

Unapproved

**Wethersfield Library Board
Minutes of April 28, 2009**

Members present: Greg Bedula, Kim Bobbin, Paul Courchaine, Susan Grady, Ralph Horowitz, Clare Meade, Brad Milvae, Polly Moon

Members excused: Jen Miglus

Staff present: Laurel Goodgion, director

Others: John Cascio, Town Council Liaison
Luci Domick, President of the Friends of the Library
Rae Ann Palmer, assistant to the Town Manager

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Polly Moon called the meeting to order at 7:03.

PUBLIC COMMENT: NONE

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

The following item (number 9) was moved to the top of the agenda:

PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET FOR 2009-10

Finance Committee Chair Paul Courchaine brought the Board up to speed on the Library Budget. At the Library budget presentation Paul said that to adhere to a cut of \$17,000, there would be no surplus to return to the town.

Rae Ann Palmer was present as a representative of the Town Manager. Every quarter Rae Ann has worked with Laurel and the heads of every other department to look at budget projections. The Town Manager asked what each department could freeze. The Library identified areas totaling \$90,000.

Clare Meade arrived at 7:06.

In the fourth quarter there is a concern about a shortfall of \$200,000 in revenues from the state, mostly slots/Pequot funds. Bonnie Therrien is not going to unfreeze any money. If the slot revenue comes in around June, Bonnie may unfreeze some money, but she is not sure what the Town Council will do. Bonnie is looking for \$25,000 for the Library to give back in savings to help defray the revenue shortfall. If the specified amount is given, then she will unfreeze some of the money.

A discussion on encumbering funds ensued. Clare Meade said that the Library can't encumber funds, but it can pre-spend. John Cascio added that the Board of Education can encumber funds, but the Library can't. He also asked the following question: How much can you dig out of the Library that provides free services for the townspeople?

Clare Meade expressed concern for next year. Taking the full \$70,000 from the 2011 budget will seriously impact the Library.

Greg Bedula arrived at 7:17.

Polly Moon stated that our concerns need to be kept on the front burner. When the Town Council used the Library's RFID money to finish Council Chambers, they promised to put the money back into the Library budget.

Clare Meade added that an RFID system can mitigate increases without having to add staff. She stated that 14,600 people had entered the Library in March. "That's half the town's population," remarked a Council member last night at the budget hearing.

Rae Ann Palmer stated that the new town manager will have no institutional memory, but she will work with him/her on the budget process.

Paul Courchaine suggested that the Board discuss the budget issue first and then vote on it.

Polly Moon thanked Rae Ann for coming to the Board meeting.

At 7:26 Rae Anne Palmer left.

The Board further discussed the budget issues. There was Board consensus that Laurel will continue to work with the Town Manager toward resolution of the 2008-2009 Library budget.

CHAIRPERSON'S COMMENTS

Polly Moon announced that the town councilors will resume holding office hours in the Town Manager's conference room. The Board will take up this matter in the new fiscal year beginning on July 1.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

President Luci Domick reported that at their last meeting the Friends agreed to donate \$3000 for the children's summer reading program. They also will provide refreshments for the forthcoming B.J. Smith adult reading series and for the open house and reception in honor of Liz Kirkpatrick.

The Friends are continuing to work on their book sale to be held on June 13. There are a lot of book donations coming in.

As a fundraiser for the Friends, Luci sold tickets to Board members for \$5 (all the money going to the Friends) to shop one day, May 5, at Lord and Taylor at discounted prices: 20% off mostly everything and 15% on cosmetics.

COUNCIL LIAISON

John Cascio announced that the Town Council is beginning a Town Manager search for the second time. On May 12 the Council will interview from noon to 7p.m. They will then narrow the field down to five candidates.

The Chamber of Commerce Awards Dinner will be held on May 13, honoring Liz Kirkpatrick as Employee of the Year and Phil Lohman as Volunteer of the Year.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF MARCH 24, 2009

The minutes of March 24, 2009, were approved as distributed.

QUESTIONS FOR THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR

There were no questions on the budget or Action Fund.
Laurel distributed a list of equipment purchased with donated funds from March 19, 2009, to April 22, 2009.
Liz Kirkpatrick is on leave until June 30. She is still leading the book discussions.
The school librarians and computer technicians met in the Library.
Laurel attended meetings on school summer reading assignments.

Silas Deane Middle School held a faculty meeting in the Library.
Laurel sent a letter to Pauline Ucich and other past board members of the Friends of the Library inviting them to tour the new Library. Jenny McIntyre is planning to do so. Past Friends' president Mary Gorman took a tour of the Library and sent a nice thank -you note to Laurel.
There will be a workshop on fundraising at the Farmington Marriott on May 13.
Laurel distributed a packet of comments from patrons of the Library for Board members to read. The comments were also sent to the town councilors.
Ken Bastura created a flyer on the test databases available to library users, which includes the Praxis test for new teachers.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance committee information was previously reported during the discussion of the 2009-2010 budget.

OTHER

Paul Courchaine, chair of the 375th Anniversary Parade Committee, reported that William McDermot gave the parade committee 20 copies of the history of Wethersfield from 1634-1790 to sell. Laurel would like to buy two copies.
Laurel complimented Paul Courchaine and the Friends for the "colonial" food they provided for the Literary Landmark celebration.
The Webb-Deane Stevens Museum, the Historical Society and the Library will be selling Phil Lohman's Witch of Blackbird Pond maps. Laurel and Phil Lohman are working on a brochure with a condensed map and current street names.
Kim Bobbin suggested using parts of Phil Lohman's talk to create a YouTube presentation on the Library.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR JOB DESCRIPTION

Laurel had previously sent out descriptions of the job of Library Director from various sources, including other towns in Connecticut. Polly Moon said this is a good time to do some re-organization and to look at the roles of the Director and the Library Board now that the renovation has been completed. It is important to categorize areas of the Director's responsibility so that the Board, especially new members, understand what the job of the Director is. Laurel will take the elements of the job description like services, programs, collections, and buildings and put them into categories that will make them easier to quantify in evaluating the Director.
Laurel distributed a sheet differentiating the roles of the Director, Library Board, and Friend of the Library.

COMMITTEE FORMATION

Polly Moon stated the need for a Board Development Committee to find replacements for Greg Bedula, Paul Courchaine, and Brad Milvae. The committee members will be Polly Moon, Greg Bedula, and Brad Milvae.

At 8:37 Clare Meade moved to adjourn. Paul Courchaine seconded. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Grady
Secretary

Date