RUTLAND FREE LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Aug. 20, 2025 5:15PM
Meeting at Rutland Free Library Fox Room

Attending: Ann Bannister__A__; Joe Bertelloni_X__; Gabi Bourassa__A__Clare Coppock __X__; Leonard DeLorenzo_X_; Fern Fryer _X___; Russell Glitman _A__; Allyn Kahle _X__; Kevin Klamm_X__; Carolyn Meub_X_; Matt Olewnik__X_; Joanne Pencak_X__; Cathy Reynolds__X__; Cathy Solsaa__A__; John Skinner__A_; Randal Smathers__X__; Amy Williams __X___ (X is present, A is absent)

Presiding: Clare Coppock **Secretary**: Allyn Kahle

Guest/s: Heather Ruelke

The meeting was called to order by Clare at 5:15 pm.

Agenda Addition(s): Clare passed around a card for the Friends to thank them for the generous donations they have made recently: contribution to staff bonuses, items to sell or give away with RFL logo, and the new copy machine kiosk. Cathy R asked the board and proposed asking the Friends if anyone would like to contribute money for a hook for the capital campaign (e.g. The first donations up to $1000 will be doubled.)

Acceptance of Meeting Minutes: Kevin moved/Cathy R seconded to accept the minutes of the July 23, 2025 meeting. The motion was approved.

Financials (report and committee): Joanne presented the July financial statements. The year end statements have not been finalized because some statements have not been received. The income includes several generous contributions from the Friends of RFL. The programming budget was over, but will be covered by the Fox Fund. The building fund was over budget due to the purchase of a new vacuum and extra cleaning expenses. Joanne emphasized that this is the budget for one month and should even out over the course of the year. Randal stated that Darby is in the process of transferring the bequest from the Sibyl Kirby Estate from a low interest to a high interest account. It does not show up on the statements yet. Kevin moved/Joe seconded to accept the financial report. The motion was approved.

Committee Reports and Actions:

Executive: Clare stated that they had completed Randal's evaluation and it will be discussed with him at the next Exec. Comm. meeting.

Clare has confirmed a slate of officers for the Oct. meeting. Russell agreed to be the President-Elect, and Gabi the Secretary. Clare and Joanne will continue in their roles.

There will be a Trustee Summit on Nov. 1. Clare has agreed to go. We can send two people. Randal does not have details yet.

The Exec. Comm. made the decision to give Randal, Amy and Casey the same raises and bonus the union staff got through contract negotiations. Pages will get a bonus of a gift card.

Board Development: Carolyn asked Randal about contacts with the selectboards of the member towns. He is in contact with them usually about twice a year. He prepares a

report for them at the end of the year which includes their town statistics for library use, a narrative about the library year, and identifies their trustees. He follows the by-laws for choosing their representatives for the board.
There was a discussion about the language changes to the bylaws about officer titles which will be voted on at the Association meeting on Oct. 15. The process will be that the Policy Comm. (and whoever would like to join them) will write language at their Sept. meeting on Sept. 8 and send it to the rest of the board. The board will discuss the language at their Sept. meeting and vote on language to include as an amendment to the Association Bylaws on Oct. 15.

Personnel: The union contract still has not been finalized and signed. We are waiting on someone in the AFSCME Rep Kristin Warner's office to fix the index and then we need to do the final proofread. Amy will contact Kristin.

Development: Matt reported that there will be a 1-hour event on Sept. 20th from 3-4pm for the raffle drawing. Food and drinks will be provided by members of the board. Tickets will be sold at the Whoopie Pie Festival and at the Friends' Sept. book sales by board volunteers. Randal said that Darby reported about $500 in tickets sold already. In addition, Cathy R has sold $100 and Clare $150.
Board members volunteered for tasks for the Whoopie Pie Festival.
Kevin suggested a fundraiser with the Paramount and Wonderfeet would be a good idea.

Policy & Planning: Allyn reported that they did not meet. They will be working on the amendment language for the bylaws at their Sept. meeting.

21st Century Library: They did not meet, but will meet on Aug. 28 to discuss how to roll out the 88 Merchants Row design from the architects.

Director & Assistant Director Updates:

Amy: Amy answered a question about the demographics of the adult summer reading program. There were no specific numbers taken, but more men were represented than expected and there was a wide age range from 20 years old to seniors.

Randal: Randal has completed the first draft of the FY27 budget. He presented it to the Finance Committee and then reworked it with Darby. They found a couple of errors. Randal will present it again at the Sept Finance Comm. meeting. He will discuss it with the mayor to determine what percentage increase to ask for from the Board of Aldermen. At our Sept. Board meeting we will vote on a provisional budget. There is a $55,000 deficit in the budget as it stands now. The question is: Can we afford to stay in this building? We went over budget on maintenance by $30,000 last year. If something major happens to the building we have to ask the city for help. What if they don't have the money? We don't have control over maintenance costs in this building. Another expense which is very volatile is health care. A new employee on a family plan could add $20,000. Randal has a meeting scheduled with David Allaire to discuss building issues. We need to look at everything in the budget, including staffing levels and hours we are open. Randal will ask the architects for an estimate of the maintenance costs for 88 Merchants Row.

Two fake confederate bills appeared in a returned book and two books have been destroyed in the holocaust collection. Similar incidents happened about 4 years ago. The idea of putting a hidden camera in that section was discussed. Randal has reported the issue at a state library meeting so other libraries and the state have been notified.

President's Issues: Clare organized an Ad Hoc Committee for Strategic Planning**.** Fern and Kevin volunteered. Russell had volunteered previously. They will develop an RFP to hire someone to guide us through the process. Fern found a description of a Strategic Planning process that was used at CCV which was shared. Clare planned to have everyone involved in the process including the board, staff, and possibly other stakeholders.

Adjournment: 6:34pm

Next Board Meeting: Wednesday, Sept. 17, 2025 @ 5:15 pm