

MEETING MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY DIRECTORS

MONDAY, JUNE 2, 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, and Pina Salvatore.
Library Director Deborah Prozzo and Assistant Library Director Scott Stanton.

Absent: Council Liaison Sebastian Panioto

Item 1- Call to order

Chairperson Carpenter called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Item 2- Public Participation

None.

Item 3- Approval of Minutes

Director Frenette MOVED to approve the Minutes of the May 5, 2025 Regular Meeting. Seconded by Director Ploszaj. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Item 4- Nomination and Voting of New Officers

The Library Board members signed and submitted written ballots. Chairperson Carpenter tallied the votes and announced that Pina Salvatore is the new Chairperson of the Library Board, Valina Carpenter is the First Vice Chairperson, and Eric Frenette is the Second Vice Chairperson. They will serve a two-year term. In accordance with the By-laws, the meeting was turned over to Chairperson Salvatore.

Item 5- Communications

None.

Item 6- Reports and Committee Reports

a. Finance Committee

No Report.

b. Property Committee

Director Kapchensky gave an update on the Cawley garden. We received a check which was deposited on May 7th. A meeting has been scheduled for June 11th to see the plans for what's going to be done and when. Director Kapchensky will attend.

Director Kapchensky stated that there is an issue related to the work that Eversource did on the library property at the corner of High Street and Main Street. The Eversource representatives in attendance introduced themselves. Sam Carmody is with Community Relations, Jeannie Maitland works on the gas side in Communications, Daryl Cuny is the Manager of Gas Operations in the central region which includes Bristol, and Paul Beckham is the Construction Supervisor of the work crew. The project involves replacing the old gas mains in the street with new plastic gas mains. They walked with Public Works to determine the location, direction, and routes. There were a lot of unexpected utilities at the intersection of High and Main, including electric, fiber telecommunications, sewers, and drains. It was determined that they could not go through the intersection as initially planned. Eversource met with Mike Krenicki from Public Works. They tried to go into the sidewalk but couldn't, so they had another discussion with Mike who talked with Ray Rogozinski and Ryan, a city engineer. It was Eversource's understanding that they had permission to proceed. They now acknowledge that there was a misunderstanding and they are very sorry. They apologize and want to work with the city to resolve this. The work has already been done. A survey company already came out. Eversource's real estate department started the easement process. No further work will be done while the easement process plays itself out. They are prepared to have a landscape company do a sod restoration within a week. Before the project starts again, Eversource would like to sit down with the library to lay out an acceptable plan in order to anticipate and avoid future problems, discuss concerns and expectations, determine points of contact, and exchange emails for better communication. While the project is on hold, there's time to figure out what's best for phase 2.

Ray Rogozinski, Director of Public Works for the City of Bristol, explained that Eversource needs a permit to work within the right of way and that it's not unusual to have slight adjustments. The Public Works Department understands the process and did not authorize work on library property. He stated that Eversource is responsible for their work and for communications. They do not work directly for the City of Bristol. Ray explained that the process of getting an easement can take 3 months. It involves Corporation Council and the Planning Commission. A map with square footage of the corner under the sign needs to be submitted to the Library Board.

Library Director Prozzo stated that not following procedure with regards to the easement is indicative of the whole project and the way that the library has been treated for the past 2 months. The initial communication was sent to 154 School Street and it was addressed to the Bristol Parks Department or Current Resident. It finally found its way to her office on April 7th, well after the work had already started. There has been serious disruption of services here at the library. Accessing the parking lot was difficult for patrons and staff, our driveway was

blocked, detours were put up directing people throughout the neighborhood but not to the library, and police officers from Bristol and other communities would not allow patrons and staff to come down the street without a discussion. We fielded numerous phone calls from the public who were confused and couldn't figure out how to get in. The library's numbers for April and May will be very low, which affects our state funding. I am very displeased with the way the project was handled. I don't think there really was any thought given to the major disruption of a city building that serves the public. I asked on two occasions for signage saying that the library was open and never saw anything. The first occasion was when Eversource broke the water main pipe on the Thursday before Good Friday when we had to evacuate the building. We had a full house that day with paid organizations using our meeting rooms and a major children's program going on during school vacation week. I and other library staff have been dragging our own sign up and down Main Street for the past few weeks. We could not direct patrons via social media because access from the top or bottom of the street changed daily and we were not notified. June, July, and August are our busiest months with school out. We serve free lunches and our foot traffic is usually 17,000-18,000 a month.

Eversource responded by saying that they bought new "business open" signs that the crews will put out. The police officers are there for traffic control and to protect the work site because work zone violations are high. They were directed to allow local traffic up the street. The library driveway may have been momentarily blocked. Assistant Library Director Stanton noted that Library Director Prozzo and maintenance staff had to go outside and ask Eversource to unblock the entrance.

Chairperson Salvatore pointed out that the meeting rooms at the library are rented out to various organizations and those folks have been impacted as well. Director Kanachovski stated that the library is one of the busiest buildings in the city and that should be taken into account when the work resumes.

For the next month, Eversource will be working on transferring the services that are on the old main over to the new main which is parallel to Main St. This involves lateral connections which are perpendicular to the main. They run across the street to the sidewalk at every structure that has an active gas account. This involves digging and the use of plates. Traffic and sidewalk use will be impacted. The project manager can provide the library staff contacts with a daily schedule. They are currently working on Bellevue. They do not have any services on High Street. They are having a sign made specifically to indicate that the library is open and library traffic is allowed, so that library patrons feel welcome. Ray Rogozinski asked Eversource for a commitment that there will be a brief, 5-minute traffic control safety meeting with the crew every day since there's a new police officer on duty every day. Eversource agreed to have a safety

official from the company set up the traffic pattern and have a safety discussion with the crew each morning. The CT DOT will be looking at traffic patterns this summer and how vehicles are moved in and out of work zones. A third party, the University of Colorado, is also looking at how Eversource does safety assessments.

Discussion followed.

c. Policy Committee

No Report.

d. Strategic Planning Committee

No Report.

e. Library Director's Report

1) April statistical highlights:

- Overall circulation was down. The increases in e-books/magazines, downloadables, and Hoopla were not enough to offset the decrease on the print/physical side.
- Programs were up 19% but they should have been higher because it was school vacation week and National Library Week.

2) Year-to-Date Budget Report:

We are doing end-of-the-year activities like closing Purchase Orders, inputting Purchase Orders for the new fiscal year, making deposits, etc. All three departments (Main, Children's and Manross) are pretty much where we normally would be at this time of the year. We are trying to get down to zero on as many accounts as we can. We will need to give money back to the city in Public Utilities even though we had to start paying Eversource again. The CT Solar credits aren't enough to offset the entire Eversource bill. We will also turn back money from the Main Library side in the natural gas area and in wages because the senior maintenance technician position, which was vacant for months, has been eliminated.

- Library Revenue @129.6%: We met our revenue projection and are actually over by \$5,242.00.
- Manross Trust Fund: We have \$68,000 available for use. The money will be carried over into the new fiscal year.
- Main Library Trust Funds: We have \$26,415 left in Goodsell money that will be carried over. The Main Library has \$9,476.00 which we want to build up. We don't have any plans for that money yet.

- Centennial Fund: There hasn't been a deposit since March 31, 2025. The interest has been holding well in the \$200 to \$300 range. There's \$45,861 in interest that eventually can be moved over to the Centennial Fund expenditure account.

3) Library Highlights:

The Adult Summer Reading Program has started. We'd love to see you all participate either online or on paper. We've got a variety of programs and activities planned.

The Children's Department is visiting local schools to promote summer reading in the community. The program starts when the kids get out of school around June 18th. Free lunches start the first week in July and run through most of August. All the activities are free. Reading is important for so many reasons. Please encourage your family, friends, and neighbors to come to the library.

Director Rivard inquired about use of the library truck. It won't be going out as often as it has the past few summers.

4) Staff News:

The Senior Maintenance Technician position has been eliminated. I've been told that we will get another regular custodian. I expressed my concerns to the new HR Director and we discussed other options, but I don't know where we stand with those right now.

We conducted interviews for the Children's Assistant position. A new person should be onboarding in the next few weeks so there will be a little bit of overlap with the staff person who's retiring.

Our IT Specialist in the Computer Lab accepted a position in the IT Department at City Hall so we no longer have anybody in the Computer Lab. He was here only a few months so it was very discouraging. We are going to carry on as best we can. I spoke with HR. We discussed a few options and ideas.

I'm happy to say that we are hosting another library science intern for the summer. They are going to make observations in all the departments and will work on a special project to be determined.

We are going to have a staff development program on Thursday, June 12th with Dr. Wendy Hurwitz. She's polled the staff at both locations for ideas.

f. City Council Liaison Report

No Report.

g. Friends of the Library

Chairperson Salvatore announced that the Summer Mini-Sale will take place between June 14th and June 27th in the lobbies of both libraries. The books will be available whenever the libraries are open.

Chairperson Salvatore reported that the Friends will partner with the library to attend the Farmers' Market on the following Saturdays: 6/21, 7/19, 8/16, and 9/13. Rose Ann will be looking for volunteers to help out from 9:45 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Library Director Prozzo reported that one spot opened up at her table for the Author Luncheon on Thursday, June 5th in case anyone still needs a ticket. We sold 320 tickets.

h. Community Outreach Committee Report

Director Kanachovski might attend the Farmers' Markets.

Assistant Library Director Stanton reported that library staff will attend the Bristol Blues Bell City Night on Sunday, June 8th to make cards and give out information.

Item 7- Old Business

Chairperson Salvatore asked if there was an update on the donate button. Library Director Prozzo reported that the button linked to Main Street Community Foundation has generated some interest. She hopes to have a conversation with Mohammed in IT. With Matt leaving, we don't have a point person here at the library. We don't know the status of the Computer Lab position.

Director Rivard suggested raising funds by selling T-shirts. Discussion followed regarding working with the Friends on that.

Item 8- New Business

None.

Item 9- Adjournment

There being no further business, **Director Carpenter made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting at 7:44 p.m. Seconded by Director Rivard. All present voted in favor and the meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Vontell

This meeting was digitally recorded.