

MEETING MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY DIRECTORS

MONDAY, APRIL 7, 2025

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

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

Library Director Deborah Prozzo and Assistant Library Director Scott Stanton.

Absent: Elizabeth Kanachovski, Barbara O'Neill, Kimberly Ploszaj, and Danielle Rivard

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 Salvatore MOVED to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2025 Regular Meeting. Seconded by Director Kapchensky. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Item 4- Communications

None.

Item 5- Reports and Committee Reports

a. Finance Committee

No Report.

- (1) Vote to accept or reinvest quarterly distributions from Main Street Community Foundation.

Director Jakubowski MOVED to accept the Bristol Libraries Fund 2nd quarter 2025 distribution of \$1,180.00 from the Main Street Community Foundation. Seconded by Director Frenette. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Director Kapchensky MOVED to accept the Samuel Goodsell 2nd quarter 2025 distribution of \$7,922.50 from the Main Street Community Foundation. Seconded by Director Frenette. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Director Frenette MOVED to reinvest the Manross Memorial Library Fund 2nd quarter 2025 distribution of \$28,190 from the Main Street Community Foundation. Seconded by Director Jakubowski. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

b. Property Committee

No Report.

Director Kapchensky MOVED to authorize Library Director Prozzo to sign the landscape architect's stage two proposal paperwork for the Cawley flower garden at Manross Library. Seconded by Director Frenette. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Library Director Prozzo explained that Pete Cawley is donating \$25,000 for this garden, which will include a memorial bench. The check(s) go directly to the Friends of the Library. The stage two proposal paperwork was sent to the Purchasing Department three times, but Roger Rousseau did not reply. She will sign it tomorrow.

c. Policy Committee

No Report.

d. Strategic Planning Committee

No Report.

e. Library Director's Report

1) February statistics highlights:

- Overall circulation was down by 3%.
- Foot traffic was up a little bit, but the bad weather negatively impacted our numbers. The biggest decreases were in children's areas. February was a depressing month, but March is looking better.

2) Monthly Budget Report: We are pretty much where we were last year at this time. We are in the last quarter of the fiscal year.

- Library Revenue is up significantly due to room rentals and printing. We already met what we had projected.
- Main Library - We are over in our telephone line item, but have sufficient funds in program supplies to cover that. The phone bills have ranged from \$660 to \$1,100. Currently, we do not have full phone service. We've been unable to receive outside calls since Saturday, so people have been emailing us on our library website. A technician is coming tomorrow. I'm not happy with Frontier and wish we had another option.
- Children's Library @ 91.8% - We've allocated all of our professional fee money for various programs through the end of the school year. We're working on our program supply money.
- Manross Library - We're in very good shape. The natural gas bills have improved since the perimeter heating units were worked on. The thermostats all around the first floor contribute to the significant savings.

- Manross Trust Fund - Money has been used for children's and adult programs, as well as books, program materials, and online resources, including Hoopla and Overdrive.
- Main Library Trust Fund - We are building up this amount. There are about 2 years-worth of quarterly distributions.
- Goodsell Trust Fund - There are sufficient funds to carry us through the end of the fiscal year. We purchase print and online reference materials with this money.
- Centennial Fund Interest - The February 2025 interest was \$274. The total in the revenue account is \$45,529. The total in the expense account is approximately \$143,000. At some point, that money could be appropriated and moved in if the Board wants to do that.

3) Highlights of library activities:

- Sunday Hours have ended. The numbers were about the same as last year. We averaged 130 - 140 each week. We lost one Sunday because of bad weather. Our highest Sunday was over 270 when the Friends had their bag sale. Programming also boosted the numbers. Sunday hours are a good option for people, especially working families. I wouldn't like to lose this way of offering our resources to the community.
- The Seed Library opened for the season. We had a nice turnout that first Monday, which was immediately followed by a well-attended gardening program. It's located on the main floor by the circulation desk. You can check out 5 seed packets.
- The Farmers' Market starts on Saturday, June 21st. I'm not sure how many markets we'll be able to attend because we are down a custodian. Mark Bolduc, the Senior Maintenance Technician, retired and his position has been frozen by the mayor. It's unfortunate because this is a supervisory position and it is considered essential personnel. Right now, I'm fielding most of the maintenance problems like working with Frontier and the technicians who came to repair the main elevator which was down for 2-3 days. It does impact services. I foresee some very serious issues coming up during summer reading, which is our busiest time of the year. Foot traffic can reach upwards of 17,000 per month. We need someone with the skill set to handle the air conditioner system, filter replacements, work on the chiller, etc. I'm very concerned about safety issues. I've spoken with the mayor, the H.R. Director, the facilities manager, the Director of Public Works, and the union. So far, the position is still frozen. The position is in the budget. Discussion followed.

- 4) Staff News: We have two retirements coming up in June and August. One of them is a supervisory position in the Children's Department.

f. City Council Liaison Report

Council Liaison Panioto reported that the City Council approved the use of a donate button and the Little Green Light vendor.

g. Friends of the Library

Director Salvatore reminded everyone that National Library Week is April 6th - 12th. The Friends prepared the following press release, which she read aloud: *Join the Friends of the Bristol Public Library in celebrating National Library Week and the many ways our libraries bring people together. Whatever draws you in, our libraries have something for everyone. Whether you come for books, programs, technology, training or simply a place to connect, our libraries spark imagination and foster a lifelong love of learning. The Bristol Public Library and F. N. Manross Memorial Library support the community by being an educational, cultural, and recreational asset to the city of Bristol and surrounding towns. On National Library Workers Day, Tuesday April 8th, we will honor our dedicated librarians and staff members for their valuable contributions that help people of all ages to enjoy the library. Please support our local libraries and library workers in any way you can.* Director Salvatore thanked Deb, Scott, and everybody on staff for all their work in making the library a wonderful place to come to. Rose Ann has special activities planned for April 8th.

Director Salvatore gave an update regarding the Winter Book Sale. The Friends raised \$8,500. Director Salvatore thanked everyone who volunteered their time and talent to the event.

Director Salvatore reported that the next meeting of the Friends is on Saturday, April 26th at 10:00 a.m. All members are invited to attend. This is the annual meeting and elections will take place. If you're interested in knowing more about the elections or running for one of the positions, you can contact Rose Ann.

Director Salvatore mentioned that Holly Bouchard, the new publicity chair for the Friends, is working on redesigning the website, forms, and adding a donate button to the website.

Director Salvatore stated that the Author Luncheon ticket sale on April 2nd was totally incredible. There was a big line outside before the library opened. The Friends sold all 300 tickets by 9:10 a.m. which includes 66 mail-in tickets. A wait list has been started. Please call the circulation desk if you want to be added to the wait list. Rose Ann wants to thank all the Friends who worked on selling the tickets. Library Director Prozzo stated that the Friends did a phenomenal job. It was nice to see so many local people. We added two more tables. We are maxed out at 320. It's encouraging to see that Bristol can bring in so many people interested in books, authors, and literary events.

h. Community Outreach Committee Report

No Report.

Library Director Prozzo is worried about covering the Farmers' Markets on Saturdays. We attended 9 of them last year. We have not yet discussed what the Friends' role will be. Many of the outreach plans that are already in place involve the Children's Department and they don't use the truck much.

Item 6- Old Business

- a. Library Director Prozzo reported that the donate button was approved at the City Council meeting on March 11th and approved by the Board of Finance on March 25th. Ryan from the Treasurer's Office informed her that she could set up the Little Green Light account, which she did on Friday. Then Ryan looped her into an email with Muhammed in IT to set up the stripe payment piece of it. Scott and I will meet with Matt, our in-house IT employee, to work out a few particulars, but we are making progress. I'm very optimistic. Council Liaison Panioto asked about how we are paying for this. Library Director Prozzo explained that Little Green Light does not take a portion of the donations. The annual subscription of \$495 comes out of our budget. Little Green Light was the cheapest option. When you set up the software, you can opt to cover the credit card processing fees rather than deducting them from the donations.

Item 7- New Business

- a. Due to low attendance at this meeting, Chairperson Carpenter decided to postpone the appointment of a Nominating Committee in preparation for the election of officers until the May meeting. She will send out an email to determine who's interested in running. If you are on the Nominating Committee, you can't run for office.

Item 8- Adjournment

There being no further business, **Director Frenette made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting at 7:14 p.m. Seconded by Director Jakubowski. All present voted in favor and the meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Vontell

This meeting was digitally recorded.