

Ashland Library Advisory Panel
Meeting Agenda
August 28, 2025

1. Call meeting to order
2. Approve August 20 minutes
3. Review C of A #3
4. Other business
5. Adjournment

Ashland Library Advisory Panel
Meeting Five—August 28, 2025 6:00—8:00pm

Attending: Kevin Bushey, Anne Chase, Shara Page, Miranda Carney

Work Week 5 for the Library Advisory Panel began by approving the minutes of the previous work session. It was reported that all phone calls to the selected regional libraries were made with 100% acceptance. Email addresses were confirmed by the contacted librarians; the finalized survey will be sent out Tuesday, September 2nd. Included will be a short message of thanks and a return email should any participant wish to provide other information not included in the survey that the respondent considers helpful or important for the panel to know.

The panel continued discussions of Course of Action #3 related to considerations for the formation of a non-profit 501 (c3) status structure. Copies of “Non-Profit Steps,” retrieved from <https://libraryfriendszone.com/creating-effective-bylaws/> were provided to attending panel members. This document provided 10 necessary sequential steps to complete prior to filing for tax exempt status with the IRS. It was noted that if CoA #3 or CoA #4, each based on a non-profit structure of governance, was identified by the Town Council as the most promising path forward, a Board of Directors (identified as “Incorporators”) would need to be recruited prior to finalizing any plans. It was noted that there was no specific structure required; the Ashland Town Council OR a Library Board could be the “incorporators” forming the Gladys J. Craig Memorial Library non-profit allowing tax-deductible fund-raising and donations. The library could therefore continue to be managed by the Ashland Town Council or by a library governing body. The panel recommends that the “incorporators” include representatives from the subsidy towns to maximize representation of all concerned and contributing citizens.

A sample template of non-profit library by-Laws entitled “The Friends of the Anytown Public Library, Inc. Bylaws” retrieved from the American Library Association website was provided to the group. The document served as a guide for further discussion. Suggested revisions were as follows:

Articles I discussing the name and Article II discussing the purpose, really just needed to be personalized to represent our community library.

Article III discussing membership was edited to state that any person who supports the purposes of the association may become a member of the Association by obtaining a library card and having that membership approved at 3 year intervals (cardholders are currently reviewed every 3 years to check for deaths or residents who move from the area). It was also agreed that there would be no dues; membership would be maintained by a monetary donation “ask” from the surrounding towns. A suggestion was made that the Ashland Municipality would continue to support the salaries and benefits of the municipal employees serving the library. The remainder of the operating budget would be supported by fundraising, grant submissions, etc. with adjustments to the operating budget as necessary.

Article IV—Section 1 was revised to represent to management of the Association by a board of directors which includes 1 representative each from Ashland, Portage, Nashville, Garfield, Masardis, and The County (Oxbow). Sections 2-6 remained intact except to note that all directors’ terms would be 3 years with eligibility for a second term reappointment. Sections 7 & 8 were revised to reflect a nomination process for officers from within the board and from the affected town to identify a new member for the board of directors for the remainder of a vacated term.

Article V, describing duties of officers, were accepted except for a change related to long-term retention of official minutes in corporate offices and the addition of the president’s position to that of the treasurer with regard to check-writing.

Article VI—Section 1 had minor edits for clarity and agreement with other sections; Section 2 rejected the concept of an Executive Leadership Team. The panel agreed that it was the responsibility of the whole board to develop programs, support projects that would increase fundraising, and enhance the visibility of the library and its members.

Article VII was revised to acknowledge the presence of 5 board members to represent a quorum and monthly board meetings. One week advanced notices will be sent regarding annual meetings, regular meetings, and special meetings. Library staff will be invited to participate in board meetings on a non-voting basis.

Article VIII was altered to match the fiscal year of the association to match the Town of Ashland, Jan. 1-Dec. 31.

Articles IX through XI were accepted as written except to replace “Anytown Public Library Corporation, Anytown, MA” with an organization name to be selected by the incorporators of the nonprofit.

A document identifying recommended changes to the “Anytown” Nonprofit Bylaws Template will be provided to all members of the panel prior to the next meeting. This will enable the completion of recommendations re: CoA #3, subject to finalized editing after review of the survey results.

A draft memorandum of agreement for “rental” of the library in the case of Course of Action #4—Municipal transfer to a Private non-profit 501 (c3) status governance will also be written for discussion of CoA #4 at the next work session.

Recorded, Anne Chase

.

