

Waterford Public Library Board of Trustees

Minutes of Meeting of 14 March 2023

President Aaron Rosenberg called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Trustees present: E. Boyce, N. Dragoli, J. Lehet, J. Merrill, G. Ritter, A. Roberge. Also present C. Johnson, Library Director. Not present: L. Couture, M. Furey-Wagner, C. Giordano, J. Mullen.

1. Consent Agenda

Motion made by J. Merrill, seconded by E. Boyce, to accept the Consent Agenda, the Treasurer's Report, and the Financial Report. All in favor.

2. President's Report - A. Rosenberg

Reflecting on a PBS Special, Do we still need libraries? A brief history from cuneiform tablets, to illustrated manuscripts, to university collections, to printed books available only to the elite. Then the advent, in the early 20th Century to public and free libraries. In 1923 Waterford established its library and now we are celebrating the 100th anniversary. All has access for free. Although information available on line, do we still need physical buildings? They are clean, safe, open space, and ALL are welcome. They provide children's storytimes, computers and access to Wi-Fi, programs such as Great Decisions, author talks, Book Groups, and much more.

By maintaining the building we are maintaining the culture. In Waterford, with a population of 18,000, the cost is about \$40 per person. Imagine the cost to the citizens of Waterford without a library?

3. Committee Reports

- Finance

G. Ritter reported the Endowment remains between \$3 and \$3.2 M as of 28 February. A meeting of the Committee will occur prior to the next Board meeting.

- Development and Fundraising

C. Johnson stated although Amazon Smile has been discontinued as a program we expect one more payment. The Annual Drive is up from our prior meeting. However, we are down \$1,900 from this point last year with slightly higher expenses. In coordination with the 100th Anniversary a special giving plan will be introduced.

- Nominating

A. Rosenberg noted there is one vacancy. One submission has been received but will wait to evaluate when several more are in hand.

- Strategic Planning

C. Johnson said the Committee has been meeting once a month. A revised Mission Statement and Values has been drafted and will be finalized for approval at a future meeting.

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The Fair for 100th Anniversary is Saturday, 20 May. Activities, which will continue throughout the day, will include several music offerings. During the month of May, there will be a variety of programs including lectures on the history of the Waterford Library, life and events in the 1920s, and portrayals of persons of the 1920s. There will be a folded brochure with events to be funded from the M+T Bank grant.

4. Director's Report

Budget

- Budget Hearings with Board of Selectmen were held on 1 and 15 February. Based on a motion by B. Sabilia, the BOS voted to approve the addition of \$8,000 to the Library's budget to reinstate Sunday service.
- Board of Finance approved the revised Library budget request of \$1,006,837.

Building and Facilities

- Mezzanine construction is complete.
- The state construction grant contract from the CT State Library has been signed by R. Brule and mailed in.
- DPW Director G. Schneider has created the RFP for design services and will schedule a meeting for the Committee in the coming weeks. The request will then go to the RTM to approve Town Building Committee for the project.
- The issue of the fire alarm faulting in the lower level electrical room continues. Origin of the leak is being investigated.
- Town is considering removing/moving the underground oil storage tanks with new tanks in the lower level store area.

Grants

- J. Bivona submitted a grant proposal of \$11,750 to the Community Foundation for the initiative to expand the Spanish language materials for children and teens and to provide bilingual storytimes and parenting programs. Funding decision to be made in April.
- M+T Bank approved our grant request for \$3,000 instead of the requested \$550! This will fund the youth finance program entitled "It\$ My Money". The program by Patrina Dixon will be presented during Money Smart Week in April. The balance of the funds will be used to support the 100th Anniversary programs and summer reading initiatives.

Personnel Updates

- Staff Development training day is scheduled for a full day 17 March. The library will be closed from 9-1 and then open for the afternoon.
- D. Beaulieu, a PT adult Info/Reference assistant will retire in May.

Service and Program Highlights

- A new software program, LibCal, has been trialing. This would replace Eventkeeper and would be transitioned in May.
- Take your Child to the Library Day was popular despite the frigid temperatures on 4 February.
- Feedback on the Winter Bingo reading program was positive.

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- Youth services is offering a variety of drop-in programs to provide a more equitable access to activities.
- The program Waterford RISE author panel partnership, on 11 February had 107 attendees.
- DVD binge bags are temporarily retired until summer.

Outreach

- Met with K. Widham to discuss Art in Waterford, planned for Memorial Day week-end.
- J. Bivona provided resume writing and interview tips for WHS students, reached out to the new administration at Friendship School, and had a Zoom meeting with elementary school principals to coordinate the summer reading program.

Town Initiatives

- Met with J. Bivona, J. Macrino, and J. Nazarchyk to discuss creation of welcoming kits for new students to the District.
- At the suggestion of the Police Department, in response to 1st Amendment Right Auditors, discrete signage will be installed for STAFF ONLY areas in the library to minimize disruptive behavior.
- Town's new website was scheduled to go live on 10 March. Still not active and no new date has been set for the launch. The intent is to give a unified look to all Town departments. A six month trial period should reveal any glitches.
- Regarding the Civic Triangle Park, no effective bids for dredging the pond were received. Thus, timing for the project has changed. The impact on the Library regarding parking and traffic patterns may occur earlier as certain portions of the overall project plan have been deleted.

5. Old Business

- a. New Buildings and Grounds Committee will include the Library Building & Grounds Manager.

6. New Business

- a. At the RTM Meeting on 5 December, a consensus was that Public Comment is vital to an inclusive and transparent government and should be part of all Public Meetings. The WPL Board of Trustees Agenda will now include an opportunity for public comment.
- b. A. Rosenberg read the draft new Mission Statement and Values. Once the Strategic Planning is complete the Board will vote to adopt as policy.

7. Adjournment

A motion was made by G. Ritter, seconded by N. Dragoli, all in favor, to adjourn at 6:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted 15 March 2023

Joy S. Merrill, Secretary