



Town of Arlington, MA

Poet Laureate Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date: December 3, 2025 — 7:00 PM

Location: Conducted by remote participation

Members Present: Stewart Deck, Lenard Diggins, Amy Hampe, Steven Ratiner

Members Absent: Lidia Kenig-Scher

1) Community time

No members of the community were present.

2) Approve minutes of September 17, 2025 meeting

Mr. Ratiner made a motion to approve the September 17, 2025 meeting minutes. Ms. Hampe seconded. Mr. Deck abstained. The motion passed.

3) Discuss status of Poet Laureate applications and other ways to promote

The committee discussed the January 30, 2026 application deadline. Mr. Ratiner shared that he and Ms. Flanagan had been conducting outreach and were hoping to see at least 2-3 candidates applying after the new year.

Mr. Diggins had previously shared that the Attorney General approved the bylaws, so Ms. Hampe updated the application and website to reflect the new criteria. The committee can share the opportunity with poets outside of Arlington, but as discussed, Arlington residents are given priority consideration.

Ms. Hampe noted that the Library and the Town communications channels have shared the deadline again. Mr. Ratiner will share it with the New England Poetry Club after the new year. All committee members will share to other channels as they can.

4) Updates/questions from the current Poet Laureate

There were no updates or questions as the current Poet Laureate was not in attendance. The committee discussed that at a future meeting the need to confirm Ms. Flanagan would accept the opportunity to join the committee as a former Poet Laureate.

Mr. Ratiner offered to remain engaged as an advisor to the committee, as needed. At a future meeting, the committee can also discuss plans for an event to thank Ms. Flanagan for her successful term and welcome a new Poet Laureate, when selected. Mr. Deck offered to connect the current/future Poet Laureate to those in the school district working on poetry curriculum for elementary schools; this could potentially be an opportunity to engage multiple former Poets Laureate on a project together.

5) New business

There was no new business.

6) Schedule next meeting

The committee agreed to meet on Wednesday, January 7, 2026 at 7:00 pm.

The meeting was adjourned.