

Town of Brentwood Municipal Budget Committee
Minutes of August 24, 2026 Site Visit at Library

Committee Members: Jim Hajjar, Kat Niemiroski, Dan Hebert

Library Trustees: Jenn Bordis, Jeff Donald

Staff: Janice Wiers, Kiki Donis-Wahl

Select Board: Letty Bedard

Public: Doug Finan

4:30 pm start time.

Janis shared an overview of operations for 2027 budgeting and a list of 2026 accomplishments, challenges, and anticipated needs. (see attached)

The major capital needs identified were

- Replace current basement flooring (quotes in progress)
- Exterior painting (quotes in progress)
- Repair/replace exterior staircase (building inspector needs to investigate)
- Elevator (possibly funded by impact fees / grants)

There was a lot of discussion regarding overall maintenance of town owned buildings (including the library) and who actually owns the maintenance plans of all the buildings. This will be discussed with the select board during the budget cycle and next CIP update. Specific items that need to be addressed for all town buildings are

- What building maintenance is supported by the “Government Buildings” 4194-16 account appropriations versus Maintenance of Town Own Buildings CRF versus departmental budgets (library, recreation, fire, police, town admin, etc)
- Maintenance of sewage systems (cause of overflow, scheduling maintenance, system inspections/verifications)
- Snow removal of entryways
- Cleaning of all public and employee bathrooms

Janice reviewed the accomplishments from this past year. Brief discussion regarding needs for wage adjustments that keep pace with inflation balanced with taxpayer affordability. Janice also recognized the outstanding efforts of the Friends of the Library.

The visit ended with a tour of the basement and discussion regarding the toilet overflow, possible location of future elevator, and examination of flooring (there was some water leak stains near doors).

The site visit ended at approximately 6:15PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Hajjar

Chair, Brentwood Municipal Budget Committee

Budget Committee Site Walk - Overview of Operations for 2027 Budgeting

STATISTICS AT A GLANCE – Comparison of Jan. 1 – Jul. 31, 2025 and Jan. 1 – Jul. 31, 2026

Hours open / week 40 / 40 0% change	Annual visits 8,985 / 9,420 (+435) 4.84% increase	Circulation 23,901 / 23,821 (-80) .33% decrease
New Patrons 74 / 89 (+15) 20.27% increase	Programs offered 126 / 148 (+22) 17.46% increase	Program attendance 1,853 / 1,979 (+126) 6.80% increase
Active Users - Trending Up 1,245 patrons have been active from 10/21/25 – 8/21/26, already 95.7% of the prior 12-month total of 1,301, with two months remaining.		

OPERATIONS

- 3.7 FTE staff providing circulation, reference, technology help, programming, collection development, outreach other aspects of customer service
- 37,047 - physical items in our collection plus e-books, digital audiobooks, and streaming resources
- Public computers, Wi-Fi, printing/scanning/faxing (by donation), meeting rooms, 3-D prints (by donation)
- Programs and activities for children, teens, adults, and older adults
- Book clubs, author visits, civics, arts and crafts, education, food and nutrition, games and entertainment, gardening and outdoors, health, music, humanities, science, travel, and more programs and activities
- Building operations: utilities, cleaning, safety checks, routine repairs, grounds coordination, and vendor management
- Social media, monthly newsletter, and website design/maintenance
- Project management, long range planning, budgeting, and administrative activities

WHAT THE COMMUNITY RECEIVES

Access and Support

The library provides access to information, resources, programs, and technology six days a week, supplemented by 24/7 digital access to reading, research, learning, and entertainment resources. People of all ages and abilities are welcomed into accessible public spaces and receive individualized support with technology, job searches, online forms, research, and information needs.

Connection

The library serves as a community gathering place, creating opportunities to participate, learn, and connect with others.

OUR #1 ASSET: LIBRARY STAFF - *Turning municipal investment into community value*

Knowledge and Expertise

Our staff are trained library professionals with expertise in collections, resources, library systems, policies, and procedures. They research and develop programs for all ages, build diverse and responsive collections, stay current with changing technology, and apply their knowledge while balancing patron needs with fiscal responsibility. Ongoing professional development ensures staff remain current and relevant as library resources, technology, and community needs evolve.

Relationships

Staff are in tune with community needs, are welcoming and trusted, build meaningful relationships, and develop partnerships that strengthen connections within the community. MEB staff make a difference.

STEWARDSHIP & FY2027 PRIORITIES

The library offsets municipal costs through consortium purchasing, grants, and shared services. FY2027 priorities are to maintain dependable public service hours and expected service levels for our community, keep collections and digital access current and diversified, and preserve high-demand community programming.

Budget Committee Site Walk

2026 Accomplishments, Challenges, and Anticipated Needs

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ❖ We moved forward with efficient and cost-effective ways to order books when a major U.S. library book vendor shuttered their business after over 100 years serving libraries.
- ❖ The assistant director guided the support staff in managing day to day operations when the director was out for an unexpected and extended amount of time.
- ❖ We received a Civic & Belonging Grant from New Hampshire Humanities.
- ❖ We received a large gift from UNH to support gardening initiatives.
- ❖ We were able to mitigate a septic backup in the basement and were able to repair the damages quickly and at low cost due to the support of a contractor who values the library and staff.
- ❖ Summer Reading 2026 – Plant a Seed, Read! – was a huge success!

CURRENT CHALLENGES

- ❖ Installing an epoxy basement floor to eliminate the risk of bacterial contamination while providing a safe, durable, and multi-purpose surface.
- ❖ Balancing taxpayer affordability with the need for wage adjustments that keep pace with inflation and help prevent employees' existing compensation from losing value. Along with merit increases to recognize performance, growth, and excellence, competitive compensation is essential to retaining qualified, experienced staff and maintaining the library services the community relies upon.
- ❖ With six building entryways, reliable and consistent snow removal from walkways, ramps, and stairs is essential to maintaining safe access and ensuring the library can open to the public as scheduled.

CAPITAL NEEDS

- ❖ Epoxy basement flooring to mitigate the risk of bacterial contamination and provide a safe, durable, multi-purpose surface
- ❖ Exterior building maintenance, including:
 - Exterior painting
 - Repair or replacement of the exterior staircase off the meeting room
- ❖ Elevator installation to connect the library's two floors and provide accessibility