

MEETING MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY DIRECTORS

MONDAY, MARCH 6, 2023

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

ATTENDEES: Valina Carpenter, Nicholas Jakubowski, Andrea Kapchensky, Barbara O'Neill (via Zoom), Kimberly Ploszaj, Pina Salvatore, Ashley Verceles, and City Council Liaison Sebastian Panioto.
Library Director Deborah Prozzo, Assistant Library Director Scott Stanton, and Recording Secretary Ruth Vontell.
Absent: Eric Frenette and Elizabeth Kanachovski

Item 1- Call to order

Chairperson Carpenter called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

Item 2- Audience Participation

None.

Item 3- Approval of Minutes

Director Salvatore MOVED to approve the minutes of the February 6, 2023 Regular Meeting. Seconded by Director Jakubowski. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Item 4- Communications

None.

Item 5- Committee Reports

a. Finance Committee

No Report.

b. Property Committee

No Report.

c. Policy Committee

An informational meeting was held at 5:30 p.m. just prior to this Library Board Meeting to discuss any additional comments, recommendations, and changes to the blacklined copy of the Library Board By-laws, which Director Salvatore sent to all the Library Board members. The timetable for completion includes presenting a final version in April, voting to adopt in May, and having the revised By-laws go into effect on July 1, 2023.

d. Strategic Planning Committee

No Report.

Chairperson Carpenter suggested that the committee meet prior to the next Library Board Meeting to set out the priorities for the coming year.

Item 6- Ad-Hoc Committee Reports

a. Directors Report

1) January statistics highlights:

- Overall circulation is up by 17%
- Electronic resources usage is up 3%-34%
- Database usage has increased by 35% which is partially due to the addition of *The New York Times*
- Interlibrary loans are up 25% as borrower and 20% as lender
- New library card registrations increased 59%. Our target goal for the year is for 30% of the Bristol population to have a library card.
- Patron visits are up by 31%
- Number of overall programs increased by 17% and attendance by 115%, which is due in part to Sunday hours. This is really encouraging because the staff have worked really hard to get patrons back into the building.
- Wi-Fi sessions numbered 7,015 which is the highest monthly count to date. We are able to track the peak times which include lunchtime and evenings.

2) Year-to-Date Budget Report: Library revenue is way up even though we are fine free. There is more foot traffic. Copier and printing charges increased 84.6% and meeting room rentals have increased 520%. Spending in all departments is on track. The numbers are almost identical to last year's. While it appears that we've overspent on the "Other Wages" line item at both libraries, this is due to the bonuses that were part of the new union contracts. The Comptroller will adjust this at the end of the fiscal year. The Trust Funds are also in excellent shape.

I presented the Library Budget before the Board of Finance on Thursday, March 2nd at 6:00 pm and wish to thank Andrea Kapchensky and Pina Salvatore for attending. I provided an overview of our current fiscal year goals and accomplishments, as well as next year's requests. This was followed by questions from the Board. A suggestion was made to raise the price charged for patron printing from 15 cents to 20 cents per page. The Library Board will need to take this into consideration and weigh in on it because it is in the Policy Manual. A member of the Board of Finance also brought up the possibility of closing the Manross branch and having only one library because the activity level in that building may not justify the expenses. The Board of Finance members were each given an "edible library card" (cookie) and a lantern because in the words of best-selling author Chris Bohjalian, "Libraries are beacons of light in a world gone dark."

Highlights of library activities:

- The library received newspaper and NBC channel 30 television press coverage of a special event held on Sunday, February 19, 2023 to honor local WWII veterans on the 78th anniversary of Iwo Jima. Over 90 people attended.
- There was an article in *The Bristol Press* about the Ribbon Cutting for the Seed Library. The seed supply has been replenished twice already with approximately 175 patrons checking out 605 seed packets. MaryLynne Boisvert is keeping inventory in the Circulation Department. It's also been a way to repurpose our old card catalog which is a nice piece of furniture.
- More than 290 patrons took advantage of Sunday hours on March 5, 2023. Many attended the Friends of the Library Used Book Bag Sale.
- The 2023 Author Luncheon Committee will be meeting on Wednesday, March 8, 2023 with Director of Sales, Christine Malay, and Chef Lexi at the DoubleTree by Hilton to make menu selections. At some point we will be doing an author reveal.
- Negotiations are underway for the October 2024 Author Luncheon. Library Director Prozzo will be asking the Friends to front the deposit. She will then request that the Library Board release Trust Fund money to reimburse the Friends and for final payment.
- Plans are being made for an author event for young adults in middle and high school. Library Director Prozzo reached out to our literary booking agent who provided a comprehensive list of "Kid Lit Authors" in our price range. We are doing some research and may write a CT Humanities grant or a Main Street Community Foundation grant to cover the cost.

3) Staff News: Courtney Hanson was promoted to Technical Services Coordinator after Susan Bernier left. Courtney's former position of Library Technical Services Clerk has been posted internally.

b. City Council Liaison Report

Council Liaison Panioto reported that the City Cemetery Commission will be hosting an event at the library on Saturday, March 11, 2023 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Mike Saman thanks the library for use of the meeting rooms. *The Bristol Press* had a nice article about the program. Ruth Brown will speak about conservation efforts to preserve historic burying grounds. They are expecting a good crowd.

c. Friends of the Library

Director Salvatore and Director Kapchensky would like to have a copy of *Robert's Rules of Order 12th edition* available for use by the Library Board members at future Library Board meetings.

The Friends of the Bristol Public Library Used Book Sale was very successful. There were more books, shoppers, and sales than last year, although it's hard to compare because Covid was still a factor last year. Rose Ann Chatfield is working on final totals and wants to thank the library administration and staff for their support of the event.

The Annual Friends Meeting will be held on April 22, 2023 with the election of officers. You must be a member to attend, but it is possible to become a member that day.

National Library Week is April 23-29, 2023. The theme is: "There's More to the Story." National Library Workers Day is April 25, 2023. Rose Ann Chatfield will plan something for the staff in celebration.

Director Salvatore is a Friend and the Coordinator of the Bookstore. Volunteers can join at any time.

d. Community Outreach Committee Report

No Report.

Item 7- Old Business

None.

Item 8- New Business

Chairperson Carpenter would like to add an item to next month's Agenda. A Nominating Committee needs to be appointed at next month's meeting in preparation for the elections in June.

Item 9- Adjournment

There being no further business, **Director Kapchensky made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 p.m. Seconded by Director Jakubowski. All present voted in favor and the meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Vontell

This meeting was digitally recorded.