

**Bennington Free Library  
Board of Directors  
Meeting Minutes February 11, 2025**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mike Munson, David Newell, Kelley Legacy, Norma McShane, Bruce Smith, Brian Cunningham, Susan McKenna, Deirdre Ryan, Beth Tegart, Sarah Blizzard, PJ Venti, and Wendy Sharkey (Director)

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Jon Goodrich

**WELCOME & CALL TO ORDER**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

- With no further discussion, minutes from the January 21, 2025 Board of Directors meetings were approved unanimously and moved.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS/PRESENTATIONS:**

- There were no public comments or presentations at the February meeting.

**FINANCE REPORT:**

A. Annual Fund

- As of February 3, 2025, the Annual Fund drive balance was \$59,038; Wendy reported that as of the February meeting we have now exceeded our 2024-2025 goal of \$60,000.

B. Finance Reports

- The Revenue & Expense Report for January was circulated for discussion and reviewed. It was noted that the R&E reflects that Harrington Brands was paid for their professional services and that a grant from the Vermont Community Foundation was received to offset the cost. It was also noted that the endowment statements had not been received in advance to include in the January report and they will be included in the February report.
- With no further discussion, all Revenue and Expenses Reports were accepted.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:** (full report circulated in meeting materials):

- The January 26 event with members of the Bennington County Multicultural Center & ECDC, *Welcoming Refugees to Bennington*, was well received with over 100 in attendance. The MCC had the opportunity to speak to the community about the programs that have been developed and to discuss their vision for expanding existing programming, including a regional center for language learning, cultural exchange, and community resiliency. The event was filmed by CAT-TV and refreshments were provided by members of our local Afghan community.

- A Lyrasis Grant application was submitted for a Role-Playing Game room and program supplies. This gaming event is being planned in collaboration with the Gamers Grotto.
- Mark your calendars for Thursday, March 27 for an evening with Kenneth M. Cadow, author of the 2025 Vermont Reads selection, *Gather*. Cadow will speak at the Library as part of the Vermont Humanities Snapshot Series.
- As a requirement of receiving the U.S. Treasury Capital Projects Fund for Libraries grant, legal notices for RFP's were publicized on the Library's website, in the Bennington Banner, and across social media platforms. Board members suggested that hard copy requests should also be hand-delivered to local architectural firms Goldstone Architecture (Jeffrey Goldstone) and Keefe & Wesner Architects (Geoff Metcalfe).

## COMMITTEE REPORTS:

### A. Strategic Planning & Long Range Planning

- Much of the meeting was reserved to continue our Strategic Visioning work on our Mission, Visions and Values
- The current Mission (the "What") has been approved:  
*The Bennington Free Library is a central part of the community that provides engaging and accessible materials, programs, and services that meet the educational, informational, cultural, and recreational needs of the community. We strive to provide a dynamic, welcoming environment that enriches lives, promotes lifelong learning and literacy, and supports the interests of our patrons.*
- Values (the "Why") serve as the heartbeat of the Library, guiding our decision-making and shaping the overall organizational culture. After a lengthy discussion, Board members came to a consensus of the following four core values:
  - Community-Driven
  - Literacy and Lifelong Learning
  - Pursuit of Knowledge
  - Intellectual Freedom
- The Board will devote time to develop the Library's Vision (the "How") at the March meeting. Earlier discussions reflected our aspirations to be more than just a place to borrow books. We envision the Library as a thriving center of innovation and cultural exchange, where patrons of all ages and backgrounds can connect, learn, and grow. Board members are encouraged to come prepared for the March 18 meeting with language and suggestions.

### B. Personnel and Policies

- A draft of the Financial Management Policy will be circulated for review and recommendation by the Finance Committee prior to the March 18 meeting.

### C. Finance

- A 3-month Certificate of Deposit with the Bank of Bennington, earmarked for capital improvements, will mature by the end of February. It was recommended by the Finance Committee Chair to roll over the CD into another 3-month CD at

the Bank of Bennington at the competitive interest rate of 3.92%. It was discussed and confirmed that there is no advantage to a longer term CD at this time.

- With no further discussion, the motion passed by majority with one abstention.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

- It was suggested that the Board should discuss and review policies on background checks for library volunteers and for people coming into the Library to conduct trainings and/or workshops, regardless of staff supervision.

With no further agenda items, the meeting was adjourned.

**BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE (FY 2024-2025):** (Third Tuesdays at 5:00 p.m.)

- February 11, 2025
- March 18, 2025
- April 15, 2025
- May 20, 2025
- June 17, 2025

Respectfully submitted,  
PJ Venti