

From: Elizabeth Thomas, Chair Leach Library Trustees

To: Leach Library Trustees

Subject: Letter of Resignation

March 10, 2026

Under NH State Statutes RSA 202-A:2, 202-A:3, 202-A:6, and other related NH Statutes, and reaffirmed via Case Law (1994 Littleton vs Taylor), the library is a separate and distinct entity from the town. Oversight is provided by elected trustees.

Last year, when most trustee members did not want the position of Chair, I accepted the position and set about providing oversight as required by State Law. I did so with the promise to govern under the state statutes, rules of the NH Library Trustees Association, Leach Library By- Laws, and Leach Library Personnel Policy. I promised to always act in the best interests of our taxpayers and patrons. I also promised myself that I would hold the position of Chair for only one year, no matter the course, and I have virtually accomplished that.

We have an excellent Library that our patrons love. However, during my tenure, I discovered several policies and practices inconsistent with state law, best practices, NH Library Trustees Association rules, Leach Library By-Laws, and Personnel Policy. Attempts were made to correct these inconsistencies, despite much misinformation spread by a trustee. These changes would not have adversely affected the library's services and programs to our patrons but would have aligned practices under the approved guidelines as they should be. The Trustees corrected the handling of funds inconsistent with library policies that would save taxpayer money. Recently, these changes have been overturned by the trustees present.

The Board of Trustees needs to approve spending before the Director can act. This is called oversight and that is the job of the Trustees. Some Trustees disagree with this concept and have sought to take unilateral action and made financial decisions that are unsustainable within our budget and can only lead to increased taxes for our taxpayers. These included approving excessive bonuses and treating salary caps as only a suggestion by distributing checks to bypass the salary limitation. Another questionable practice was to give exempt (salaried) employees administration time for time worked beyond the scheduled time without verified financial oversight.

There has also been a disturbing trend by the town manager to interfere with the independence of the trustees, largely unchecked, that points to his desire to have the library under his control. Our previous Director claimed that she was treated as a valuable member of the Town Manager's staff and met weekly with the Town Manager and took directions from him. While the manager

disclaimed this statement, he continued these meetings and has now started to direct the current library team. This points to his desire to have the library directly report to him.

One example of possible interference was House Bill 1214 submitted locally to Concord that would change the Trustees Board to a figurehead advisory committee, stripping their oversight authority of the library and putting the library directly under the control of the Town Manager. This bill was soundly defeated by the House committee in a unanimous bipartisan vote after over 1000 testimonies were received against its passage. In other examples, the Town Manager has routinely usurped the trustee governing body, disregarding or grossly misinterpreting state law and making decisions on how the library was operating without the approval of the Trustees. Except for the Budget Committee and included in the town budget, all other policies need to be under the control of the elected Trustees.

These actions threaten the authority of the Trustees as a separate entity as required under SB2 town government. As Chair and as a member of the Trustees, I do not condone this trend. I believe the Trustees should resist this practice and take back the oversight authority and work in cooperation with, not direction from, the Town Manager.

For these reasons, I no longer feel comfortable serving under these conditions. Therefore, I am resigning my position as a library Trustee effective immediately and thank those Trustees who have tried to provide oversight as intended by the governing statutes and to act as good stewards of taxpayer money.

Respectively submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elizabeth Thomas".

Elizabeth Thomas
Chair, Leach Library Board of Trustees

Cc: Chairman Dunn, Londonderry Town Council