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DATE: February 3, 2026
TIME: 11:21 AM

Belmont Public Library
Meeting of the Board of Trustees
October 16, 2025 via zoom

Trustees Vice Chair Corinne McCue Olmsted called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. In attendance were Chair Kathy Keohane, Trustees Ed Barker, Stephanie Cahoon, and Tara Donner. Director Peter Struzziero and Assistant Director Lauren Pfendner were present as was Select Board member Matt Taylor. Trustee Gail Mann was not in attendance.

RECs

Solar panels will be installed on the new library and will produce 30-40% of the projected needed electricity. Trustees discussed a proposal from the town administration regarding the sale of RECs associated with the library solar installation. Substantial changes have been made to the original proposal and the board requested to delay the vote on the proposal until members have had more time to consider all implications. It was requested that a member of the town or Belmont Light attend the meeting to address questions in advance of a vote. It is hopeful that the Library Board will be able to consider this at the upcoming November meeting.

Review of Minutes

Tara Donner moved to approve the minutes from September – as presented.
Kathy Keohane seconded the motion and the board voted unanimously to approve.

Library update

Director's report

Hiring: A new tech librarian has been hired and will start by mid-November. A 2nd candidate is being reviewed. A library coordinator is also being interviewed. It has been a best practice to have a member of the trustees participate in final interviews for department head positions.

Staff Development: The September staff development and outing was well received, boosted morale and provided a rare opportunity for staff members to be together during the construction period of separate locations. Training included six topics, with particular focus on AI.

ITAC – Paul Roberts will not seek another term on the Information Technology Advisory Committee), which leaves an opening for a library representative. Trustees should consider what skills and or topics would be most beneficial for the library for a candidate to have and provide that information to the Director.

New website: The new library website is ready for beta testing, which will happen by the end of October. Feedback will be incorporated and the website will launch before the opening of the new building.

Budget FY '27

The 30 year Capital Budget for the library will be submitted shortly to the town administration. Chair Keohane noted that capital budget needs had been submitted annually for the library until construction began. The town has recently enhanced the process for capital budget needs and has extended the timeframe. The information is used as an important forecasting tool for the overall town budget. The practice allows trustees to consider long-term capital needs and values and timeframes can be reconfirmed annually. It was noted that many of our building needs would have long lead times. Nonetheless it was discussed that the planning is important. Board members asked for clarification on pricing methodology (current vs. future values).

Chair Keohane motioned to approve the submission with the understanding that the director will validate present day vs. future value pricing.

Vice Chair Olmsted seconded the motion. Board members approved the measure unanimously by roll call vote.

Building Update

Chair Keohane reported that the building will reach substantial completion on November 20, 2025 and continues to be under budget. The largest cost overrun has been soil disposal from the false berm and excavation related to the outside space.

The move in plan is in process.

Signed MOAs are in place with the Belmont Media Center and the Historical Society. Similar agreements are needed with the Friends and the Woodland Garden.

The necessary papers are in process for the solar rebate.

A community celebration will be held January 10th with a snow date of January 11th.

Move In Update

Move in will occur in early December. The director hopes to continue providing limited services during that time.

The library is considering a modest contribution to refresh the Beech St Center and Benton Branch, though none is required in the MOA.

2020 Fund

The Library Capital Building Fund 2020, which was established as the location for all funds for the library building project and the Foundation, will close as of November 1, 2025.

Chair Keohane moved to close said fund with all balance and interest to be gifted to the town of Belmont for the sole purpose of funding any and all expenses associated with construction of a new library facility.

Ed Barker seconded the motion and the board voted unanimously in favor by roll call.

Revolving Fund

Vice Chair Olmsted noted that the Warrant Committee voted in favor of Article 10, creating the Library Room Rental Revolving Fund for funds raised outside of normal business hours. (The library board voted unanimously in September to support the measure.)

Key Topics

Assistant Director Pfendner recently celebrated six years at the Belmont Public Library. Chair Keohane commended her for her exceptional performance.

Town meeting moderator will recognize town employees who have passed away this year, including long-time library staff member Fred Dooe.

Trustee Barker noted that the Wall for All prototype was reviewed earlier this week. The project is on schedule and will be ready for installation in coordination with the move in process.

Liaison Updates

Historical Society – the MOA is signed and plans for move in are underway.

Friends – Membership letters will be sent to over 1400 people, a dramatic increase over the typical 350. This is a key year to increase numbers because of the merger with the Foundation. Plans are under way for a mini golf event in March and Books in Bloom in early May.

Schools – Trustee Donner has been appointed to the School Strategic Planning Committee and will work to enhance collaboration with the library.

Vice Chair Olmsted adjourned the meeting at 8:59 p.m.
Respectfully submitted by Stephanie Cahoon, Secretary

Future Meetings

November 13, 2026 via Zoom

December 18, 2026 Belmont Public Library

Attachments:

Meeting agenda

Meeting minutes September 2025

Library Update

Project Budget Update

LBC Update

September Statistics

Administrative Report

30 Year Capital Budget

REC Agreement (Redlined)

FY26 Goals

FY26 State Aid Spending