

Weathersfield Proctor Library Trustees Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 19, 2026 at 7:00 pm
5181 Route 5 Ascutney, VT
Approved: March 26, 2026

Attendance Trustees: Chair Mavis Ellingwood, Vice-Chair John Waite
Rick Bates, Alicia Jenks
Director (LD) Mark Richardson
Guest: Claudio Véliz

Call Trustee Meeting to Order: 7:05 pm

I. Consent Calendar – *The consent calendar consists of items that are considered to be routine in nature and will be enacted in the form of one motion. Any item can be removed from the consent calendar and heard in its regular order at the request of any Library Trustee or Citizen.*

A. Review Minutes from Previous Meeting

1. Shall the Trustees approve the meeting minutes for the January 15, 2026 meeting? Rick made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 15, 2026 meeting. Alicia seconded and all voted in favor.

B. Rick made a motion to approve WPL expenditures dated January 18, 2026 subject to each Trustee's review and signature. Alicia seconded and all voted in favor.

II. Comments from Citizens on Topics not on the Agenda: None.

III. New Business

A. Library Director's Report:

1. LD Mark walked Trustees through the library showing reconfiguration of alcove and new lighting features by KJ Electric, LLC. Weathersfield woodworker Robert Holtorf renewed elements in the alcove and the space was reorganized as well. Additional lighting also has been installed on bookshelves in the main reading room. Additional reorganization to the alcove is planned.

2. Rick made a motion to donate a heretofore unused electronic projection screen which WPL had obtained to the 1879 Schoolhouse in Perkinsville for potential use by other groups in town. Alicia seconded and all voted in favor to donate the screen.

3. LD Mark informed the Trustees that the Library septic pump is in need of repair. He is working to obtain an estimate.

4. Beginning in March, Patti Arrison plans to lead a group reading of the Shakespeare play *Titus Andronicus*, continuing her years-long project to introduce Shakespeare's plays to townspeople.

5. The volunteer group of tax assistants will continue their efforts at WPL through the first week of April for the benefit of our citizens in filling out their Federal and state income tax forms.

B. Vermont Library Board Meeting (Rick Bates)

1. Rick announced that \$10 million in preservation grant applications overseen by the Preservation Trust of the Vermont Department of Libraries would be due no later than 31 March 2026. There will be up to 20 grants made of \$50,000 to \$400,000 for preservation

projects. Trustees discussed possible projects that would benefit WPL, including extensive work to the roof and structure underlying the roof. Other possible preservation projects include restoration and replacement of ten windows, and fireplace reconstruction. To this end, Rick made a motion to authorize LD Mark and Alicia to hire an engineer, determine a reasonable rate and obtain an engineering report which can be used in the application for a grant from the Preservation Trust. John seconded and all voted in favor.

2. Rick reported on other potential grants available from the Vermont Department of Libraries, included Courier grants and Summer Reading Program grants.

3. Finally, Rick also reported that a bill had been introduced to the VT State Legislature to name the third Monday in October as Vermont Library Day.

C. Town Meeting

1. LD Mark mentioned that reports from WPL and Friends of WPL both were received in time for publication in the 2026 Town Report for upcoming Town Meeting, which will be held Saturday 28 February 2026 at the Weathersfield school with voting the following Tuesday. Trustees are encouraged to attend. The Friends of the Library will be providing food for the event.

III. Old Business

A. Astronomy (update Rick Bates). Rick was joined by Chester architect and SoVerA founder and Director Claudio Véliz to discuss possible future plans for SoVerA (the Southern Vermont Astronomy group). One potential effort is to obtain funding for a larger, more sophisticated observatory at Hoisington Field. The idea is to provide an ongoing, educational service in the teaching of astronomy to members of the wider Vermont community, including schoolchildren, adults and tourists. Due to the WPL's association with SoVerA, we may be in a position to assist in some way with this effort, which also may involve a number of professionals, both domestically and internationally, from the field.

B. Lighting (update Alicia Jenks). The lighting project has been completed, the contractor paid and all the work was done under budget. Yea!

C. Town Challenge is scheduled to be held Saturday March 28, 2026 at the Weathersfield School. WPL plans to field a team. Rick Bates will provide questions for the music. John Arrison will moderate and Patti Arrison will provide questions.

D. Summer Evening Program. Rick and Alicia report that Trustee Anne Parent has contacted a band that blends Scottish and Irish melodies and instrumentation with rock n' roll rhythms. The name of the band has not been disclosed.

E. Alarm System for WPL (update LD Mark). No news.

F. Semiquincentennial Weathersfield 250 (John Waite). The 250 Committee is to meet Friday 21 February 2026 to discuss forward-looking options. A resolution will be put forward to the Weathersfield Selectboard at a meeting Monday evening, 23 February 2026, for the town to officially endorse any future performance of Patti Arrison's play *We Most Ardently Desire* as Weathersfield's official contribution to the Semiquincentennial celebration.