

Castleton Free Library  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
January 26, 2026  
APPROVED ( March 5, 2026)

**Present:**

Board: Chair Nancy Mark, Patricia Schroeder (Pat S), Patrick Keller (Pat K), Sue DeCarolis (Sue D), Mark Brownell (Mark B)

Librarians: Mary Kearns, Library Director

Community Members; Lysie Johnson

The meeting was called to order by Chair Nancy Mark at 5:32pm.

**Agenda:**

The agenda was reviewed.

Motion to approve the agenda as presented made by Pat K and seconded by Pat S.

Motion passed.

1. Approval of Minutes
  - Motion to approve the minutes from 12-22-2025 as written made by Pat K and seconded by Chair Nancy.  
Motion passed.
2. Approval of Financial Statements
  - Motion to approve the financial statements made by Pat S and seconded by Pat K.  
Motion passed.
3. Librarians' Reports
  - See bulleted reports
4. Community Members Comments
  - Lysie reports that the Friends will meet 1-29-2026 at 6:30pm here at the Library
  - Science Pub February 1<sup>st</sup>
5. Insurance Inventory
  - Photos and/or video of contents of Library
  - Help may be needed
6. Building and Grounds Update
  - Lead remediation has begun
  - Possibly 3 week time frame
  - Several small projects:  
All trim painted in main room  
New tiles office foyer  
Some stairs need recycled  
Cover for water heater in BR  
Door threshold repair

7. Grant Options

- Capital Improvement Grant \$50,000-\$400,000 due end of March  
Questions regarding Environmental review-would new one be needed?  
Approval of Select Board?  
Do we need an architect?  
Awards in the summer
- Basement floor/foundation work? Donchian Foundation

8. Piano Concert

- March 27
- Federated Church
- Check with Stone Valley regarding honorarium
- Piano in church will need tuned before the concert
- No charge-donations only

9. Personnel Update

- Elly Pockette will work Erica's hours
- Tuesday and Wednesday 2-6
- Thursday 4-8
- Starts 1-27-2026

10. Other reports

- Pat K will explore and call masons that are certified by Preservation Trust
- Select Board approved the budget as submitted and will be placed to the ballot

Motion to adjourn made by Pat S and seconded by Pat K.

Motion approved.

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Nancy Mark at 7:00pm.

The next meeting will include a reorganization meeting on March 5, 2026 at 5:30pm.

Future meetings will be determined at that meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A. Schroeder

Clerk

Castleton Free Library  
Board of Trustees Meeting 01/26/2026  
Library Director's Report

- Work has started on the upstairs windows to remediate the lead. The curtains have been taken down and they are extremely dirty. I'm not sure it will be worth it to clean and rehang them, I prefer the "no-curtain" look so we may leave them off.
- Since the holidays the library has been a bit quiet. It has given me time to send out a batch of overdue notices. We have been staying on top of the overdue books and I feel the return rate is very good. It is rare if we have more than 300 overdues at a time and most of them are less than a month overdue.
- I've also started to put together the numbers for our state statistics form. It is due the end of March. However, I'm hoping to get it done before the end of January.
- On Friday, February 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 we will be having a movie night for adults only. The movie is "Party Girl", a 1995 comedy starring Parker Posey. I am planning another movie night for March. Also, for February is the return of "Blind Date with a Book". This has been a big success and patrons really enjoy this program.
- Pam and I did a walk through of the library and made a list of small building projects that need attention. I will present them at this board meeting.
- Erica has left the library and moved on to the position of Assistant Town Clerk. She is very excited about the new job. We wish her well in her new endeavor. We were recommended a very sweet 19-year old who is going to start as library assistant on Tuesday, 1/27. She is a Fair Haven resident and graduated last June from FHUHS.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Kearns, Library Director

## Children's and Young Adult Librarian Report CFL/BOT 1/26/26 Meeting

- We have 3 **upcoming visits from Castleton Elementary classrooms-** Kindergarten, 1st Grade, and 4th Grade. The children listen to and participate in a story, do a related craft and find out about public libraries and how *magic* having your own library card can be!
- I am applying for the **\$350 Summer Reading grant** this month. The Vermont Institute of Natural Science (VINS) will have a live animal program, ***Birds are Dinosaurs***, *“Find out how 65 million years of evolution turned the dinosaurs into–birds! Celebrating “Unearth a Story” at your local library, we’re excited to introduce you to some live birds of prey and learn all about their dinosaur ancestry together. We’ll explore the ways modern birds became masters of the air, and understand the immense timescale over which these dinosaur-descendants adapted!”*  
that ties into the Vermont Department of Libraries dinosaurs, paleontology, and archaeology-themed, ***Unearth a Story*** for this summer. The program is scheduled for Friday, June 26th at 11:00 am.
- We had a total of 42 kids participate in **3 different programs** over the holidays. We had an afternoon of crafts, Legos, and puzzle and game play. Freshly baked cookies and hot chocolate ( with lots of mini marshmallows ) helped make for fun afternoons. Many thanks to our wonderful volunteer, Jacque Frost, for handling Lego afternoon on her own- we are so lucky to have such dedicated volunteers.
- Mary and I each made and donated a basket of books, and other items, to be auctioned off for the Fair Haven High School Class of 2026.
- I am preparing for **National Take Your Child to the Library Day** on Saturday, February 7th . Maddy is making a “passport” that our younger patrons can get stamped after they complete each part of a scavenger hunt- with a prize at the end. We will serve cookies and hot chocolate and Caring Canines of Southern Vermont will be here as well.
- I **Painted the bathroom** in the children’s room- it desperately needed a refresh. Maddy and I will be painting more wooden shelving and refreshing and rethinking the children’s space, which we try to do on a regular basis.
- Maddy’s **Take and Make** for this month was a yarn snowflake- it always sounds so simple but Maddy makes the simplest crafts, with material on hand...extraordinary!
- **Story Hour** continues to be busy, fun and overflowing with little ones,anywhere from 12-28 people. I am, again, so fortunate to have Laurie Kamuda offering a tie-in playtime at the REC twice per month. The kids adore her.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Pamela Arel, Children’s and Young Adult Librarian**