

Wethersfield Library Board Minutes of May 23, 2006

Members Present: Donna Brown, Greg Curtin, Susan Grady, Howard Greenblatt, Brad Milvae, Polly Moon, Karen Mortensen, Lucille Plouffe

Members Excused: Gene Grayson

Staff Present: Laurel Goodgion, Director; Liz Kirkpatrick, Asst. Director

Also Present: Christine Fortunato, Council Liaison

CALL TO ORDER

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

PUBLIC COMMENT: NONE

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Chairman Curtin reported that Friends of the Library President, Luci Domick, couldn't make tonight's meeting. She is proceeding with the Friends' Book Sale on June 24 in the Town Hall corridor. It is allowed as long as there is no construction going on nearby.

Donna Brown and Karen Mortensen arrived at 7:04.

Laurel Goodgion and Joan Guthier will attend the annual meeting of the Connecticut Friends of the Library on June 3, when Jane Sjoman, Treasurer of the Wethersfield Friends, will receive a Special Achievement Award for her outstanding volunteer work in the Library.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

[The minutes of April 25, 2006](#) (regular meeting) were approved as amended.

[The minutes of May 8, 2006](#) (special meeting) were approved as amended.

QUESTIONS FOR THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR

Polly Moon reported that Lucille Plouffe, Greg Curtin, Liz Kirkpatrick, and Joan Guthier attended the Chamber of Commerce dinner, at which Library Director, Laurel Goodgion, received the Town Employee of the Year Award.

A question was raised concerning when the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving is going to reimburse the Library for its strategic plan development. Laurel answered that the Library will receive the rest of the grant when the strategic plan and the final report are sent in. The final report is not done yet. Strategic Planning Consultant, Simone Joyaux, will meet with a staff planning committee on June 19 to shape up the strategic plan. After that the Department heads will identify goals for their departments. The last step will be the Library Board's approval of the strategic plan and the final report.

In response to a question regarding a transfer from the Trust Fund to the Action Fund, it was clarified that at the January 24, 2006 meeting the Library Board approved spending \$6,000 from the Trust Funds to cover the cost of additional hours by the strategic planning consultant.

The Library Board expressed appreciation for the staff members who gave up the Saturday of April 29 to attend the retreat led by Simone Joyaux at the Keeney Center. Their input was terrific.

Laurel reported that the Town is participating in a salary survey along with three other towns: Glastonbury, Newington, and Rocky Hill. The Library will share part of the cost in exchange for receiving the survey report.

COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT

The Board expressed thanks to Council Liaison Christine Fortunato for her support of the Library budget. She reported that future Town budgets will be very tight. She is working with CROG to develop a survey and focus groups before the budget comes out. A goal is to publish a brochure defining core services for the Town of Wethersfield. In some towns residents pay a fire tax, a sewer tax, and pay for their trash collection. The public will need to understand if there are cuts in some services.

Laurel expressed appreciation for Christine's attendance at Building Committee meetings.

Christine urged the Board to continue communication with the Board of Education concerning summer programs. She reported that Board of Ed. Co-Chair Stacey Hodges is sick. Co-Chair Gerri Roberts can be contacted if need be.

DISCUSSION OF NEEDED BOARD SKILLS

The Board Development Committee reported that the following skills are needed in light of the skills of the three members leaving the Board in June: technology skills, links to the education system, and financial acumen. The committee has focused on recruiting members with these skills. They have one more interview to conduct on May 31. They will present the names to the appropriate screening committees.

Laurel added some other areas to be considered in recruiting future Board members: expertise in strategic planning, non-profit management, and facilities and construction management. Diversity should also be considered as a factor.

Councilor Fortunato stressed the need for a connection to town leaders and an ongoing relationship with public policy makers in the town and on the state level. She also said it is important to identify personal traits in future Board members like the ability to work on a team and a sense of humor.

STAFF WORKSHOP ON GOVERNANCE

Asst. Director Liz Kirkpatrick reported that the April 28, 2006 staff workshop on governance, led by Simone Joyaux, went very well. Staff attendance was good. Questions like the following were addressed: What is appropriate and not appropriate to ask a Board member? Staff members were genuinely curious as to what a Board did. Simone explained that a Board is a collective with a voice as a group, not as individuals. The Board functions through the Library Director, not through individual staff members. The Board's role is policy and looking at actions and proposed actions in view of the mission of the organization and reflecting concerns back to the Director. Governance is the act of being a Board. The staff found the handout of the Responsibilities of Board Members very useful.

Laurel Goodgion distributed copies to the Board of Connecticut State Library publication on the duties of the Library Director, the Trustee(Board Member) and Friends of the Library.

BOARD/CEO RELATIONSHIP POLICY

There was discussion on the need for Town Attorney Jack Bradley to look over this policy. Laurel reported that Simone Joyaux suggested a whistle-blowing policy. Polly Moon moved that the Library Board/Library Director Relationship Policy be approved pending review by Town Manager Bonnie Therrien and to Town Attorney Jack Bradley. Lucille Plouffe seconded. The motion carried.

POLICY REVIEW

Lucille Plouffe moved to re-affirm the policy on Displays and Exhibits. Donna Brown seconded. The motion carried.

Lucille Plouffe moved to approve the policy on Library Cards as revised. Donna Brown seconded. The motion carried.

RENOVATION

Laurel Goodgion presented a list of information items concerning the latest work on the renovation: the check-out desk has been re-configured and moved; new concrete floors have been poured; walls have been demolished, etc.

Phase 2 has not gone out to bid yet.

There are still some problems with abatement issues, the leaking roof, and water-stained tiles.

Progress is being made on planning the temporary library. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien helped arrange a meeting with the Fire Marshal, Building Officer Brian O'Connor, and the Town Engineer, who said it was all right to use the ground-floor meeting room as a temporary library (during the three month closing of the library). A layout plan must be submitted that shows clear aisles. Patrons will be able to come in, check out, and return books.

The move to the ground floor might occur in August, but most likely in September. How long the Library will need to be closed for the transition is being considered (two weeks maybe). The book storage company will take a week to box the collection. The children's room and staff furniture have to be moved to the ground floor.

Laurel reported that the staff worked very hard during the three-week closing, which began on May 1, 2006. There was a lot of weeding of books and card catalog discards, many of which were given to the Friends of the Library for their book sales.

She noted that the public likes the new Library entrance.

Donna Brown left at 8:15.

Since there is no bike rack in front of the new Library entrance, Councilor Fortunato suggested that the Library ask the senior class or the graduating middle school class to make a donation to help buy one.

At 8:16 Greg Curtin moved to go into executive session in order to discuss union issues. Polly Moon seconded. The motion carried.

At 8:24 Howard Greenblatt moved to end executive session. Brad Milvae seconded. The motion carried.

At 8:25 Polly Moon moved to adjourn. Lucille Plouffe seconded. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Grady
Secretary