

MEETING MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY DIRECTORS

MONDAY, JANUARY 9, 2023

Bristol Public Library, 5 High Street, Bristol, CT 06010

ATTENDEES: Valina Carpenter, Nicholas Jakubowski, Andrea Kapchensky, Pina Salvatore, Eric Frenette, Elizabeth Kanachovski, Barbara O'Neill, Ashley Verceles, and Kimberly Ploszaj.

Library Director Deborah Prozzo, Assistant Library Director Scott Stanton, and Recording Secretary Ruth Vontell.

Absent: Council Liaison Sebastian Panioto

Item 1- Call to order

Chairperson Carpenter called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

New Library Board member, Kimberly Ploszaj, introduced herself.

Item 2- Audience Participation

None.

Item 3- Approval of Minutes

Director Kanachovski MOVED to approve the Minutes of the December 5, 2022 Regular Meeting. Seconded by Director O'Neill. All in favor. Motion passed.

Item 4- Communications

None.

Item 5- Committee Reports

Chairperson Carpenter reported that the Library Board no longer has any vacancies. She is working on committee assignments now that there is a full group. She suggested that all the committees hold informational meetings before next month's Library Board Meeting to set tasks and agendas for the year. Library Director Prozzo is available to attend these meetings upon request.

a. Finance Committee

No Report.

b. Property Committee

No Report.

c. Policy Committee

Director Salvatore reported that the Policy Committee will meet at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, February 6, 2023, just prior to the Regular Library Board Meeting, to discuss possible amendments to the Library Board By-laws. The ACLB (Association of Connecticut Library Boards) has helpful resources, including 4-5 page sample

bylaws from other towns, available on their website: aclb.wildapricot.org. There is also a link to the Trustee's Handbook. The Bristol Public Library pays to be a member of ACLB. The State Library publishes whether library boards are appointed or elected, but not the number of members. Most library websites have a list of their library board members.

d. Strategic Planning Committee

No Report.

Item 6- Ad-Hoc Committee Reports

a. Library Director's Report

1) November 2022 statistics highlights:

- Overall circulation went up 2% which is a monthly trend.
- E-Books/Magazines saw a 9% decrease from last year at this time, which is actually a good thing because it means more patrons are actually coming into the building. Resuming in-person visits has been a struggle nationwide.
- Inter-library loans to other libraries were up 14%
- Number of adult programs went up 13%
- Library card registrations increased 19% thanks to the efforts of Beth Martin and her staff. Everybody should have a library card to access resources.
- Database usage decreased 52% due to the elimination of costly and underperforming databases. We recently added back *The New York Times* after negotiating a better price. The public also has free daily access to *The Wall Street Journal*.
- Bristol History Room patron visits decreased 46% due to staff shortage in the Reference Department.
- Number of items cataloged decreased 29% due to ongoing issues with Baker & Taylor since the Ransomware attack.
- Patron visits increased 16%
- Wi-Fi sessions are up 23%
- Overall program attendance is up 43% which is encouraging.
- Total number of programs is down by 10% mainly due to no Young Adult programs and lack of Children's programs at Manross. We don't want to see that continue.
- Children's program attendance is up 60%. Valerie Toner and her staff have done a tremendous job offering a variety of in-person programs. The Children's Department is very busy.

2) Year-to-Date Budget Report: We are half-way through the fiscal year.

- Our Revenue is doing very well even though we are now fine free. We still charge fees for lost and damaged items, including cases and RFID tags, and for copying/printing.

Meeting room rentals have increased 400% with many groups paying the \$25.00 food/clean-up fee.

- The Main, Children's and Manross Departments are at the same spending levels as last year. The budget really does not fluctuate that much from year to year.
- The biggest fluctuations are with public utilities and natural gas which we have no control over. We opened a P.O. for the CT Solar Program and receive solar credits. We don't have a year's worth of solar data yet so we don't know what to anticipate.
- The BPSA Contract was settled not too long ago and now the 233 Union Contract is up for a City Council vote tomorrow night. If passed, this will impact wage line items.
- We have blanket P.O.s set up for our repeat vendors.
- There could be a potential problem with the Professional Fees line item which covers our \$52,000 LCI membership and the cost of entertainers and programs. This line item will be impacted by an increase in Westech's cost for our two security guards, one at the Main Library and one at Manross. We may need to shift money from another account, cut the security guards' hours, or request more money to cover this expense. The Purchasing Department may need to put this contract out to bid.
- Library Trust Funds will be used for RnB's A/V upgrade in Meeting Room #1 at the Main Library, the library's website redesign (mobile-friendly), new meeting room booking software, and the cap on the library truck. Goodsell funds have been used for program supplies, which mainly includes reference materials and online databases. There is approximately \$15,000 in the Manross Miscellaneous line item. We are moving forward with all of our projects. There is no update on the truck. We have tried to get a vendor number for Action Glass.
- Ruth and I have an appointment with the Comptroller's Dept. on February 1, 2023 to review the Library Budget which was input directly into MUNIS this year after receiving training in December. This was much more tedious, cumbersome, and time-consuming than preparing EXCEL spreadsheets and salary worksheets. After the budget review meeting, a Budget Hearing will be scheduled.

3) Staff News: The library is now fully staffed! Sara Abbatemarco joined the Reference Department on December 27, 2022. She has a research background. She has worked at the CT Historical Society and part-time at the public libraries in both Simsbury and Canton. Sara will share some of the Bristol History Room responsibilities.

4) Sunday Hours: Sunday hours started yesterday. We had 115 patrons come through the doors. This is more than last year. Sunday hours will run through the end of March from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. An adult program is scheduled for February 12, 2023 and the Children's Department will provide passive programming every Sunday for families.

b. City Council Liaison Report

No Report.

c. Friends of the Library

No Report.

d. Community Outreach Committee Report

No Report.

Item 7- Old Business

- a. Director Kanachovski sought clarification about the Friends of the Library's ability to apply for Main Street Community Foundation grants. Assistant Library Director Stanton stated that he has spoken with Rose Ann Chatfield about this. The Friends can apply for money for internal, organizational expenses or on behalf of the library. The Library Coffee House programs were originally funded by Main Street.
- b. Director Kanachovski asked about having a "Youth Author Day." Library Director Prozzo has encouraged our Young Adult librarian, Jose Alvarez, to pursue a Nutmeg author and to talk to the Main Street Community Foundation about getting grant money for such an event.
- c. Chairperson Carpenter noted that a Nominating Committee needs to be formed in March/April in preparation for the election of officers at the Annual Library Board Meeting in June.

Item 8- New Business

There was discussion regarding the City of Bristol's Conflict of Interest Acknowledgement form which Library Board members sign when appointed or reappointed.

Item 9- Adjournment

There being no further business, **Director Frenette made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:13 p.m. Seconded by Director Jakubowski. All present voted in favor and the meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Vontell

This meeting was digitally recorded.