

MEETING MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY DIRECTORS

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2025

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

ATTENDEES: Valina Carpenter, Eric Frenette, Nicholas Jakubowski, Elizabeth Kanachowski, Andrea Kapchensky, Barbara O'Neill, Kimberly Ploszaj, Danielle Rivard, Pina Salvatore, and City Council Liaison Sebastian Panioto.

Library Director Deborah Prozzo and Assistant Library Director Scott Stanton.

One virtual guest via Zoom.

Absent: None.

Item 1- Call to order

Chairperson Carpenter called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

Item 2- Public Participation

None.

Susan Sadecki, President and CEO of the Main Street Community Foundation, and Rhonda Pilkington, the Director of Finance, gave the annual report on the library trust funds. They discussed use of the funds, spending policies, distributions, balances, rates of return, asset allocation, advisors, endowment growth, and administrative fees.

Item 3- Approval of Minutes

Director Salvatore MOVED to approve the minutes of the January 6, 2025 Regular Meeting. Seconded by Director Kanachowski. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Item 4- Communications

None.

Item 5- Reports and Committee Reports

a. Finance Committee

Director Kapchensky MOVED to accept the Bristol Libraries Fund 1st quarter 2025 distribution of \$1,180.00. Seconded by Director Frenette. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Director Jakubowski MOVED to accept the Samuel Goodsell Library Fund 1st quarter 2025 distribution of \$7,922.50. Seconded by Director Ploszaj. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Director Frenette MOVED to accept the Manross Memorial Library Fund 1st quarter 2025 distribution of \$28,190.00. Seconded by

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

Chairperson Carpenter and Director Jakubowski asked questions regarding federal grants. Library Director Prozzo explained that the Bristol Library does not directly receive any federal grants. She has not yet heard of any financial impact to the library budget based on federal granting.

b. Property Committee

No Report.

c. Policy Committee

No Report.

Director Salvatore requested an update on the overnight shelter situation. Library Director Prozzo stated that the library was an emergency overflow shelter for four nights in January. We did have some problems and the police needed to be called one night. Some additional cleaning needed to be done in the bathrooms. The carpets needed to be shampooed and sanitized to deal with various stains. Attendance was higher this time, approximately 20-23. People were brought in from New Britain and other towns. Most recently, the overnight overflow shelter was located at the Salvation Army. She's not sure if that's permanent or if they'll use the library again. It impacts the regular operations of whatever building or facility is used. The city might want to consider finding a spot dedicated just for that purpose. Director Ploszaj suggested seeking to recoup cleaning costs from Harley Graime's budget. Director Kanachowski attended a meeting back in September and heard that there are federal and state funds available for housing for the homeless.

d. Strategic Planning Committee

No Report.

e. Library Director's Report

1) December 2024 statistics highlights:

The increase in the number of library card applications and growth of the number of card holders is an exciting trend. We are trying very hard to build that up. We have over 15,000 card holders in the city, which is the highest number we've seen in a few years. The goal is to get to the 20,000 mark. In other CT communities our size, about 31% of the population has a library card, so we have some work to do here in Bristol. Library Director Prozzo encouraged the Library Board members to take any opportunity they have to promote the benefits of

getting a library card. Our big focus is getting people to use the many library services that are available to them with a card. You can get a temporary card online to get started in accessing resources, but then you need to come in person and show proof of address to get a physical card. You can use your library card all over the state, but it needs to be issued from the town you reside in. Library Director Prozzo thanked Director Frenette, Principal of St. Joseph School, for utilizing library services and having library staff visit the school. We have a great partnership with them.

- 2) Monthly Budget Report: There is nothing out of the ordinary to report. We are right on track.

Library Director Prozzo invited the Library Board members to attend the Budget Hearing which will be held on Thursday, February 27, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. in a conference room on the 3rd floor of City Hall. Parks will be presenting first.

f. City Council Liaison Report

City Council Liaison Sebastian Panioto reported that at the last City Council meeting, they enacted a provision to designate the Salvation Army as an alternate shelter site during cold weather protocol. He recognized the challenges the library has faced. The mayor will determine whether the library or the Salvation Army is used next time an overflow shelter is needed. All 169 towns should have cold weather protocols in place.

Director Ploszaj has rejoined CERT. She explained how non-profits like HRA and the Friendship Center provide transportation to/from the Bristol shelters for homeless people from out-of-town. Director O'Neill noted that we see a huge influx from Waterbury and New Britain because they get on the Fastrack bus.

Discussion followed regarding funding for more permanent solutions to homelessness.

Director Salvatore, who attended the last City Council meeting with Director Kanachovski, thanked City Council Liaison Sebastian Panioto for recognizing and complimenting the work that CERT and the Library Board are doing.

g. Friends of the Library Report

Director Salvatore attended the Friends' meeting a couple weeks ago. Rose Ann reported that the Carousel Museum had announced that the Bristol Library handed out the most museum passes in 2024. As a result, they were rewarded with three free programs to be held at the library in the spring, summer, and fall

through the Carousel Museum and the McPhee Foundation. Assistant Library Director Stanton thanked the Friends of the Library for their contributions to purchase museum passes.

National Library Week is April 6th - 12th this year. The Friends always do something special during that week at both libraries.

The Friends now have a new Publicity Chairperson. She will be working on creating a new Facebook page for the Friends.

The big winter Used Book Sale will be held from February 26th to March 2nd. Hardcover and softcover books for adults, teens and children will be available at reasonable prices, along with audiobooks, movies, and CDs. Books will be sold half-price on Saturday, March 1st from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and the \$5.00 Bag Sale will take place on Sunday, March 2nd from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Specials are not included in the Half-Price and Bag Sales, but will be available for purchase. The Preview Sale will be held on Wednesday, February 26th from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. There is a \$5.00 admission fee for that. Rose Ann is looking for volunteers, especially for set-up and clean-up. Please email her if you are interested. The proceeds from this fundraiser help support library programs and events.

h. Community Outreach Committee Report

No Report.

Library Director Prozzo met with the Children's staff and encouraged them to get out into the community more, so they scheduled visits to more schools. In January, they made 13 new teacher cards for Edgewood Preschool and the custodian used our community outreach vehicle to deliver a collection of 25 books for each classroom. We hope to continue these efforts through the rest of the school year. Director Frenette explained that his teachers email the Children's staff with a theme for the month and then receive a related bundle of books. The Children's staff visit the St. Joseph preschool classrooms at least once a month.

Discussion followed regarding how old you need to be to get a library card, parental permission to get a card, whether parents need to be present when children check out books, school book fairs, offering reading incentives throughout the year, library presence at community festivals and farmers' markets, etc.

Item 6- Old Business

Assistant Library Director Stanton prepared a mock-up of the new "Donate" page on the library website. The rough draft shows a link to the Main Street Community Foundation's website for donations to the Bristol Libraries Fund, which is the smallest trust fund. A second donate button will be linked to the Bristol Public Library Centennial Fund. We are working with the Treasurer's Office to connect PayPal to that account. Library Director Prozzo encouraged the Library Board members to explore our website to determine the

best location for the donate buttons and to look at other library websites to compare options. We can make adjustments, but she'd like to keep it simple.

Item 7- New Business

None.

Item 8- Adjournment

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

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Vontell

This meeting was digitally recorded.