



Wethersfield Library

Wethersfield Library Board Meeting

March 1, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

Approved Minutes

Meeting Began at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Martha Conneely, Chair, Michelle DiPaola, Hannah Granfield, Diane McAdams, Kristen Michaels, Laurie Wrona

Also Present: Brook Berry, Library Director, Kevin Hill, Town Council Liaison, Carolyn Vallieres, Friends of the Wethersfield Library

Absent: Peter DeNegre, Terry Santapaola

Public Comment

None

Additions/Changes to the Agenda

None

Approval of Minutes: Library Board – Jan 25, 2022

Michelle DiPaola noted one spelling error, which will be corrected.

Diane McAdams voted to approve as amended, seconded by Laurie Wrona.

Ayes: Martha Conneely, Michelle DiPaola, Kristen Michaels

Abstain: Hannah Granfield

Motion carries.

Friends of the Library Report

The Friends have begun accepting book donations and will be hosting their first book sale in 2 years! The dates are May 20-22. They will make some modifications to the usual set up to allow crowds to be more spread out. The pricing will be the same as in past years. They currently have 35 volunteers to help with the set up and sales.

Carolyn suggested having a dedication ceremony for the Jane Sjoman Community Room, possibly in the spring. Martha agreed that the Library Board hoped to do that as well. Carolyn would also like to recognize Ralph Horowitz and Mary Beth Mahler and add them to the plaque of supporters.

Donations have remained strong throughout the pandemic, and the Friends would like to consider funding some capital improvement projects.

The Friends would also like the Library Board to appoint someone to their board as the Library Board Liaison.

Town Council Liaison Report

Kevin Hill reported that the Council voted on cannabis regulations in Wethersfield, we will not permit retail sales but will allow for any other license.

The Council discussed the issue of panhandling but was not able to come to any decision as to how to regulate this. It will be tabled for future discussions.

The Council is busy preparing for upcoming budget sessions and the ARPA committee continues to hear from various boards and commissions about funding opportunities.

Chairman's Report

Martha Conneely expressed her happiness to be back to in-person meetings, and her gratitude towards Brook and all of the library staff who have worked throughout the entire pandemic.

Library Director's Report

Brook presented a list of the museums and their membership fees for the Museum Pass program. She asked for permission to ask the Friends to provide \$3,400 funding for this program. Diane McAdams motioned to request the funding, Michelle DiPaola seconded. The motion was unanimously approved. Carolyn will bring it to a vote at the next Friends of the Library Board meeting.

In-person programming for children is resuming, this will be initially be taking place in the Jane Sjoman Community Room and numbers will be limited to allow for distancing. Alternative programming on Zoom and take-and-makes will continue as well.

One of the union contracts for the non-supervisors has been completed and given to the Union to review, there is a second contract for the supervisors that is still being re-written by the Town's Labor Attorney.

The display is currently showcasing Ukrainian Eggs, a favorite of many for the past 10 years. It will be included in the next email newsletter.

The Outreach Committee met last week along with Director of Parks & Rec Kathy Bagley to discuss StoryWalk. The consensus is that Wintergreen Woods is the ideal setting. Our next steps will be to discuss pricing for the installation with Sally Katz. The focus should be sustainability, the Library will most likely fund the upfront costs but will want Park & Rec to be able to maintain it in the future. Once the plan is more finalized we will present it to the Town Council. We may ask the Friends for some funding.

Finance Report

As of this meeting current year expenses are at 64% of the budget, which is normal. Brook will wrap up book purchases around the end of April. The plan for this year was to have the library open on Sundays just October through May, it looks like we will be able to extend that through June.

The library refresh project and lower lever flooring was submitted to the state Bond Commission with a budget of \$1.7M. Representatives Amy Morrin Bello and Kerry Wood were very receptive. We may also apply for a state library construction grant.

The RFID upgrade proposal was submitted to the ARPA committee for funding. Library Redesign might be eligible as well. The committee is also considering other projects that will benefit the Library including HVAC upgrades, roofing, a generator, and the voiceover IP.

Brook reviewed the proposed FY 2022-2023 budget and explained any discrepancies from past years. It is an overall increase of 4.17%, but much of that is due to contractual salary increases which were approved by the Town Council. The other significant increase is tech support, which is necessary given the increased demand for online services and the need for weekend tech support. Other line items have been reduced to offset this. Martha pointed out that the budget changes reflect the changing needs of the library (more online, less hard materials) and that Brook has worked hard to make the budget more efficient each year.

Laurie Wrona voted to approve the preliminary proposed 2022-2023 budget, seconded by Hannah Granfield. All voted in favor and the budget was approved.

Brook also confirmed that \$5K in revenue was proposed from overdue fees and printing. The proposed budget will be presented at the April 18 Town Council meeting, members of the public are encouraged to attend or write letters.

Adjournment

Kristen Michaels motioned to adjourn, seconded by Hannah Granfield. All voted in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristen Michaels

Secretary