

# THE SHAKER SOCIETY

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May 11, 2020

ATTN:

PAUL FIRST  
TOWN OF NEW GLOUCESTER SELETMEN  
TOWN OF NEW GLOUCESTER BUDGET COMMITTEE

Dear All,

As concerned citizens of the Town of New Gloucester we would like our voice to be heard on the issue of future library funding.

A library is one of those civic institutions that everyone says they want to support, but when finances are concerned many seem to question its value and importance.

Every town—and especially a rural one such as New Gloucester—needs public spaces where citizens of all backgrounds can meet and connect with each other. These places create vibrancy and a milieu that is sadly becoming increasingly rare in partisan times. Let us come together to protect spaces that encourage residents to connect.

The Sabbathday Lake Shakers and residents of Shaker Village wholeheartedly support maintaining the assistant librarian position and do hope you feel the same.

PEACE,

THE SABBATHDAY LAKE SHAKERS

**To:** New Gloucester Budget Committee Members  
**From:** Dr. Patricia A. Vampatella  
**Date:** May 8, 2020  
**Re:** Library Budget

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Patricia Vampatella a resident of New Gloucester since December of 1974. The Vampatella family have been and still are, are frequent users of the library. Throughout the years I have had the privilege of serving on many of New Gloucester's Town Committees so I am fully aware of the difficult decisions you have had to make.

However, I am truly upset, dismayed, and do not understand the logic behind the decision to recommend such a drastic cut to the Library Budget. I am sure that you are all aware of the vital services that any Public Library provides and in this day and age, where citizens are under assault with untruths, and general ignorance, my opinion is that now, more than ever, libraries are essential institutions because of the myriad services they provide. The drastic personnel cut proposed for our library will greatly inhibit its ability to function as it should.

We all know that aside from the educational services, such as pre-k storytelling, assistance with educational research, and locating important physical health related resources, libraries pay a role in maintaining mental health by acting as a place for community gatherings ex: book clubs for adults and teens. Additionally, many New Gloucester residents take advantage of the library computers, newspapers, journals and other services too numerous to mention.

It takes a staff of knowledgeable and experienced individuals to carry out the functions that can connect communities in a way that benefits everyone. With only two librarians, we are not over staffed. If one position is eliminated, an extraordinary burden would fall on the remaining librarian. Could volunteers assist in filling the gap? To some extent yes. We are fortunate to have the volunteers that we do. However, they will not be able to, nor should be expected to function as a 'true librarian'.

Have the Library Trustees or Budget Committee Members considered applying for grants before recommending this course of action? Have you considered taking out more expenses from other departments to help offset the library costs?

I sincerely implore you to reconsider this budget cut which I feel is shortsighted. At the very least, please consider submitting two budgets, one with the cut and one without, and let the voters determine the final outcome.

Thank you for your consideration in regard to this matter.