

## **Wethersfield Library Board Minutes of February 26, 2008**

**Members present:** Paul Courchaine, Greg Curtin, Tracy Gionfriddo, Susan Grady, Howard Greenblatt, Brad Milvae, Pauline Moon

**Members excused:** Greg Bedula; Clare Meade

**Staff present:** Laurel Goodgion, director; Liz Kirkpatrick, asst. director

**Others present:** John Cascio, Town Council Liaison; Luci Domick, president of the Friends of the Library; Paul Montinieri, Town Council Liaison

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Greg Curtin called the meeting to order at 7:00.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** NONE

**ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA:** NONE

Chairman Curtin took the agenda out of order and began with a report on the Fundraising Committee by Tracy Gionfriddo, who had to leave the meeting early. She reported that all initial contacting of Board members has been made and donations from them have been secured.

State Senator Paul Doyle agreed to act as honorary chairman. A fundraising letter with the editorial by Joyce Rossignol in Wethersfield Life will be the framework for the campaign.

Board members should be compiling a list of friends they think will make donations.

Board members will speak to community groups. Laurel Goodgion or Liz Kirkpatrick will accompany Board members to answer any questions about the renovation.

Laurel and Susan Grady will speak to the AARP about the renovation. Greg Curtin will talk to the Chamber of Commerce.

John Cascio suggested contacting real estate companies. He also suggested a pyramid tier giving a choice of gifts to the Library. There could be an opening celebration brochure with donors' names.

Tracy Gionfriddo asked Board members to email her with their contact information.

At 7:25 Tracy Gionfriddo left.

### **RENOVATION**

Laurel reported that the contractor is sticking to schedule and should be finished July 2. She and Liz are looking at a timeline including how long Town Hall will take to move back. It will be tax time, and maybe they won't be able to move the tax office at that time. It will take a couple of weeks to install the shelving. More time will be needed to integrate the books. Painting also needs to be done. It will take about five weeks all together. Mid-September looks like the target date for the re-opening of the full Library. It would be ideal to close Labor Day weekend and open in mid-September. Mid-October would be a good time for a grand re-opening celebration. Laurel and Liz will discuss all the variables with Mike Turner.

## **FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY**

President Luci Domick reported that the February meeting was cancelled because of bad weather. They are waiting to start fundraising. Donna Brown is the new treasurer of the Friends. Lucille Plouffe has been acting as liaison to the Fundraising Committee.

## **COUNCIL LIAISON/S**

John Cascio stressed the importance of putting the shelving in both the capital improvement budget and in the regular budget. He reported it is not going to be an easy budget. The \$500,000 deficit in the town budget is due to low-interest returns. The budget meeting agenda is being adjusted.

Paul Montinieri said that the Board's effort to raise money is noted in view of the shortcomings on the renovation level. The Council has an appreciation of the importance of furnishings. The Board's presentation of the Library budget last year was thorough and clear. July is still the target for moving departments back into the Town Hall, although there will be an effort to stagger the move.

At 7:40 Luci Domick left.

## **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

The [minutes of the meeting of January 22, 2008](#), and those of [the special meeting of January 31, 2008](#) were approved as distributed.

## **QUESTIONS FOR THE DIRECTOR**

Polly Moon asked about two expenditures in the Action Fund.

## **PROPOSAL REGARDING PENSION AND HEALTH PLANS FOR THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR AND ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**

Laurel and Liz are the only staff with benefits not covered by union contract. There is an effort to get everyone on the same health plan. It needs to be stated where Laurel and Liz will be covered.

Howard Greenblatt moved to place the Library Director and the Assistant Library Director in the non-union administrative group pension plan and health plan (group #002186-185) effective March 1, 2008. Brad Milvae seconded. The motion carried.

## **PROPOSED LIBRARY TECHNOLOGY PLAN 2008-2010**

Liz explained that the Technology goals remain the same. Those that have been achieved have been removed from the list. The next step is to send the Library plan to the Advisory Committee on Technology.

Laurel wanted the Board to take note of the great strides the Library has made in technology. The Library outsources tech support. It buys blocks of hours and pre-pays. This vendor also works with other libraries.

John Cascio added that the Library's system is a great model, and he would like to incorporate this system with the Town.

Paul Courchaine made a suggestion for the Library's budget presentation: Delineate those goals currently funded and those needing to be funded so they can be prioritized in the budget. He also wanted the Technology Plan tabled for consideration at the next meeting so there could be sufficient time to study it.

Howard Greenblatt complimented the plan as a community asset. The direction it is moving in puts the Library out in front in the area of technology.

## **PROPOSED POLICY ON CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS**

Howard Greenblatt suggested a re-wording of part of the policy. He moved to approve the Children's Program Policy as amended. Polly Moon seconded. The motion carried.

## **PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET FOR 2008-2009**

Laurel received an email from Town Manager Bonnie Therrien asking for further cuts to the Library budget because of the \$500,000 shortfall. Laurel will meet with the Finance Committee to discuss this budget issue.

Polly Moon spoke highly of the increase in the number of loans over last year's figures at this time. She said it was extraordinary considering the hardships during the past year.

Laurel distributed the following:

- a graph of the history of the Library's circulation showing the tremendous rebounds the Library is making
- an update on the Library's standing as a percentage of the Town Budget, now 2.03 percent, up from 1.94 in 2000-2001
- an update on the Wethersfield's Library's per capita materials budget in comparison with selected area libraries

Laurel reported that the Town Manager had proposed an increase in the Library's materials budget.

Next, Greg Curtin distributed a letter that Laurel sent to the Friends of the Library thanking them for their donations and delineating what their money was spent for.

Laurel displayed a new purchase called a Playaway, a very small audio book run by battery. It comes with an extra battery. A patron can purchase an ear bud for one dollar.

John Cascio suggested more fundraising ideas: big attractions with a fund-raising theme and some flashy or catchy aspects that will grab the public's attention.

Howard Greenblatt added that the public needs a carrot, an incentive, like a gala to honor the opening of the Library: a formal reception at the Silas Robbins House.

At 8:33 Polly Moon moved to adjourn. Howard Greenblatt seconded. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Gradyb  
Secretary