

Town of Kensington
Public Library Trustee Meeting
Tuesday, September 22, 2026

DRAFT

Present: Susie Gilbert, Director; Susan Bascom, Trustee and Chairperson; Matthew Dow, Trustee and Treasurer; Amanda Morrill, Trustee and Secretary
Harold Bragg, town moderator; Elaine Kaczmarek, social trustee president

Meeting called to order: 4:30 pm

Agenda Modification

The Board agreed to adjust the agenda to allow presentations by Elaine Kaczmarek and Harold Bragg regarding the proposed library addition and upcoming informational forum, followed by public comment.

Public Information Session Discussion

Remarks by Library Director

Susan Gilbert explained that a future town-wide informational meeting is being planned regarding the proposed library addition. The purpose of the session would be to provide residents with information concerning project plans, fundraising status, architectural work, engineering studies, and future approvals. She reviewed public meeting procedures and public comment opportunities.

Presentation by Social Trustees

Elaine Kaczmarek reported:

- Architectural design work remains underway.
- Final design documents are expected in October.
- A public informational presentation is anticipated at the school once architectural plans are complete.
- The event will allow residents to raise questions and concerns regarding the project.

Presentation by Moderator

Harold Bragg explained the anticipated two-part public process:

1. A Social Trustees informational session featuring architects, engineers, and project consultants.
2. A Planning Board public hearing process.

He emphasized the importance of collecting community concerns and questions so they can be addressed in a formal public setting.

Public Comment Period

The Chair opened public comment and requested names and addresses for the record.
Residents in attendance- Wendy Berry, Valerie Watkins, Marrie Luce-Barton, Al Brandano, Barton Wu, Lelsie Artigliere, Kathryn Wikman, Mary Jane Solomon, Susanne Galitski, and Mike Schwotzer.

Residents raised numerous concerns regarding the proposed library addition, including:

- Whether smaller alternative designs had been considered.
- Long-term capital maintenance planning.
- Justification for the size and scope of the project.
- Future operating expenses.
- Parking capacity and parking plans.
- Collection and reliability of fundraising pledges.
- Escalating construction costs since initial estimates.
- Fiduciary obligations of trustees.
- Potential tax consequences.
- Public voting authority and project approval process.
- Transparency surrounding decision-making and communications.
- Septic system impacts on neighboring properties.
- Need for financial projections and sustainability analyses.
- Clarification of the relationship between Social Trustees and Public Trustees.
- Government-use determination and legal authority for development approvals.
- Barton Wu submitted exhibits and supporting documents regarding: comparative library sizes in small New Hampshire communities; operating-cost data from similar library expansions; legal and governance concerns regarding project review and approval.
- Marrie Luce-Barton submitted RSA 91-A request for library expansion operating cost analysis.

Regular Business Meeting

August minutes approved

Ratification of vote from Sept 8, 2026.

Motion from Matthew Dow, second Susan Bascom. Unanimous approval.

This vote approves roles and responsibilities of the public trustees as stated in letter from select board

Statistics:

Visits down from last month and up from last year. Physical circulation, total circulation, and streaming up from last month and last year; streaming down from last month and last year. Museum passes steady from last month, up from last year and ILL steady.

Budget: Quickbooks report reviewed, on track with budget. September bills paid, 2 months left for heating/electricity.

Ongoing Business:

-Addition update:

Waiting until spring to break ground pending a decision on a public or private building. As of today \$5.5million collected towards total cost. If deemed to be private, social trustees need to go to the planning board and zoning board for approval. Architect, Steve Laput has reconfigured septic/well so it is not near abutters.

-Budget: Reviewed, needs to be approved to send to Kathy Felch by end of the month. Have included 3% COLA for the staff, Matthew to review payroll figures from Kathy.

-Policies: Volunteer policy and application reviewed, approved edits from the lawyer. Policy unanimously approved with provision that Ian O'Reilly will have 60 days from today to complete background check.

Past events:

- September 16th Jane Oneail on Norman Rockwell- 14 people in attendance

Upcoming events:

- September 30th Kiki Berk on AI at the Universalist Church at 5:30pm
- New Hampshire Humanities Council event Oct 28th "Benedict Arnold" by G Morrison
- Felting workshop, Jane Oneail, and boxwood tree coming
- Fall after school activities are full with waiting lists for every activity. Activities capped at 10 kids due to space in the children's room.

New Business:

-Discussed library calendar re: question closure Saturday of Columbus Day weekend. Unanimously approved Susie to make the decision pending data on past years.

-Upstairs furnace: Has been shut off by Proulx since the spring. Proulx recommended Comfort Air Services, who said there were 3 items that were broken and they would get back with pricing and availability. Have not received a quote yet. Susie will reach out to Comfort Air Services and Mackenzie.

-Libby by Overdrive (streaming platform) is requiring PIN/password by October 15th for all users. KPL already has PIN/password (last name) in place for our Atrium OPAC so transition should be easy. Notification to patrons sent out in a newsletter and posted on KPL desk.

-Technology policy to be reviewed next meeting

Next meeting: Thursday October 22nd 4:30pm

Meeting adjourned at 5:45pm