shilpa Jacobie for co-chairing the NOBLE Advocacy Committee that put on the successful event. The seeds have been sorted and the Seed Library will be refilled beginning on March 9th. This will be the 5th year for the Seed Library. Last year, 92% of the 2,246 seed packets were taken by library patrons to grow in their home gardens, our best year yet! We are grateful to the Twomey Family for continuing to fund the materials for the Seed Library. The library is now offering "Teen Hangout" programs every Tuesday afternoon. Activities vary every week, between gaming or a movie or a craft or pizza.

Staff – Boc reminded the trustees of the full day virtual staff training on Wednesday, March 18th. As a result, the library will be closed. Assistant Head of Reference and Information Services, Shilpa Jacobie has given her notice and her last day is March 7th. Patrons will miss her excellent customer service on the Reference desk. Once the updated job description is approved by the union, it will be posted internally first. If we have no internal candidates, then it will move to an external posting. Trustee Noah Leavitt added Shippa should be recognized as a good advocate for the library. Boc will be attending the Public Library Association conference in

Minneapolis on April 1-3rd. She also attended a webinar about Responding to ICE in the library which was presented by the American Library Association.

Trustee Cory Ryan has concerns about which she believes is the culture of the library. She feels we should be able to discuss these issues as a Board at these meetings. She is very concerned about the library being a more welcoming and supportive place which offers employees encouragement. Ryan wants to make sure the library continues to make progress in the area of inclusion.

Everything Else –Head of Children’s Amy Martin and Boc visited the furniture vendor Learning Interiors to get ideas around potential furniture purchases for the Children’s department. They are going to provide some renderings of what areas could look like when refreshed. Boc met with LLB Architects who kindly walked through the process of getting our library building renovated. It’s a many years-long process, but she has some first steps to think about putting into action.

Old Business:

Indemnification Insurance Update– Chair Donna Hopkins reported she had written the Town Attorney regarding trustees being indemnified but that had not been able to get a response from the Town Attorney. If she has no answer by next month, she will research private indemnification. Director Boc has reached out to other libraries regarding their trustee’s being indemnified, and found that they are not.

Scholarship Committee Policy – The Scholarship Committee will be meeting to move forward with revisions to the policy. Once this is completed, the new policy will be brought before the Board.

New Business:

Accountant Discussion – The Investment Committee will be meeting to discuss the outside Accountant position and how to make it better suited to the needs of the Trustees.

Code of Conduct and Social Media Policy – Chair Donna Hopkins handed out the Code of Conduct and Social Media policy for the Trustees to review.

The Town is hosting a workshop on the Open Meeting Law and How to Hold a Municipal Hearing training in the Toomey Room of Town Hall on Thursday, April 2 from 6-7:30 pm. Director Boc encouraged trustees to attend.

Past President position – A discussion was held regarding Chair Hopkins suggestion of adding a Past President position. Hopkins stated that a Past President position would provide continuity of operations, mentorship and strategic help to the newly elected Chairperson, Executive Board and Trustees. If approved by the Trustees, it will be a one-year term for the person who served as Chair the previous year. In the event that the person who would be the next Past Chair is unable to serve due to their exit from the Board of Trustees. The Trustees had some questions regarding the new position and it was decided to table this to the April meeting.

Potential Marsh-Pope donation to the Archives – Director Boc led a discussion regarding the potential gift of the Marsh-Pope Family. Town Archivist Richard Trask informed Boc that he had

met with the family twice in 2024 and 2025, where he viewed a sampling of items from the collection and reviewed one of five preliminary inventories. Trask observed that if acquired, this would be the largest family collection in the archives and one with great historical value. Boc has spoken with the Town regarding this collection and will provide more information when presented. Monetary appraisal is pending for this valuable collection and will hopefully be finished by the summer. Boc will share details once the appraisal is completed. The family is prepared to accompany the donation with financing to help support an assistant archivist to catalog and digitalize the collection and to create a finding aid.

.Adjournment: Where there was no other business presented, a motion was made by Jessica Cargile and seconded by Noah Leavitt to adjourn the February 11, 2026 trustee meeting at 8:10 pm. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie E. Curtis
Recording Secretary