

MEETING MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY DIRECTORS

MONDAY, MAY 5, 2025

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

ATTENDEES: Valina Carpenter, Eric Frenette, Nicholas Jakubowski, Andrea Kapchensky, Barbara O'Neill, Kimberly Ploszaj (via Zoom), Danielle Rivard, Pina Salvatore, and Council Liaison Sebastian Panioto.
Library Director Deborah Prozzo and Assistant Library Director Scott Stanton.

Absent: Elizabeth Kanachovski.

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 7, 2025 Regular Meeting. Seconded by Director Frenette. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Item 4- Communications

None.

Item 5- Reports and Committee Reports

a. Finance Committee

No Report.

b. Property Committee

No Report.

c. Policy Committee

No Report.

d. Strategic Planning Committee

No Report.

e. Director's Report

1) March 2025 statistics highlights:

- Patron visits (foot traffic) increased by 8%
- Library card registrations increased by 6%
- Circulation is holding steady. We broke even.

- Program attendance was up by 44%
- Number of programs was up by 7%

Director Kapchensky asked why March 2025 isn't compared to February 2025. Library Director Prozzo explained that the statistics compare March 2025 to March 2024, which is the traditional way of reporting. The end of the fiscal year report will show the whole year. It will be available in July and will get submitted to the State Library. She will run a couple scenarios for next month's meeting.

- 2) YTD Budget Report: We are in the last quarter of the fiscal year. We're wrapping up a lot of our spending. The numbers are right where we traditionally are this time of year, although we've seen a very big increase in our revenue, particularly in the library room rentals and copier charges. We are ahead of the projection. All revenue goes to the General Fund. The financials are checked on a daily basis to make sure we're on track. I'm running a journal detail report to see our expenses to date and any areas where we might have to transfer money like printing and telephone. I also run the open POs for all the departments to see where we are and what can be closed.

- Library Revenue @ 115%
- Main Library - on target
- Children's Library - on target
- Manross Library - on target
- Manross Miscellaneous Trust Fund - \$45,926 available; \$49,644 spent (databases, Hoopla subscription, Author Luncheon, etc.)
- Goodsell Fund - money used for books and reference items at the Main Library
- Main Library Trust Fund - the smallest fund; we're hoping to build it up.
- Centennial Fund - \$45,529 in the income account; \$143,000 in the expenditure account; only restriction is that the money must be used for the Main Library.

Chairperson Carpenter suggested looking into using copier/printer revenue to offset the library's printing expenses.

- 3) Highlights of library activities for April 2025: We had National Library Week in April. There were a lot of activities going on throughout the building. I'd like to thank the Friends of the Library for providing luncheon for the staff on National Library Workers Day during that week. It was a very nice celebration.

- 4) Staff News: We will soon have a vacant position in the Children's Department due to a retirement. That position was

originally posted back in February, but was caught up in the hiring freeze. It's been released. No one signed internally so it went out. You might see it posted on a few bulletin boards and on the website for library jobs in CT. Interviews are scheduled for May 15th. We hope to find a good candidate because with summer reading coming up, it's going to be extremely busy in the Children's Department.

The Senior Maintenance Technician position has not been released from the hiring freeze. There was some discussion at the April 22nd Board of Finance meeting regarding a proposal by the Public Works Director to eliminate that position and perhaps hire another custodian. I don't know where we stand with that right now. It's still a major concern for us. Since the position has been vacant, I've been fielding numerous maintenance issues. Alarms have gone off at both locations. I've been dealing with the Eversource gas folks who hit a water main. There was flooding and the library had to be closed on the Thursday before Good Friday, which was during school vacation week. It created some difficulty. We had a full house that day. The Garden Club was in the meeting rooms with a guest speaker and their luncheon. Starbucks was doing training and had paid for use of the meeting rooms. Everyone had to be evacuated. There was also a program in the Children's Department. It created quite a bit of disruption to library services and the community. I was scheduled for that day off, but I did come in because there were a lot of moving pieces and things that had to be done. When the water main broke, it caused a valve to blow inside the building. Fortunately, there was no damage inside. That's just one example of when a senior maintenance technician would have been of value to the library. I believe the Water Department is going to take care of the expense of that valve.

Council Liaison Panioto stated that he has discussed this position with the mayor and he's aware that things have been tough. They are looking into getting someone here perhaps from Public Works.

We've had a great deal of disruption in the neighborhood for a month now with Eversource working in the street. We've had to put out signs saying the library is open because Eversource didn't. The detours were misleading and hindered access. People were confused and thought they couldn't get in. The paperwork from Eversource regarding the project didn't come to the library. It was sent to another city department and they routed it to us. It indicated that they would not disrupt services and would keep the parking lot and driveway accessible at all times during construction, but that was not

necessarily the case. We know the work needed to be done but it impacted library services. It's been a frustrating month.

- 5) Author Luncheon: We are putting the final touches on that. We are a month out. We have a wait list, but it does move along.
- 6) Summer Hours: The last Saturday for the season is going to be June 14th. We're finishing up with a bang. We have a lot of programs scheduled that day.
- 7) Donate Button: We have made some progress with the donate button on the library's main home page. Scott, Matt, and I met to iron out a few bugs. (Assistant Library Director Stanton shared the screen.) The Bristol Libraries Fund links over to the Main Street Community Foundation's website. They will handle the donations to this small fund that we are trying to build up. They will be part of the quarterly distributions. We have a placeholder for the Centennial Fund, but there's no donate button for it yet. We have to get the payment option available through Little Green Light. We're in a free trial with them until May 15th. The goal is to meet with the people from City Hall and get it all in place before May 15th. Then we'll pay the \$495 annual subscription. We're looking at a fall launch when we'll also be celebrating National Library Card Sign-Up Month. We have brand new library cards to premiere. You'll be able to swap out your old card for a new one with our logo. We're working on our branding. Discussion followed regarding advertising with a QR code to promote the donate buttons, their location(s) on the website, and possible raffle prizes for getting a new library card.

f. City Council Liaison Report

No Report.

g. Friends of the Library

Director Salvatore reported that the Friends of the Library treated the library staff to a luncheon on April 8th. This was a special day during National Library Week when library staff were honored.

Director Salvatore announced that the Friends plan to hold their yearly mini sales in June in the lobbies of both libraries. Book donations have resumed, but book donations are down. They are looking specifically for fiction books.

Director Salvatore stated that the Friends' elections took place on April 28th as scheduled. At this meeting, they set dates for their next three meetings at the Main Library at 6:00 p.m.: 9/11/25, 1/15/26 (with a 1/27/26 snow date), and 4/23/26, which is the annual meeting.

h. Community Outreach Committee Report

Library Director Prozzo reported that we had a community outreach opportunity yesterday. Beth Martin from Manross and custodian Steve Kozikowski were out at the duck race in Forestville where approximately 65-70 people stopped by the library table and 10 new cards were issued. That's a great response for a one-day event like that.

We need to nail down dates to attend the Farmers' Market. It could get a little tricky with only 2 custodians to drive the truck. We are looking forward to those events.

The Children's Department staff will be visiting all the elementary schools to promote summer reading and Deanna Fowler, our Readers' Advisor, has put together a great summer reading program for adults. She's really streamlined it, which will make it easy for the patrons to participate. They can read, watch DVDs, listen to books, attend programs, etc. to have an opportunity to win prizes both weekly and at the Grand Finale. Library Director Prozzo thanked the Friends of the Library for supporting summer reading both financially and with hospitality at many of the programs.

If anyone hears of any other outreach opportunities, please email or call Library Director Prozzo and she will try to add them to the list.

Item 6- Old Business

- a. Chairperson Carpenter stated that according to the charter, and in preparation for the June elections, she's supposed to put together a nominating committee of three library board members who are not running for a position. She described what's been done in the past regarding ballots and the duties for each of the three positions that will be vacant: Library Board Chair, 1st Vice Chair, and 2nd Vice Chair. She reminded everyone that you cannot serve more than two consecutive terms in the same position so there needs to be some shifting. Director Salvatore would like to step up and run for Chair, Chairperson Carpenter is interested in running for 1st Vice Chair, and Director Frenette offered to run for 2nd Vice Chair. The following individuals were named to the nominating committee: Director Kanachovski, Director Jakubowski, and Director Rivard. The nominating committee must send written notice regarding the candidates to the Library Board at least 7 days prior to the election and shall prepare a paper ballot with provisions for writing in candidates. Chairperson Carpenter's last duty will be running the election before she hands over the role to the new Chair.

Item 7- New Business

None.

Item 8- Adjournment

There being no further business, **Director Frenette made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 p.m. Seconded by Director Jakubowski. All present voted in favor and the meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Vontell

This meeting was digitally recorded.