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## **Wethersfield Library Board Minutes of May 25, 2004 Meeting**

### **Notice of actions taken:**

Members present: Donna Brown, Greg Curtin, Lucille Domick, Susan Grady, Eugene Grayson, Brad Milvae, Polly Moon, Karen Mortensen, Lucille Plouffe.

Also present: Laurel Goodgion, Library Director; Pauline Uchich, Friends of Wethersfield Library.

Chairman Greg Curtin called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

- I. Other items for the agenda. None.
- II. Public comment. None.
- III. Town Council Liaison report. None.
- IV. Approval of minutes of April 27, 2004.

Lucille Plouffe moved and Donna Brown seconded, that the [minutes of April 27, 2004](#) be approved. All were in favor.

### V. Director's Report

Laurel reported that she, Susan Grady and Polly Moon had all attended the Chamber of Commerce annual dinner last week.

A Town Hall/Library renovation workshop was held on May 24th. Laurel, Polly Moon and Lucille Plouffe attended. Architect Peter Wells explained to Town Council members the possible scope of the additional construction and repairs if the project is expanded. Because the bond language reduces the amount of the bond by the amount of the two construction grants (\$790,000), it is necessary to go to referendum to "accept the grants which will increase the amount of the bond". Because a referendum cannot be held until 30 days after the public hearing (set for June 7th) the earliest possible date for a referendum would be July 7th.

In order to keep the Small Cities grant for ADA work at Town Hall, work needs to begin soon. Bids have gone out and are due May 27th. They will be valid for 90 days. However no contract can be signed with a construction company until paperwork for the Library construction grant has been received back from the State Library. The Town Manager cannot initiate the paperwork until the funding for the Library project is in place.

Funds to expand the Town Hall/Library project to include many needed repairs and improvements could be sought in a separate referendum which could be included on the November ballot. The Building Committee has evaluated the list of possible repairs and improvements and rated each either high or low priority.

If the referendum to restore the \$790,000 in grant funds is defeated, the Library renovation will be nearly useless.

The Library Board needs to find out how they can legally lend support to the July referendum.

Laurel would like to recognize the staff for the excellent job they have done during this very demanding year. She asked the Board to allocate money from the Action Fund for a staff recognition project. She would like to purchase a book, selected by each staff member, to add to the collection. Each book would bear a plate recognizing the staff member who had selected the book. The books would be displayed for a short time for the

public to look at with a short statement from the staff member explaining why she/he picked the book. Donna Brown moved and Brad Milvae seconded, that the Board allocate up to \$700 from the Action Fund for the staff recognition project. All were in favor.

Gene would like to include a social event for the staff so the board could express their appreciation in person. Board members will bring the refreshments for the party. So it will be possible for all staff to attend, the party will be scheduled for a Wednesday evening in June. The Library is closed on Wednesday evenings.

## VI. Financial Report

Greg distributed the quarterly report on the Endowment Fund.

Laurel reviewed the Library operating budget. Benefits show only a 32% expenditure.

Laurel plans to meet with the new Finance Director, Lisa Hanover, and request improving the categories for the Library budget so it is easier to understand.

Laurel distributed a report on the Action Fund.

## VII. Friends of the Library report

Pauline Ucich reported that the Friends had donated \$2000 for the children's summer reading activities and \$1,000 to purchase CD cases for the re-classification project.

Laurel commented that the museum passes will begin expiring in June and hopes that the Friends will want to continue this popular project. Pauline said she would schedule a meeting after the booksale.

The Friends booksale is scheduled for Friday, June 11th from 6 - 9 p.m., Saturday, June 12th from 10 - 4 and Sunday, June 13th from 1 - 4 p.m.

## VIII. Chairman's report

Greg thanked the Board members for their excellent support during the budget process.

## IX. Old Business. None.

### X. New business

#### A. Impact of Library budget for 2004-2005.

The Board discussed the impact of the 2004-2005 budget allocation. The Town Council voted to add \$50,000 to the Manger's II budget for the Library. Laurel provided three scenarios: 1. Follow the suggestion of Town Council and allocate \$31,500 to wages and \$18,500 to materials, 2. Place all \$50,000 in the materials budget, 3. Place all \$50,000 in wages. Laurel reported that the Town Manager had told a staff member that it would not be good public relations to close any hours.

There was much discussion and a realization that whatever the Board's decision, there needed to be extensive communication with the public to explain the critical role that the materials budget plays in the health of the library. Laurel would like to develop an information sheet for staff to hand to people who complain about the lack of materials.

Karen Mortensen asked where the cuts will be made. Laurel said that she would eliminate one database and drop little used magazines but most of the shortfall will affect the things that people check out: books, recorded books, music CDs, DVDs, videos. Laurel commented that she had made many economies in the current budget year, eliminating expensive standing orders, dropping the NYTimes on microfilm, etc. and there was no more to cut. There will be significantly less money to purchase new materials.

After more discussion Susan Grady moved and Donna Brown seconded that the Library maintain the

present hours. All were in favor.

Greg will advise the Town Council of the Board's decision and explain the impact on the Library of the having significantly less money for library materials. He would also like to appear on television with Laurel. The Board needs to resume making reports to Council and provide information about problems as well as successes.

B. Proposed change in video fine rate.

The Town Manager has asked that departments increase revenues. In reviewing the library fine rates Laurel noticed that surrounding libraries are charging \$1 a day fine for overdue videos but Wethersfield is charging only 10 cents. Laurel recommended that the Library increase the video fine to \$1. Donna Brown moved and Greg Curtin seconded that the video fine rate be increased to \$1 a day. All were in favor.

C. School summer reading lists

Laurel said that she had been very concerned about the books that students had been assigned to read over the summer because the Library lacked sufficient copies to meet the demand and with the greatly reduced materials budget, did not have funds with which to purchase copies. However today Mary-Jane Pazda, the Wethersfield Schools Language Arts Coordinator, had called Laurel to tell her that Mary-Jane was allocating \$1,700 for the purchase of these books for the Library. Laurel was relieved and pleased.

D. Connecticard statistics

Laurel distributed the latest Connecticard statistics. Wethersfield residents have increased their use of the libraries in Glastonbury and West Hartford but borrowed slightly fewer items from the libraries in Newington, Rocky Hill and Hartford. Total items borrowed by Wethersfield residents from other libraries decreased by 4%.

Residents of Glastonbury, Newington, Rocky Hill and West Hartford, and Hartford residents significantly increased, their use of the Wethersfield Library. Total non-resident use of the Wethersfield Library increased by 25%.

XI. Adjournment

Donna Brown moved and Lucille Plouffe seconded that the meeting be adjourned. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Pauline Moon,  
Secretary