

Rye Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Rye Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting

May 14, 2026 at 9am

Location: Rye Public Library Community Meeting Room

Please note that the notes in blue denote additions included by Rachel McCann for the Rye Civic League taken on May 21, 2026 while watching the meeting livestream.

Attendees

Board of Trustees: JoAnn Hodgdon (Chair), Victor D. Azzi (Vice Chair), Joe Marttila, Elizabeth Fairchild, and Caitlin Delaney

Library Staff: Sandra Licks, Director

Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

Chair JoAnn Hodgdon called the meeting to order at 9:46AM following a non-public session per-RSA 91- A:3, II (a) - the dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee.

Public Comment

There was no public in attendance.

Approval of Prior Minutes

The Board reviewed the prior meeting's draft minutes of April 7, 2026.

- One edit from Victor: the approval of COLA increased in Town budget and also included a pool of funds *for performance-based increases for staff, as appropriate, or bonuses.*
- Spelling correction of JoAnn's name on page 2.

Of note: Trustee Azzi reminded the board that 9 years ago the board successfully petitioned the selectboard to allow the RPL to initiate bonuses based on performance rather than a step increase that is determined by length of employment.

JoAnn makes a motion to approve the minutes as amended; seconded by Elizabeth; all in favor, minutes are approved.

Acceptance of Cash Donations

\$4,105 in donations, less \$25, were received from the Friends of Rye Public Library to fund the summer reading program.

Reports

Financial Report & Discussion:

- CD at Partner's Bank will be due for renewal in June.
- Joe would still like to sit down with Trustees of the Trust to discuss but the Alma

Goodwin Hill Trust accounts are in a good position and we have clarity on Trusts that support the library.

- Joe and Sandra will set up a separate meeting in the coming weeks to review the year to-date budget to assess progress as we're one-third of the way through the year and address any over-budget or front-loaded expenses. Elizabeth will join as well.

Of note: Director Licks indicated that budget categories that she is currently utilizing may be "different from the previous administration" and that an effort should be made to standardize.

- Caitlin asked what NHPDIP stands for. This is the New Hampshire Public Deposit Investment Pool (NHPDIP) that allows libraries and public entities to pool funds into a money market account.

Of note: Trustee Marttila indicated that the NHPDIP is "safe". It is noted that these funds, as they are not held in a bank, are not FDIC insured. However, the NHPDIP allows for a degree of layered security by utilizing conservative investment strategies, backing up the deposits with secure and tangible assets and by maintaining a stable net asset value.

Directors Report & Discussion:

- Sandra highlights that we have notary services on staff, free of charge; Libby borrows are strong - almost half of all borrowed items; Kanopy is a new program that allows for streaming movies. Library has an account with NoveList but we need to make this available to patrons (it functions as a book review and recommendation tool). Sandra will send Trustees a link to explore.
- Sandra attended a Master Plan meeting and sees overlap in RPL themes and planning themes of resiliency, transportation, and Town operations.
 - Transportation includes installing sidewalk paths from the Junior High; Victor raises a question of whether the plans for sidewalk and crosswalks align with library needs. Sandra noted the sidewalk out front will not be moved, just repaired.
 - Sandra will connect JoAnn with John Shaw, lead of the Master Plan Implementation Committee.
- The library will open late tomorrow (10am) to hold an all-staff meeting. In the lead-up to Memorial Day, the staff will be clearing out the storage space; will make the meeting room temporarily unavailable (May 22, 23, 26, 27).

Of note: Director Licks indicating that one of the topics that will be discussed at the all-staff meeting will be for first amendment audit training. This includes providing training to the staff on best practices on how to manage a situation where a member of the public enters the library and films with the intent to provoke. Trustee Hodgdon inquired if this has happened at RPL, Director Licks reported that it has not happened in Rye but has happened in other local libraries.

- Technology needs are being audited with the goal to create a complete picture of needs and costs. Rebates are coming back for HVAC installation (~\$8,000).

Youth Department Report & Discussion: no discussion.

Old Business

Proposed Committees

- Policy & Personnel
- Finance
- Facilities
- Ad-hoc Committees

Discussion:

Victor raises a concern around how Committee work gets done and ensures we have a solid, consistent point of contact for projects.

Of note: Trustee Azzi mentioned that the two most recent projects “were not positive learning examples” due to not having one dedicated point of contact and that this in turn, may cause harm to the reputation of the library.

All requests and delegation should run through Sandra with her calling in Committee and volunteer support as needed.

Joe will join Facilities along with Victor (roof is top priority); JoAnn and Caitlin will join Policy & Personnel; and Joe and Elizabeth will join Finance.

Of note: Director Licks requested a capital improvement plan.

Update on Website: RPL is looking for vendors.

New Business

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Rules for Meetings: JoAnn has raised a need for an internal guide or external expectations for procedures for meeting facilitation and guidelines.

Discussion:

Time allocation of ~3 minutes per speaker to ensure there is time for everyone who wants. Public comment is open to all.

Action:

JoAnn will draft an internal guide for meeting management.

Of note: it was discussed that non-residents are allowed to speak during the public comment period and that it is not a requirement to state one’s address.

Trustee Use of Social Media: How and when should Trustees engage in social media and what guardrails do we need to consider.

Discussion:

Caitlin raised the issue of how and in what ways we should use social media. Goals should be to endorse and amplify RPL communication goals and messaging.

Joe feels we should use social media to represent Board work and decisions, and also to support staff.

Sandra's concern is around communications that might circumvent the decision-making process but also personal connection with Trustees can be a strength.

Sense that Trustees should handle communications cautiously and with duty of care and loyalty.

Of note: no policy was officially set. Trustee Marttila said "just use your best judgement."

Upcoming Meetings and Events

Trustees Meetings:

- For the summer months meetings will be the third Thursday of the month at 9:00 am.
- June 18
- July 16
- August 20

JoAnn makes a motion to adjourn; Joe seconds; all approve the motion and the meeting adjourns at 11:05 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Caitlin Delaney, Secretary, RPL Board of Trustees