

To the Windham Town Council,

The Library Board of Trustees fully, and wholeheartedly, supports the decisions Jen has made regarding the upgrade to the Minerva software as well as the change in library hours. These decisions were not made lightly nor did she make them alone and were made with the benefits to the community in mind.

Before Jen came on board as director, the library was already functioning with fewer staff members than necessary. When Innes retired, the difficult decision was made to close the library on Friday mornings. This was similar to what the town offices did to meet the demands of their own workload. Not everyone liked it, and many complained, but they adjusted. With the current change in library hours, not everyone likes it, and many have complained, and it is our most sincere hope that the Council will find a way to provide the funding to open the library again on Saturdays, but people will adjust. The Board realizes that there are some patrons for whom Saturday was the only day they could use the library, and we are sure the town offices ran into similar complaints when they were working under restricted hours, but people adjusted. It is not ideal but it is necessary given the need to provide a safe working environment and for the staff to work effectively.

The Minerva program, has been seen by many, as the main reason why the library hours were reduced, which is not the case. The decision was based on a current under-staffing, safety, Minerva and budget constraints. In comparison to nine other libraries in our area, we are currently the only library that does not offer this service to its' patrons. Inclusion in the Minerva program will allow patrons to access a much larger database of resources that will keep the patrons, as well as our library, competitive in today's changing world. During the budget season, the request for an additional staff member to help support the Minerva program, as well as make up for a staff deficit, was requested and refused.

Councilor Nadeau has said, "the library has been working on a shoe-string budget and the shoe-string has run out". It is the hope of the Board of Trustees that the Town Council make a commitment to the library, which, given the current upset about hours, is clearly a valuable asset to the community and appropriately allocate funds to support the staffing needs to remain open on Saturdays or support the decision to close on Saturdays until the next budget season.

Sincerely,
The Library Board of Trustees

Robert Rosborough
Flora Woodside
Elizabeth McDougall
Catherine Miller