



Board of Library Trustees
Gladys E. Kelly Public Library, 2 Lake Street, Webster, MA
Minutes for Thursday, March 12, 2026

In Attendance

Rich Franas, Chair, Susan Veshi, Vice Chair, Jeanne Mikels, Secretary, Mary Chabot, and Rena Klebart present. Sue Buehler present via Zoom. Also present Sondra Murphy, Library Director, and Evan Hale, Assistant Director and Board Clerk. Martina Koziak, Treasurer, was absent.

Meeting Called to Order

Meeting called to order at 5:03PM

Minutes:

Mary moved to approve the minutes as written; Rena seconded. Roll call vote: Mary aye, Jeanne aye, Rena aye, Rich aye. Susan and Sue abstained.

Reports

Trustees Report from the Director

Sondra set the dates for the oral history screenings: April 15th, Nichols College at 3:30PM, the Samuel Slater Experience at 11 AM on April 18th and the Senior Center on May 5th at 11:45AM. The Gladys E. Kelly Public Library will feature a private dinner for all featured in the film, followed by a showing at 6pm on April 21st.

Evan received a solar quote from East Coast Renewable Energy that stated the total cost of solar would be \$(56,000). Mary moved this proposal be presented to Rick LaFond, Town Administrator; Jeanne seconded. Roll call vote: Mary aye, Susan aye, Sue aye, Jeanne aye, Rena aye, Rich aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Evan also spoke about purchasing GrantStation for a year, he will offer grant research services through the Nest by appointment. The initial meeting of Evan's sci-fi book club was in February with 6 people in attendance, all of whom really enjoyed the book.

Warrants and Financial Reports

Rich spoke about the financial reports and mentioned he will sign warrants March 13th.

Friends Update

Evan reported that most of the Friends' meeting was taken up by Paige who provided updates on her programming since she's started as the Children's & Youth Services Librarian. There will be a joint meeting between the Trustees and Friends on May 21st at 5PM. Sue praised Kate's amazing use of our social media to promote the Library.

Unfinished Business

Early Closing March 3, 2026

Rich spoke about the inclement weather on March 3rd. Sondra was unable to contact the Town Administrator regarding closing, so she and Rich made the decision to close the Library at 5PM for the safety of staff and patrons. Mary moved to support weather related closures for the safety of our staff, while Susan suggested a written inclement weather procedure.

Facility Issue: Chairs

Sondra spoke about a quote for replacing the upholstery on 9 chairs in the Library for \$3,000, using a building improvement fund. Mary moved to use the trust fund; Jeanne seconded. Roll call vote: Mary aye, Susan aye, Jeanne aye, Rena aye, Sue aye, Rich aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Volunteer Addition

Sondra spoke about Dakota, a young man who is employed by LUK, Inc. an organization that works with youth and young adults. He has worked very well with the Library and done a great job so far.

Community Space Policy Review

Sondra spoke about some updates to the community spaces policy to include fee-based usage of The Nest. Sondra will check around with other libraries about fee-based usage regarding room damage. Mary moved to accept the amended policy as written; Rena seconded: Roll call vote: Mary aye, Susan aye, Sue aye, Jeanne aye, Rena aye, Rich aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Grants Status

Sondra applied for the ARSL grant this year for \$10,000 for a story walk. This would include 3 story walks: one at the library, one at Memorial Beach, and one at the riverwalk. She also added \$7,000 into the Friends budget next year for story walks. She is applying for the Malser Trust Grant for \$10,000, and to the Mass Cultural Council for One Book, One Community. Greater Worcester Community Foundation has a grant called the Road To End Hunger. She wants to apply for a grant to purchase a little free pantry. She also put money into the Friends' budget to bring a children's author to the school.

Oral History Project Update

Previously covered.

Holiday Review/Easter

Evan reported there are 2 union holidays in April: the 3rd for Good Friday, and the 20th for Patriots Day. Mary moved to close the Library on April 3rd and April 20th, Rena seconded. Roll call vote: Mary aye, Susan aye, Sue aye, Jeanne aye, Rena aye, Rich aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Ideas for Generating Public Relations/10 Year Anniversary

Looking ahead a few years, Sondra wants to develop some projects to generate good will for the Library. Sondra thought that we could do an oral history next year featuring local veterans, their experiences and what the town was like during that time. She also discussed what a 10-year anniversary celebration would entail. She would like to involve both the fire and police departments, including projects we could do for them.

Friend's Programming Requests/Ideas

Sondra spoke about some building improvements that she is going to propose to the Friends: the children's craft room needs furniture that would be modular, adding an office behind the children's circulation desk and updating the desk to accommodate two staff members. She is getting a quote to install some walls to create a tween space. She also has a quote for dishwasher installation. Mary moved to approve the priorities for building upgrades; Susan seconded. Roll call vote: Mary aye, Susan aye, Jeanne aye, Rena aye, Rich aye. The motion passed unanimously.

One Book, One Community Update

Sondra is still trying to determine if RF Kuang would like a reception in her honor. Her presentation, on April 29th, will likely be held in Bartlett Auditorium.

New Business

Volunteers

Rick LaFond is asking for volunteers from town boards to be on two different boards: the community preservation act, and the master plan committee.

Adjournment

Mary motioned to adjourn, Susan seconded. Roll call vote: Mary aye, Susan aye, Sue aye, Jeanne aye, Rena aye, Rich aye. The meeting adjourned at 6:36PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Mikels, Secretary

Evan Hale, Clerk

Exhibits (to be posted on the Library Website)

Director's Report

Financial Reports

Minutes Approved: April 9, 2026