

MEETING MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY DIRECTORS

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2024

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

ATTENDEES: Valina Carpenter, Eric Frenette, Nicholas Jakubowski, Thomas Jensen, Andrea Kapchensky, Barbara O'Neill, Kimberly Ploszaj, and Pina Salvatore.

City Council Liaison Sebastian Panioto
Library Director Deborah Prozzo

Absent: Elizabeth Kanachovski
Assistant Library Director Scott Stanton

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 from the October 7, 2024 Regular Meeting. Seconded by Director O'Neill. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Item 6- Old Business

Director Jakubowski MOVED to move Item 6- Old Business after Item 3- Approval of Minutes. Seconded by Director Ploszaj. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Discussion followed regarding use of the library as an emergency overnight shelter during the Governor's cold weather protocol declarations. Harley Graime was present to answer questions.

Chairperson Carpenter summarized the action items. We need to get more clarity from corporation counsel regarding liability for injuries or damages and we need to talk with either the mayor or Human Resources about union issues involving overtime for staff - not only payment, but also what to do if the library custodians are unavailable.

Harley is making revisions to his draft guidelines document and will get copies to Chairperson Carpenter and Library Director Prozzo.

Item 4- Communications

Library Director Prozzo stated that we received an email from the Town & City Clerk requesting that we set our board calendar for next year. Director Kapchensky reviewed the dates.

Director Kapchensky MOVED to approve the 2025 Library Board Meeting Calendar. Seconded by Director Frenette. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Item 5- Reports and Committee Reports

a. Finance Committee

Library Director Prozzo got an email this morning from Dave at CT Web Factory. He was able to get us up to 100% compliance on website accessibility from the back end. We also have the overlay from UserWay on top. We now have a low lawsuit risk. Unfortunately, Seth Ramos, our IT Specialist, has left the library, so no one is currently working on the donate button, however, Library Director Prozzo did some research regarding the Centennial Fund and found the correct contributions account that we would link to eventually. There are three accounts within the Centennial Fund: the interest income account, the expense account with \$143,000, and the contributions account which currently has no money in it. Corp Counsel Tom Conlin has taken the lead in communicating with Attorney Favazza regarding website compliance. The library is done with its piece.

b. Property Committee

Director Kapchensky had a couple updates. We got notification that the estimated shipping date of the HVAC units for Manross is around the second week of December. A couple weeks ago, she met with Library Director Prozzo, Beth Martin, and Rose Ann Chatfield to discuss the Cawley donation. The Parks Dept. has put us in contact with someone who does landscape design. Rose Ann would like to get something to the board before the end of the year.

c. Policy Committee

No report.

d. Strategic Planning Committee

No report.

e. Library Director's Report

1) September statistics: There's nothing really out of the ordinary. Overall circulation was down by 1%, but Hoopla and Kanopy were up by 55%. We were busy in the Reference Department with more activity in the Bristol History Room. The staff in that department have helped out immensely. Our programming numbers are up, especially attendance numbers in all the departments. Unfortunately, foot traffic was down by 8%, but WiFi sessions and website visits were up significantly. The WiFi sessions were up by 221%! The library is being used differently.

- 2) Monthly Budget Report: As of October 29, 2024, everything is right on line with last year.

Library Director Prozzo discovered that some of our Main Street quarterly distributions were put into the wrong accounts. She notified the Comptroller's Office. Also, the Manross Miscellaneous distribution for the 3rd quarter went into the Frederick Manross trust fund, so we fixed that, too.

Library Director Prozzo discussed a few line items in the 2026 budget that might have increases or decreases. The two unions that impact library staff are negotiating contracts that will be up as of June 30, 2025, so salaries will need to be adjusted. Also, minimum wage goes up January 1st. She sees some possible reductions in public utilities. There's an increase in the telephone line item and also in printing and binding. She will make predictions based on the past. The funds for the children's department look sufficient for programs and materials. Manross may need more in natural gas and utilities because they don't have solar. LCI membership is going up 2.9% to approximately \$53,000. She has no projections about revenue yet. The library generally holds the line. She will have a firm budget ready for the board to vote on in December.

3) Highlights:

- Author Luncheon: Library Director Prozzo thanked the board for their support and those who were able to come to the event. We had 310 people in attendance. It was the highest attended luncheon since we've been doing this. The feedback was phenomenal. It was a huge success and great PR for both the library and the community. She is working on the Author Luncheon for 2025. We have the opportunity to host another huge *New York Times* bestselling author for an extremely reasonable price on June 5, 2025 at the DoubleTree. The Friends are funding \$4,000 towards it and we have funds available to cover the rest.
- Sunday Hours: The Main Library will be open on Sundays from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. starting on January 5, 2025 and running through March 23, 2025.

4) Staff news:

- Mark Bolduc, our Senior Maintenance Technician, is still out on extended leave. We have no return-to-work date.
- Valerie Toner, Supervisor of Children's Services, is out on extended leave, possibly as late as February.
- We have a computer lab vacancy.
- Assistant Library Director Scott Stanton is out for the month of November.

f. City Council Liaison Report

No Report.

g. Friends of the Library Report

Director Salvatore reported that the Friends will hold a holiday sale in the lobbies of both libraries in the month of December.

Director Salvatore announced that the Friends and the Library Board recognized Deb and Scott in a brief ceremony on Saturday, November 2nd for their contributions to the library, which led them to receiving two awards.

Director Salvatore stated that the Author Luncheon held on October 10th was successful and well-attended thanks to all the hard work done by Deb and the library staff. She also thanked the Friends who volunteered their time at the event.

h. Community Outreach Committee Report

Library Director Prozzo reported that the library did nine Farmers' Markets this year and partnered with the Friends. We made over 120 library cards and saw hundreds of people.

Item 7- New Business

Director Frenette MOVED to close the library on Wednesday, November 27, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. for Thanksgiving Eve. Seconded by Director Jakubowski. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Library Director Prozzo will ask Susan Sadecki of Main Street Community Foundation to do a financial presentation at the January 2025 Library Board meeting.

Item 8- Adjournment

There being no further business, **Director Kapchensky MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m. Seconded by Director Jakubowski. All present voted in favor and the meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Vontell

This meeting was digitally recorded.