Minutes
East Haddam Library System Board of Trustees
Thursday, November 13, 2025

Municipal Office Building
Meeting Room 3
6:30pm

Mission Statement: The East Haddam Library System seeks to enrich lives by helping to build communities of lifelong learners. The system provides access to historical collections, offers materials in print and digital formats, and gives community members opportunities to share in public discussion.

I. Call to order by J Beilot @ 6:31pm
   a. Trustees present: J Beilot, K McRae, L White, S Jezek, M Mazur, J Tyron Ranaudo-via phone
   b. Others Present: E Morgan, EHLS Director

II Approval of October 9, 2025 meeting minutes, with corrections as discussed

III **Directors Report-**
   a. Welcome of newly elected Trustees- K McRae, L White and D Barlow
   b. E Morgan met with the two First Selectmen candidates in October and discussed the need for the new library with Todd Gelston. He is in favor of a building committee being formed.
   c. CT State Library Grant, funded by the State is up to $2,000,000. The application process is complex and will take about 2 years to complete the paperwork needed to complete the grant application.
   d. Budget Y26 began July 1, 2025. 30.2% of the budget has been spent since then, or $155,428 of the $515,000 total budget through November 7, 2025. E Morgan states we are well within our budget.
   e. There have been many events in the month of October including Project Safe Halloween where over 900 children and guardians came through the MOC, Half Pint Hamlet which entertained over 300 children and included a partnership with the EDC which provided hayrides, An Author talk was sponsored by the Friends Groups. Other upcoming activities are listed on the website for both adults and children and include a partnership with Parks&Rec for the Light Up the Green event. Trustee D Barlow will be Mrs Claus, the EHLS will decorate the Santa room and the EHFPL Friends will donate the toys for Mrs Claus to hand out. Also the Library will be donating $250 to Parks&Rec for replacement of some of the backdrops, lighting and supplies. The Community Lions organization will again hold their “Light Up the Holidays” auction-items will be displayed at the Rathbun starting November 24, 2025, and can be viewed online as well. Drawings for winners will be December 5, 2025. The Rathbun annual Holiday Market will be held at the Grange and the Old Town Hall November 22, 2025 from 10-3pm. November 11, 2025 saw a Fire Cider workshop

f. The EHFPL monthly adult craft and book discussions are well attended and often fully subscribed. Anastasia has several teen programs to offer as well.
g. E Morgan reminds the community that many children's programs are offered at both branches and lead by Anastasia Wilson. The online catalog gives descriptions.
h. The Goodspeed Good Neighbor Program is seeing fewer vouchers as the theater is selling out many performances very quickly. As a result they are limiting their offering to one set of tickets per week. E Morgan tells us that the decision to hold a weekly lottery whereby patrons can enter to win the tickets each week will take place. If the first name drawn isn't able to use the tickets, another name will be drawn, and so on.
i. As discussed in previous meetings, the book distributor Baker & Taylor, which many other libraries use, is going bankrupt. They are closing their doors in January. The EHLS uses a different distributor, Ingram, and may now see greater delays in receiving orders as the demand to this one distributor may increase.
j. The Directors Projects: Policy updates for the CT State Library will be posted once the monthly board minutes are approved. Data collection for the Library's annual report is ongoing. Library use is increasing while the population of the town is decreasing. Continued helping in coordination of fall and winter events. Data collection for planning the Library FY26 budget.

IV **Reports**-

a. **Finance Committee Report-**Met November 10
i. 2025-2026 Budget expenses are on target. J Beilot has created a spreadsheet to assist in the development and discussion of the next round of budget planning.

b. **Governance Committee Report-** Met November 10
i. Discussion of the recent Municipal election results and the open vacancy seat. Prior member of the Library Trustees, Bill Barney, has expressed interest in the open seat and will approach the new administration to apply for an appointment.
ii. 2026 Calendar prepared with note that Labor Day September 7, 2026 meetings will need to be changed.
iii. Orientation, none at this time as all members are experienced Trustees
iv. Ongoing Annual Manual Review
v. Subcommittee assignments were made

Governance: K McRae, S Jezek, J Tryon Ranaudo-meeting Monday prior to board meeting except when conflicts with holiday
Public relations: L White, M Mazur, A Hinchcliff- meeting first Wednesday of the month except when conflicts with holiday
Finance: J Beilot, D Barlow, potential vacancy appointment- meeting Monday prior to board meeting except when conflicts with holiday

c. **Public Relations Committee Report-** Did not meet
i. M Mazur discussed the guidelines of goals and has met with A Hinchcliff and will discuss with L White as a newly appointed subcommittee member.

d. **Friends Liasion Reports**
i. **Friends of EHFPL-**

The recent October Book Sale made $3471.10, $600 more than last year Expenses for the sale were $183 and an additional $150 for pickup of unsold books. K McRae will not authorize the payment without an invoice. There are 50 boxes of high quality books being kept for a spring adult book sale and these are being stored in the MOC. K McRae says there was not enough help in setting up this sale.

The Author Showcase, held November 8, 2025 was not well attended. Discussions as to reasons why have not resulted in a better understanding. Also there were a couple of authors who did not show up. It was decided a waiting list for openings will be kept. The cub scouts did a bake sale and there was a food truck. Set up and breakdown were well staffed.

Trustee D Barlow will become Mrs Claus for the upcoming Light Up the Green event. As mentioned previously, The Friends buy the small toys Mrs Claus hands to the children.

Two new Friends members have joined with great enthusiasm.

ii. **Friends of Rathbun-**

The Half Pint Hamlet was a great success, there were long lines for the many activities offered. The cost for the event was $2000 for supplies.

Further discussion of the Author Showcase's poor attendance: economic concerns, conflict with other area events, conflict with a recent similar event in town were listed as possibilities.

The Holiday Market at the Grange and the Old Town Hall has 30 vendors signed up. Warning that cash may be the only form of payment as the Grange has very poor signals for internet services that support credit card and Venmo options.

The Friends are still working on a Marionette performance for January/February 2026.

The Friends meetings have changed to Tuesdays

V. **Unfinished Business**

A. 2025-2026 budget discussed above
B. CLC Strategic Planning Cohort-Develop Strategic Plan Committee-
    a. Busy addressing community outreach which are meeting goals
    b. New Strategic Planning will be added to the January Agenda
C. New Library facility-
    a. E Morgan has met with Todd Gelston, the newly elected first selectman
D. Cuts to IMLS-
    a. They have written a budget to shut down their organization

b. This will not impact EHLS as it will deeply impact rural and indigenous libraries

VI. **New Business**

a. Discussion and action on the 2026 Meeting calendar- J Tryon Ranaudo made a motion to accept the calendar with changes discussed for Labor Day, 2nd by J Bielot.
b. J Tryon Ranaudo asked to add an item to the agenda to discuss officers for the Trustees for the next session. This was tabled to the December meeting when D Barlow is in attendance and the vacant seat may be filled.

VII. Audience of Citizens-none

VIII. Adjournment- 7:29pm

Respectfully submitted L White