

MEETING MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY DIRECTORS

MONDAY, MAY 6, 2024

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

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

Item 1- Call to order

Chairperson Carpenter called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

Item 2- Public Participation

None.

Item 3- Approval of Minutes

Director Kapchensky MOVED to approve the Minutes of the April 1, 2024 Regular Meeting. Seconded by Director Frenette. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Item 4- Communications

Library Director Prozzo received a letter from Ellie Wilson thanking her and the library staff during National Library Week for all they do for the city of Bristol. This exemplifies what "all-heart" means.

Library Director Prozzo and Assistant Library Director Stanton received a thank you letter from Chris Amorosino from First Congregational Church which included a \$100 donation in appreciation for the help he received from the staff in setting up the meeting room for the Men's Fellowship Retreat. He said everyone was "helpful, productive, and encouraging." He received assistance with the technology, found the kitchen clean and convenient, and was grateful we opened early for him on Saturday.

Library Director Prozzo received communication acknowledging that Main Street Community Foundation had sent quarterly trust fund distribution checks to the City of Bristol Comptroller's Office.

Item 5- Reports and Committee Reports

a. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee held an informational conversation just prior to this Library Board meeting to discuss using a donate button on the library website. They've been told that the city is in favor. There are questions regarding possible providers and methods like Pay Pal and Square, linking the button to a

specific fund, perhaps moving the Centennial Fund, which is earmarked for the Main Library and held by the city, to Main Street Community Foundation to start earning interest on the approximately \$150,000 in the account, and receiving reports of the donations. Library Director Prozzo will draft an email to the Comptroller and include Marie O'Brien, Board of Finance Liaison.

b. Property Committee

No Report.

Director Kapchensky stated that the new carpet on the second floor looks very nice and encouraged everyone to take a look.

c. Policy Committee

No Report.

d. Strategic Planning Committee

No Report.

Director Frenette MOVED to change the Agenda order and jump to Section 6. b. Old Business to allow the guest speaker from Air Temp to give his presentation. Seconded by Director Kapchensky. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

e. Director's Report

1) March statistics highlights:

- Overall circulation is down by 2%
- Database usage increased by 59%
- Number of programs decreased by 8%
- Number in attendance increased by 24%
- Patron Registrations decreased by 26%
- Patron visits increased by 4% (We have good foot traffic. The study rooms are used heavily. The Friends' Café and lobby are busy. Weather is a factor.)
- Internet usage by the public increased by 64%
- Wi-Fi sessions numbered 12,305
- Website visits numbered 45,393

2) Monthly Budget Report: We are now in the fourth quarter. We're wrapping up the fiscal year. We are on track in most areas. I'm reviewing the budget daily now and will do some transfers. Some overtime wages will be moved to "other wages" to cover the 2 staff members who sold back vacation time per their contract. Program supply money will be moved to "printing and binding" to cover an additional \$700 in expenses.

- Library Revenue - collected 156.7% of anticipated amount
- Main Library - spent 78.4%
- Children's Library - spent 75.8%
- Manross Library - spent 78.4%
- Goodsell Trust Fund - spent 57.9% and Main Library Miscellaneous Trust Fund - spent 10.4%. Both will carry over to the new fiscal year.

3) Highlights of library activities for April:

- Our first ever Youth Author Literary Luncheon was a huge success. We had 86 participants. Dr. LaRocca was engaging and even sat with the children during lunch. This was a team effort. The Children's Department did an exceptional job securing food/donations. Perhaps we will do it again.
- The mayor read a proclamation in honor of National Library Week and the Friends provided the staff with a pizza luncheon on National Library Workers Day. Thank you!
- April was Passport to CT Libraries month. Patrons went library to library receiving stamps and small tokens. We gave out 136 passports and we stamped 504.
- The Seed Library is very successful. Bristol residents can select 5 packets, and so far, we have checked out over 1,500.
- I met with Francis Cohen on Friday, April 26th. He's done extensive research on the mileage marker showing the distance to Hartford (county seat) that was in front of Taco Bell on Route 6. It was in danger of being destroyed. He rescued it and would like to find a home for it. It is one of the last such markers left in the state. The mayor expressed interest in displaying it here at the library and we are now waiting on the paperwork. It's a nice piece of art history that's in fairly good condition. It cannot be kept outside. We'll need a glass case for it so the general public can view it.

- 4) Staff News: Alexandra Holley was promoted to Floater/Children's Assistant so we now have a vacant Children's Assistant position. The posting went up internally.
- 5) Summer Hours begin the week of June 10th and run through Labor Day. The library will be open Monday through Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and Fridays from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The library is closed on Saturdays in the summer.
- 6) Adult Author Luncheon: Plans are being finalized. The event will take place on Thursday, October 10th at the DoubleTree. Doors open at 11:30 a.m. Menu details are being worked out. The author will be announced sometime in July and tickets go on sale August 1st.

f. City Council Liaison Report

Council Liaison Panioto reported that a bill in the State House which would have given agency to municipalities to negotiate prices and fees paid to publishers for e-books did not pass. Connecticut would have been the first state to do this. Currently there are 169 cities and towns with lots of different negotiations. It might help if other states got on board. The issue is on pause, but we should keep it on our radar.

Library Director Prozzo confirmed that libraries have been unsuccessful in gaining any buying power through LCI or the state. E-books are a huge part of our circulation but they are very costly and eat up our budget. Municipal libraries are being taken advantage of by being charged a higher amount for e-books than the public pays. Director Jakubowski pointed out that many people can access and read library purchased e-books so the publishers who are in business to make a profit are actually losing money. Director Kanachovski suggested that school boards join libraries to take a more powerful stand with publishers.

g. Friends of the Library

The Friends will attend the Cultural District Festival on Federal Hill on June 8th. The library will also participate.

The Friends purchased handouts for the Star Wars event at BAIMS on May 4th.

The Friends will partner with the library at the Farmers' Market. Assistant Library Director Stanton noted that no dates have been assigned yet but we hope to attend twice a month.

The Friends have set their next three meeting dates at the Main Library: 9/12/24, 1/16/25 (with a 1/23/25 snow date), and 4/26/25 which is the annual meeting with the election of officers. The September and January meetings will begin at 6:00 p.m. and the April meeting will begin at 10:00 a.m.

The summer book sale in the lobby will take place June 7th - 21st.

On August 1st, the Friends will help sell tickets for the Annual Author Luncheon. Last year over 100 tickets were sold on the first day.

When Director Salvatore attended a program a few weeks ago, a patron mentioned that she loves the Bristol Public Library. She comes from out of town to participate in the programs.

h. Community Outreach Committee Report

Director Kanachovski was pleased that the Youth Author Event was such a success. It went pretty well. The room was full, there was lots of donated food, and the staff did a great job. The author, who has some new books coming out, is the mother of 3 kids so she was able to relate to the children in attendance even though they were younger than our target age of 9-11-year-

olds. Director Kanachovski thanked Library Director Prozzo for releasing funds for this program because you never know what kind of effect it might have on a child who will hopefully return to the library as an adult. Chairperson Carpenter thanked Director Kanachovski for seeing this project through.

Director Kanachovski has noticed a new energy at Manross when she visits the branch. Beth Martin is doing a very good job.

Item 6- Old Business

- a. Action on the use of a donate button on the library website was tabled until the June meeting while answers to various questions are sought.
- b. Rick from Air Temp provided information and answered questions about the HVAC perimeter units at Manross which work off of a hot water boiler downstairs and are located under the windows. Five of the fourteen units from 1975 were replaced in 2004. The new units will have 15,000 BTUs instead of 14,000 BTUs. The life expectancy of these units is 15-20 years but there are no guarantees. Third party warranties can be purchased. Unfortunately, there are no energy rebates. New enclosures can be added for an additional cost but they are not necessary. The disruption to library services should be minimal. Rick will submit an updated quote with the correct number of units and an accurate price per unit.

There was also some discussion regarding the main air handler up above in the loft, the compressor, thermostats, temperature checks, the location and grouping of the switches/controls, multi-speed fans, efficiency, and keeping the system operational versus rehabbing the building with costly engineering calculations and modifications.

Mark Bolduc, Senior Maintenance Technician, was present for this presentation and contributed to the discussion.

Item 7- New Business

None.

Item 8- Adjournment

There being no further business, **Director Jakubowski made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m. Seconded by Director Frenette. All present voted in favor and the meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Vontell

This meeting was digitally recorded.