

Rye Public Library Board of Trustees

DRAFT

Minutes for public and non-public session, Thursday, June 5, 2025,

Present: Trustees Michael Moody, Joe Marttila, JoAnn Hodgdon, Julie Tucker, Victor Azzi, Library Director Andrew Richmond and Town Attorney, Eric Maher

Meeting was called to order at 9:00am by JoAnn Hodgdon. Pledge was said.

Motion at 9:02 by Joe Marttila, seconded by Julie Tucker to go into non-public session according to RSA 91-A:3 II(l) Legal. Roll Call: Moody-Yes, Hodgdon-Yes, Azzi-Yes, Marttila-Yes, Tucker-Yes

Trustees get legal advice from town attorney regarding safety, library liability, invasion of privacy and First Amendment issues regarding library sponsored program.

Motion at 10:20 to come out of non-public by Mike Moody, seconded by Joe Marttila and approved.

Motion by Julie Tucker to allow NH Outright to reserve a room at the library for Practical Allyship program as long as they consult with police regarding a safety detail and adhere to occupancy limitations determined by the Rye Fire Department, seconded by Joe Marttila and approved 4-1. Roll call vote- Support: Victor Azzi, Julie Tucker, JoAnn Hodgson, Joe Marttila. Opposed: Michael Moody

Comments and discussion:

Mike Moody: I vehemently believe the trustees decision to cancel sponsorship of the Allyship program is a huge mistake, sullyng the reputation of the library and town. It sends a terrible message to our community and I believe the decision is a result of the trustees bowing to political pressure.

Julie Tucker: As a trustee I am voting against this program because the presenting group has repeatedly brought up safety issues they have had at past events and were looking to “mitigate” attendance of what they consider “bad actors” and “disruptors” in a public place. There was no “bowing to political pressure”. I happily would have had a different program to celebrate and recognize the Pride community in an informative manner without the safety issues and the training agenda of this program.

JoAnn Hodgdon: Continual mention by NH Outright of “bad actors”, “third party security” “known agitators”, the group wanting wanting to share registration list against the First Amendment and invasion of privacy, necessity of police being on heightened risk alert are

all reasons to be concerned about the library sponsoring this program. Due to poor planning, we were put in this situation.

Andy Richmond, director: The decision to abandon this program is a grave mistake for the Rye Public Library and its commitment to the Rye community.

Victor Azzi: This could have been a win/win situation if the trustees were informed five months ago. This did not happen so instead it is a lose/lose.