

Berkshire Free Library
Meeting of the Board of Trustees
at the Berkshire Free Library
January 13, 2026

Present: Nancy Lohmann, Carol Leigh, Barbara Schwartz, Janice Merrill, Carol Cox, Fran Miller, John Stoughton, Lisa Michaud, Sue Ford and guest Denny Dyer.

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 AM by President John Stoughton. The Agenda was changed to include Blueberry Festival, Annual meeting, and Narcan Box under New Business.

REPORTS

Secretary: Minutes of the December 9, 2025 meeting were reviewed. There were no changes as presented.

Treasurer: Carol L noted that over \$12,000 in gifts for the month, plus other income makes us solvent.

Director: Fran noted that numbers were low, but our web person will add sliders with info on new books and magazines to generate more checkouts.

Old Business: School Board News: The signed petition to be placed on the school tax roles was delivered. The Berkshire Town Board was notified of our intent and the Richford Town Board would be notified shortly. Grant Info was distributed on a sheet listing active grants and their use, and it was reviewed. Christmas trees are now removed from the front of the Library, but Fran asked if we couldn't plan something a bit more to take place during the tree lighting each year. Janice suggested they hold caroling on the steps of the Library and have food at the Fire Hall after the lighting.

New Business: The graphic novel writing class by Ithaca College students comes from the Community Fdtn of Tompkins County grant, formerly known as The Rossen Grant. Annual report writing is not accessible since the State took over administration. Book collection of used books and puzzles to be placed on a shelf at the Post Office was discussed. Fran will see to its rotation. We agreed this would be a good effort and help people to still be able to donate their used books to the library. Back Ramp door lock was tampered with and needs to be replaced. Bathroom leak, specifically in the tub, needs to be fixed since it now leaks a bucket plus daily. We're not sure if there is a separate shutoff for that faucet. However, at this point dishes are being done in the bathtub because the pipes in the kitchen sink freeze. Denny said he would try to make it so those pipes don't freeze. Grant Writing Policy needs to be written, per Fran, as it is not in her list of duties. The first few years she worked at the library she didn't write grants. The hours she spends writing grants should be kept separate. Janice moved and Barbara seconded that we write a policy similar to the one Fran distributed, and that her hours writing grants be figured and paid separately from her salary. Since the Treasurer had to leave early and was not available to answer where the funds might come from, Sue moved and Barbara seconded that the whole question be tabled until the next meeting. This was unanimously approved.

Barbara moved and Lisa seconded a motion to accept the above reports as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Grants – under Director's report

Building Updates – Nothing new at this time.

School Budget Status – The signed Petition to receive \$50,000 annual from school taxes was delivered to the School Board.

NEW BUSINESS

Board Members Renewal: Carol Cox, Carol Leigh, Barbara Schwartz and Lisa Michaud agreed to continue on the Board for another term.

Blueberry Festival: Nancy asked if we shouldn't start meeting monthly to prepare for this year's Blueberry & Book Festival, and we agreed to meet the Tuesday before Board meetings at 10 AM.

Annual meeting: will be held next month before the regular monthly meeting.

Narcan Box: A Narcan box has been obtained by Denny Dyer for the use of the Fire Hall, Community Hall and Library, and can be placed outside except in winter months since contents could freeze. Location of the Box to be placed in April is under discussion. Notice will be distributed to the Town via email, and Town and Library web sites.

ROUND TABLE

Barbara participated in an Ithaca College class on Ageism, and the leaders were students who asked if we would post a flyer about Anti-Ageism, and we agreed.

There being no further business to conduct, Carol Cox moved we adjourn, Sue Ford seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully,

Janice Merrill, Secretary