

## BML Strategic Planning Minutes, May 18, 2026

Convened at 4:40 p.m. in Meeting Room B

Present: Ann Varilly (Chair), Leo Schiff, Bob Ferrante, Felicity Ratte, Lindsay Bellville, Jeanne Walsh, Julie Perrin

- Agenda changes: none
- Public participation: Howard Burrows attended and shared ideas.
- Minutes of March 16, 2026 approved as read

### CONTINUING BUSINESS

#### **Marketing**

We reviewed a draft of a new library Marketing Plan, which we've been developing with Seth Thomas, Communications Coordinator for the Town. The plan looks good so far, and we should continue to refine it. The Strategic Planning Committee took this on after the last planning cycle was completed.

#### **Strategic Plan**

We had open discussion about the next strategic planning process, noting that the current plan, originally for 2023-2025, has been extended through 2027. Julie was engaged in library business at the municipal center and had to join us at the end of the meeting, so much of the discussion was preliminary until she's available to participate. Key ideas that were offered and discussed by committee members:

- We'll want to know Julie's sense of best timing of the next strategic planning process.
- Can we simply carry on with the existing plan? Many of the goals are ongoing and central to our mission, such as "collecting materials in accessible formats."
- While some services will no doubt carry on into a new plan, we need to continually assess the needs of the community and respond. That requires stepping back.
- The Strategic Plan provides some guidance for what the library should be focusing on.
- The Strategic plan ideally wouldn't have so much operational detail. It would have a wider view.

- The VLA conference on June 1 will have sessions that address “how to be a library in this world that we know.”
- The Plan should address what staff already do and what they would like to do that they struggle to have the capacity to do.
- The previous planning process was about one and a half years and included engaging a consultant, staff and public forums, and input from community partners.
- There are reasons why we haven’t taken this on yet, specifically the library leadership transition and lots of changes in the Town.
- How frequent are planning cycles these days in the business and nonprofit world? There seems to be a shift to shorter cycles: instead of every 5 years, it’s 1-2 years.
- In the planning process, whom do we contact for insight and feedback?  
Answers: stakeholders who benefit from our services and community partners and agencies.
- Part of this process is a general evaluation of how we’re doing.
- *Appreciative Inquiry* is a process that might be useful for our Strategic Plan. It’s essentially asking people what they like. You can read between the lines about what is *not* going well, but it remains upbeat. Felicity will bring more information about this process to the next SP meeting.

## **Other Business**

How are things going during Tara’s leave? We’re getting along. We specifically noted that Amanda is sending out the e-news, which is vital.

How are things going during the construction? Pretty well. Our patrons seem understanding and enthusiastic.

Signage collaboration with Building and Grounds Committee: we looked at some signage proposals and discussed what we liked and didn’t like about the options.

**Amended By-Laws** – Still on hold.

ADJOURNED at 5:48