

MEETING MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY DIRECTORS

MONDAY, JANUARY 8, 2024

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

ATTENDEES: Valina Carpenter, Nicholas Jakubowski, Andrea Kapchensky, Kimberly Ploszaj, Pina Salvatore, and Council Liaison Sebastian Panioto.

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

Absent: Eric Frenette, Elizabeth Kanachovski, Barbara O'Neill, and Diane Salmoiraghi

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 Kapchensky MOVED to approve the Minutes of the December 4, 2023 Regular Meeting. Seconded by Director Ploszaj. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Item 4- Communications

- a. Library Director Prozzo received an email from Patti Philippon, Executive Director of The American Clock & Watch Museum, thanking us for participating in the sixth annual Mantels for the Season. A record number of people attended and the Bristol Public Library's mantel was voted the visitors' favorite. A photo of the mantel is on the museum's Facebook page along with several "likes."
- b. Library Director Prozzo received an email from Joanna Ziarnik and Melissa Murphy, staff members at the Meriden Public Library who are redoing their Strategic Plan. They thanked her and Assistant Library Director Stanton for meeting with them regarding meeting room policies and programming issues. They left with helpful takeaways from the discussion and tour.
- c. Library Director Prozzo received and read correspondence from Main Street Community Foundation dated January 5, 2024 regarding quarterly distributions from the trust funds.

Director Jakubowski MOVED to accept the Bristol Libraries Fund 1st quarter 2024 distribution of \$1,157.50. Seconded by Director Kapchensky. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Director Ploszaj MOVED to accept the Samuel Goodsell Library Fund 1st quarter 2024 distribution of \$7,765.00. Seconded by

Director Jakubowski. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Director Ploszaj MOVED to reinvest the Manross Memorial Library Fund 1st quarter 2024 distribution of \$27,090.00. Seconded by Director Kapchensky. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Discussion followed regarding some fairly large recent expenditures (Author Luncheon deposit, Hoopla content, Hartley Lock & Key project) and the possibility of accepting the Manross Memorial Library 2nd quarter 2024 distribution in April after identifying meaningful projects. We need to account for the fact that Main Street Community Foundation runs on the calendar year, but the City of Bristol uses the fiscal year.

There are two rather urgent HVAC and mechanical projects at Manross. The heating units are original to the building and date back to 1975. Dave Oakes, City of Bristol Facilities Manager, is getting a quote for the work. Library Director Prozzo recommends using Frederick Manross Trust Fund money to cover these particular repairs. There's a little over \$400,000 in this interest-bearing account.

Director Kapchensky suggested purchasing the children's book written recently to honor the memory of the two fallen Bristol police officers and adding it to the library collection. Assistant Library Director Stanton will look into it.

Item 5- Committee Reports

a. Finance Committee

No Report.

b. Property Committee

No Report.

c. Policy Committee

No Report.

d. Strategic Planning Committee

No Report.

Item 6- Ad-Hoc Committee Reports

a. Library Director's Report

1) November 2023 statistics highlights:

- Overall circulation, including online content, was up 5%.
- Reference questions increased by 20%
- Number of adult programs went up 35%

- Bristol History Room numbers are still struggling. Library Director Prozzo met with Claire Strillacci, Reference Department Supervisor, and there is now a plan in place to turn these numbers around.
- Library card registrations dipped by 2%. The preliminary draft of the State Report shows that this is an unfortunate trend throughout the state. Please spread the word about all the free resources available to you with a library card. We really want to increase the number of card-holders in Bristol.
- Assistant Library Director Stanton sent a general email regarding free online Universal classes. Chairperson Carpenter viewed the catalog and immediately found 10 courses she's interested in taking.
- Computer Lab numbers are not as strong as we'd like to see. They decreased by 7%.
- Wi-Fi sessions dipped by 12%
- Website Visits: 38,937. We generally get 37,000 - 43,000 hits per month.
- Hoopla usage was up 29% with a record number of items checked out: 1,077. Audiobooks circulate the most.
- The online versions of *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal* have proven to be a good return on our investment. There are hundreds of hits per month. Ancestry numbers are not quite as high since it must be used on-site. Goodsell trust fund money is often used to pay for online databases.

2) Year-to-Date Budget Report:

- Revenue is higher than usual at \$11,244.73. Because we are @ 93.7% at the halfway point in the fiscal year, we may be able to double it. Reasonable copy charges bring people in.
- Main Library is @ 54% used. The savings with CT Solar is amazing.
- Children's Library looks good @ 78.7%.
- Manross Library is @ 55.7%. Library Director Prozzo wishes we could have gotten on the solar program at the branch.
- Library Trusts are @ 41.4%. Goodsell-Program Supplies are @ 45.5%. We have a little over \$31,000 available in that account. Main Library Miscellaneous has \$5,591 available which we may use to upgrade the A/V in Meeting Rooms 2 and/or 3.
- Library Director Prozzo has a Budget Review appointment with the Comptroller's Department, the Mayor, and the Chairman of the Board of Finance on Thursday, January 18, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. The Budget Entry due date is January 12th but it was submitted before the holidays.

- 3) Sunday Hours: Sunday hours were supposed to start yesterday but we were unable to open due to the snowstorm. This is unfortunate because the Friends had something special planned. One of our most popular programs last month during the holiday vacation week was Chinese Acrobat Li Liu. We had 92 people in attendance. This event was sponsored with a grant from CT Humanities.
- 4) Staff News: Graham Dudley resigned so we are down a custodian. The job was posted and we conducted an internal exam. We hired the temporary custodian who worked here late in the fall. He will start on January 23, 2024. Also, Erin Shapland resigned as Reference Assistant. We have interviews scheduled for tomorrow. We hope to fill that position soon. There's been lots of turnover in the Reference Department.

b. City Council Liaison Report

Since the first of the year, there have been Capital Improvement and Strategic Planning Committee meetings regarding the funding of big, multi-million-dollar projects, including Firehouse Building 3 and Northeast Middle School. Tough decisions are being made.

One of City Council Liaison Sebastian Panioto's new co-workers, who just moved to Bristol from out of state, visited the library with his daughter and was very impressed.

c. Friends of the Library

The Friends have a new tri-fold brochure with a membership application on the back that's ready for distribution. Rose Ann Chatfield is working on getting a shorter version printed on cardstock. Director Salvatore thanked the library staff for their input on this project, especially Talyn Estores in the Circulation Department who provided formatting and other technical assistance. Consider becoming a member of the Friends.

The bookstore has new Saturday hours. Mary Jane, who volunteered on the first Saturday, reported that it went well. There were a couple sales and two new customers.

The holiday lobby sales in December at both libraries were an outstanding success. Over thirty boxes of books were sold. The money raised was double that of last year: \$1,730.00 at the Main Library and \$1,249.00 at Manross. Director Salvatore thanked Sheila and Rose Ann and recognized them for constantly restocking the tables with new items. She also acknowledged the library staff who served as gracious cashiers. Chairperson Carpenter, who shopped at the sale and in the bookstore, purchased gifts for the five little ones in her family. She thanked the Friends.

The winter book sale will be held in the meeting rooms on the lower level of the Main Library from February 28, 2024 to March 3, 2024. It begins with a preview sale (\$5.00 admission) and ends with a bag sale (\$5.00 per bag). There will be over 8,000 books, LP vinyl records, boxed sets and specials. There are no buyer restrictions and debit/credit cards will be accepted. Hours are as follows: Wednesday 2/28 - 3 pm to 7 pm, Thursday 2/29 - 9 am to 7 pm, Friday 3/1 & Saturday 3/2 - 9 am to 4 pm, and Sunday 3/3 from 1 pm to 3 pm.

The next Friends meeting will be held on January 18th at 6:00 p.m. at the Main Library with a snow date of January 25th. If you're not a member, you can come and join that night.

Assistant Library Director Stanton thanked the Friends for all their help with the opening program for Winter Reading: Tea & Trivia. The volunteers who make reminder phone calls, provide hospitality, staff the bookstore, etc. are very much appreciated. Pina Salvatore and Marie Baptist are doing an outstanding job organizing the volunteers.

d. Community Outreach Committee Report

Library Director Prozzo reported that in addition to decorating a mantel at The American Clock & Watch Museum, the library will participate in "CT 250" as a means of getting out into the community. Assistant Library Director Stanton already attended one meeting and the next meeting is scheduled for January 18, 2024 at 6:30 p.m.

Seth Ramos, our Computer Lab Supervisor, will be doing a computer/technology program for the residents at Gaylord Towers. The community outreach truck will bring additional materials and resources that day.

Item 7- Old Business

None.

Item 8- New Business

None.

Item 9- Adjournment

There being no further business, **Director Jakubowski made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:13 p.m. Seconded by Director Ploszaj. All present voted in favor and the meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Vontell

This meeting was digitally recorded.