

## Director's Report

### November-December 2025

Respectfully submitted by Val Finkel on January 2, 2026.

#### Joys and successes:

- We're grateful to Jade Mortimer for continuing to diligently sand and shovel the walkways.
- Many thanks to Chelsea, who continues to volunteer to offer our services at the Franklin County jail.
- Staff members Dominique, Mara, Sasha, and Roxanne stepped up to provide coverage to let me enjoy a wonderful holiday with friends.

#### Building & Grounds:

- Our tree lights have failed for the third time, which Aaron thinks means that there is an issue with them. We will look into replacing the strings and getting the trees re-lit ASAP, but getting them re-wrapped may not happen until the weather warms. One of the front lampposts also just went out, which we will be able to have Aaron replace more quickly.
- I met with Stephen Larocque on 12/11/25 to discuss next steps on the feasibility study. It appears that from a regulatory perspective, the MAAB would be fine with the main entrance being at the rear door. It remains unclear whether they will require an accessible route from the street to the rear. It appears they didn't require this pathway in a relief action they recovered from 1997, but Stephen needs to unpack the 1997 file relative to what we are contemplating and send a revised list of questions to the MAAB, as well as reconcile the full & fair cash value triggers of the project relative to their comments.
- The town administrator reports that the Select Board has approved Jade Mortimer's volunteer work to shovel snow for us, and adds that should Jade be indisposed in the

future, that now the Highway Department does now have sufficient staff to cover all the library's snow removal needs.

### **Programs and services:**

- Our winter display has had good engagement, and we plan to keep it up through January.
- The Smartphone Skills workshop on 12/8 was attended by four people. Attendees expressed satisfaction with the workshop and requested more.
- We held our annual Winter Party on 12/20, with a cookie swap and a showing of "The Muppets Christmas Carol." 11 people attended, five of whom are part of a large family that hadn't visited since before the pandemic and expressed that they were spurred by this event to start coming in again!
- Our "Knit with Friends" program, led by Jan Jones, continues on Wednesday evenings at 6:00. Attendance is steady.
- The Cyber-Seniors Tech Help program continues on Wednesdays 3 PM - 5 PM. We are still on the lookout for a Mohawk Trail or other local high school student to host the Tech Help hours on Wednesday afternoons or, failing that, a local tech maven or crew of mavens, but for now Donna Dusell with GCC continues to host.
- The second meeting of the new hybrid format Carol Purington Poetry Collective was held on 1/2, and was attended by five people.
- The Patron Picks display for the adult room has landed, featuring Tesia Elani's picks. Both Tesia's picks and Maggie Korby's picks in the kid's room have been very popular displays! We will rotate to new Pickers in February.
- Story Time is here! The first one will be this Friday, 1/9 with Ms. Betty hosting.

### **Administration:**

- We have reactivated our streaming services, and added Paramount Plus! Val is working on restricting purchase options from the Rokus and how to handle physical site-specific tracking.
- The mailer insert was submitted to the Town Clerk on 12/11.

- Strategic Planning is progressing. The Plan draft is completed, and we are planning a Community Discussion to serve as one large focus group to take place at the library on Saturday 1/24. An email invitation to town “influencers” will be sent out on Weds 1/7.
- We submitted a grant application to the ALA’s fund for Libraries Transforming Communities: Accessible Small and Rural Communities. Awards will be announced March 3, 2026.
- The budget is on track to be submitted to the Town Administrator on January 8th.

#### Other Thoughts/Good to Know:

- **Supreme Court declines to hear appeal on Texas book ban case that allows officials to remove objectionable books from libraries** – PBS (12/9/2025): The U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear an appeal on a Texas free speech case that allowed local officials to remove books deemed objectionable from public libraries. [Link to article from PBS.](#)
- **US librarians tackle ‘manufactured crisis’ of book bans to protect LGBTQ+ rights** – The Guardian (12/15/2025): In at least half a dozen states, librarians have joined forces with civil rights groups to oppose book bans, often facing personal and professional repercussions. [Link to article from The Guardian.](#)
- **NASA's Largest Library Is Closing Amid Staff and Lab Cuts** – The New York Times (12/31/2025): Holdings from the library at the Goddard Space Flight Center, which includes unique documents from the early 20th century to the Soviet space race, will be warehoused or thrown out. [Link to article from The New York Times.](#)
- **The Most Popular Books in US Public Libraries in 2025** – Book Riot (12/19/2025): What were the most popular books checked out in US libraries in 2025? Here are the top fiction and nonfiction titles across 40 libraries. [Link to article from Book Riot.](#)
  - **Related: [Genre fiction and female authors top U.S. libraries' most-borrowed lists in 2025](#)** – NPR (12/29/2025)