

MEETING MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY DIRECTORS

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2023

Bristol Public Library, 5 High Street, Bristol, CT 06010

ATTENDEES: Mayor Jeffrey Caggiano, City Council Liaison Sebastian Panioto, Valina Carpenter, Eric Frenette, Nicholas Jakubowski, Elizabeth Kanachovski, Andrea Kapchensky, Barbara O'Neill, Kimberly Ploszaj, and Pina Salvatore.

Library Director Deborah Prozzo, Assistant Library Director Scott Stanton, and Recording Secretary Ruth Vontell.

Absent: Ashley Verceles

Item 1- Call to order

Chairperson Carpenter called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. and welcomed Mayor Caggiano.

Item 2- Audience Participation

None.

Item 3- Approval of Minutes

Director Kapchensky MOVED to approve minutes of the January 9, 2023 Regular Meeting. Seconded by Director Frenette. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Item 4- Communications

None.

Item 5- Committee Reports

a. Finance Committee

No Report.

(1)Vote to accept or reinvest quarterly distributions from Main Street Community Foundation.

Director Kanachovski MOVED to accept the Bristol Libraries Fund 1st quarter 2023 distribution of \$1,157.50 from the Main Street Community Foundation. Seconded by Director Kapchensky. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Director Jakubowski MOVED to accept the Samuel Goodsell Library Fund 1st quarter 2023 distribution of \$7,765.00 from the Main Street Community Foundation. Seconded by Director Frenette. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Director Frenette MOVED to reinvest the Manross Memorial Library Fund 1st quarter 2023 distribution of \$26,597.50 from the Main Street Community Foundation. Seconded by Director O'Neill. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

b. Property Committee

No Report.

c. Policy Committee

Director Salvatore, Chair of the Policy Committee, which also includes Chairperson Carpenter and Director O'Neill, reported that work is being done to revise, update, and clarify the By-Laws of the Library Board. She thanked all those who attended the informational meeting held at 5:30 p.m. to discuss the research, comments and recommendations. The Policy Committee will meet again next month at the same time, just prior to the regularly scheduled Board Meeting. Attendance is appreciated.

d. Strategic Planning Committee

Chairperson Carpenter noted that this committee still needs to schedule an informational meeting. Review of the Strategic Plan was postponed last year due to Covid, but needs to be completed by the end of this calendar year.

Item 6- Ad-Hoc Committee Reports

a. Director's Report

1) December 2022 statistics highlights:

- Overall circulation is up by 11%
- Internet usage by the public increased 12%
- Computer Lab usage is up 29%
- Number of programs is up by 4% and attendance doubled
- Patron visits increased by 19%
- WiFi sessions were up 34%
- Meeting Room attendance was up 13%

Director O'Neill is impressed by the big increase in attendance at Children's and Young Adult programs. Library Director Prozzo stated that families are feeling more comfortable coming into the building.

We've been fine-free for a few months now which has resulted in an increase in foot traffic, as well as library card registrations and renewals.

Around the holidays, the Circulation Dept. sent emails to patrons with expiring library cards, which resulted in a huge number of renewals. Library cards are good for 3 years. A similar reminder email will be sent at the beginning of summer.

2) Monthly Budget Report: Spending in all departments is on track for this point in the fiscal year. Revenue is way up due to copy/printing fees and meeting room rentals. As of 2/3/2023:

- 83.1% - Library Revenue
- 61.1% - Main Library
- 87.8% - Children's Library
- 64.3% - Manross Library
- 51.4% - Library Trust Funds

Regarding the year-to-date budget, we are watching our public utilities and rising natural gas prices. Fortunately, now that we are with CT Solar, we may see a savings of \$10,000 or more on our Eversource bills, although this is weather-dependent and we don't have a year's worth of data yet. AFSME Local 233 settled their contract so the four wage line items will be impacted. We are also closely watching the professional fees line item since the cost of our security guards has gone up as of January 1st. Next fiscal year, we may need to seek out additional funding through grants or the Friends of the Library to pay for some programs.

Much of the Children's Library budget is encumbered with Baker & Taylor for the purchase of books and DVDs.

A water pipe burst over the weekend at Manross and we are short in the water and sewer line item. **Director Frenette MOVED to transfer \$200.00 from Repairs and Maintenance to the Water and Sewer line item for Manross. Seconded by Director O'Neill. All in favor. None opposed. Motion Passed.**

Manross is not a beneficiary of the solar program, which was negotiated under the previous administration. Our solar comes from Bethlehem, CT. Mayor Caggiano stated that there are solar panels on Stafford School and the City is looking into using solar panels at the landfill. He suggested speaking with Attorney Tom Conlin and the Energy Commission regarding solar credits.

Goodsell Trust Funds are used mainly to purchase nonfiction and reference materials, and to pay for databases. Bristol Libraries Trust Fund money was used to upgrade the audio in meeting room #1 at the Main Library with four speakers, wireless microphones, and a new wall switch. We have two more rooms to go when funding becomes available. Seth Ramos is our on-site IT employee who helps to maintain the system.

Ruth and I met with the Comptroller's Dept. and Dave Maikowski of the Board of Finance to review the 2023-2024 Library Budget. It was a productive, one-hour meeting. The Library Budget has always been lean and we are very resourceful. We are respectful of the mayor's request to look at efficiencies and reductions.

The library's budget hearing before the Board of Finance is scheduled for Thursday, March 2 at 6:00 p.m. in Meeting Room #1 at City Hall West. Anyone's welcome to come. A snapshot

of our library will be presented which contains statistics that are reported to the State Library in the Annual Report which contains 300 questions. Bristol is doing very well when compared to other CT libraries with a similar population and Angelic Ranking, which is a measure of wealth in a community. Our numbers are strong and trending upward, especially circulation and program attendance. We are rebounding after Covid and are optimistic.

3) Highlights of library activities:

- Valerie Toner, Supervisor of Children's Services, has written a Dollar General grant which will go to the City Council on February 14, 2023 for approval and hopefully for the mayor's signature.
- The Library and Public Works Department have partnered to introduce a Seed Library. The former card catalogs will be repurposed to store vegetable, herb and flower seed packets. Patrons with valid Bristol Public Library cards will be able to check out 5 seed packets. Lindsey Rivers from PW secured funding from Covanta and I have applied to get 200 free seed packets from UCONN Extension Services which has a program that distributes seeds from Ocean State Job Lot. There will be a Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony on Thursday, February 23, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. in the lobby of the Main Library followed by a presentation by Dan Williams on square foot gardening.
- The Main Library is now officially designated as a CTLAB Hub Library. The Connecticut Library for Accessible Books (CTLAB), formerly the Connecticut State Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, lends books and magazines in braille and recorded audio formats, free of charge, to any CT resident who is unable to read regular print. Related materials and equipment are on display next to the Reference Desk on the second floor. Patrons register with CTLAB and materials are mailed to them or downloaded to their computers or mobile devices.
- The library truck is in production with Blasius Chevrolet and Action Glass. We have a P.O. We hope it ships by the end of the fiscal year in time for the start of the Farmers' Market in order to promote library services.

4) Staff News: Susan Bernier, Technical Services Coordinator, has accepted a position out of state. Her last day was Friday, February 3, 2023. The position has been posted internally. The closing date is tomorrow. Internal candidates will be given an oral exam, or it will get posted out to the public.

Chairperson Carpenter publicly thanked Debbie Prozzo and her staff for being creative, resourceful, and very dedicated.

b. City Council Liaison Report

Council Liaison Panioto recommended that library staff be trained to use the Automated External Defibrillator (AED) devices which the libraries received from Harley Graime of Bristol CERT. He has spoken with Fire Chief Hart, Fire Captain Blaschke, and Mark Penney, Director of Human Resources. He requested that we determine how many people are interested in learning to use the pads. Director Ploszaj volunteered to teach CPR classes. Mayor Caggiano noted that the Senior Center and other city departments might want to get involved. Director Jakubowski mentioned a community need for NARCAN training. Discussion followed regarding 911 calls and the new technology available to assist first responders.

c. Friends of the Library Report

Director Salvatore reported that the Friends are looking forward to another successful Used Book Sale which will take place from March 1st to March 5th. The books are reasonably priced and many are like new. The proceeds support library programs. Rose Ann Chatfield has an organized schedule of volunteers.

d. Community Outreach Committee Report

Director Kanachovski and Valerie Toner discussed working on a grant to have a Nutmeg Author Event for elementary students, and eventually for middle school students. The author would speak and sell his/her books, perhaps on a Saturday.

Item 7- Old Business

None.

Item 8- New Business

None.

Item 9- Adjournment

Chairperson Carpenter thanked Mayor Caggiano for attending the meeting and he thanked the Library Board for all their good work. There being no further business, **Director Kapchensky made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting at 7:26 p.m. Seconded by Director Frenette. All present voted in favor and the meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Vontell

This meeting was digitally recorded.