

Weston Public Library Board
Regular Meeting
April 5, 2023
7:30 PM, In-person and via Zoom

Draft Minutes

Present: Thomas Burke, Lori Goertz, Barbara Groves, Anne Hunt, Amy Jansen, Sharon Murphy, Amy Sanborn, Cyprian Toczek (left early), Director Ian Parsells

Absent: Rick Ross

Guest Representing the Friends: Marina Coprio

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Goertz at 7:34 PM.

The Interim Director's Report including Departmental Highlights is attached and includes expanded detail related to various items below.

1. **Budget:** Chairman Goertz reported that the BOF approved the Town Budget for FY 2023-2024, including the Library budget with late fees included. Late fees will be revisited with next year's budget proposal.
2. **Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Toczek screen shared the March 31, 2023 report. Interest for the period was over \$2,000. Income and expenses were minor. Expenses included a document scanner for the Director. Director Parsells also discussed the plan to fully understand the Pittsburgh Federal Home Loan Bank Board LOC in place to effectively provide the Endowment Fund with "insurance" above the FDIC limit. This was Treasurer Toczek's last meeting as Treasurer. He expressed his gratitude for being able to serve on the Board and as Treasurer. He will assist in the transition to a new Treasurer. The Board thanked him for his service to the Board, the Library, and the community, and wished him well.

Member Sanborn made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report for March 31, 2023 as presented. Second by Member Murphy. Motion carried unanimously.

3. **Minutes:**

Chairman Jansen made a motion to approve the minutes for the Special Buildings & Grounds Committee Meeting February 24, 2023. Second by Member Hunt. Motion carried unanimously.

Member Hunt made a motion to approve the minutes for the Special Buildings & Grounds Committee Meeting March 6, 2023. Second by Member Goertz. Motion carried unanimously.

Member Murphy made a motion to approve the minutes for the Regular Board Meeting March 7, 2023. Second by Member Goertz. Motion carried unanimously, with an abstention from Member Burke as he was absent.

4. **Director's Report:** Director Parsells introduced his Director's Report previously distributed to the Board. Issues discussed by the Board included the new Library cards, the need to upgrade/replace the camera security system, and the status of the air handler (has some life left; can be addressed in capital budget in the future). He gave an update on the process of hiring a new Children's and Teen Librarian. It is hoped they will be in place on May 1st. Additionally, the Director led a preliminary discussion related to the Use of the Community Room and Conference Rooms policy with the possibility of exploring when/if there should be a room rental fee under some circumstances. The Policy Committee comprised of Members Jansen, Burke, and Sanborn will work with Director Parsells to make a recommendation to the Board as to the Use of the Community Room and Conference Rooms policy and the Application for Use of Community or Conference Rooms.

The gate count for March was 5,311 an increase of 27% over March 2022 and equal to pre-pandemic levels. Physical circulations were up 2% over March 2022 and digital circulations were up 1,608.

5. **Committee Reports:**

Buildings and Grounds: B&G Chairman Hunt gave the Board an update related to Beautification planting around the Library and the situation with the lawn. Member Sanborn gave an update on progress related to new Library signage.

Chairman Goertz announced the Programs and Publicity Committee will be meeting at 2:30 this Friday to discuss a new logo.

6. **Old Business:** Chairman Goertz reported that the reception to welcome Director Parsells was well attended and received. She thanked all of those who contributed to its success. She also highlighted the fantastic event hosted by the Friends on Friday, March 31st with incredible turnout and energy.

The Board discussed the need to review its investment plan, and create an investment strategy for its various accounts. Old draft needs to be reviewed/finalized.

7. **New Business:** The Board discussed the Treasurer position vacancy. Member Hunt indicated she was willing to fulfill this role.

Member Burke made a motion to elect Member Hunt as Treasurer of the Board. Second by Member Sanborn. Motion carried unanimously.

8. **Friends:** Marina Coprio reported on behalf of the Friends. The Friends are hosting a concert on Sunday, April 23rd as a musical tie-in with a May 4 book discussion of *Final Revival of Opal and Nev*, by Dawnie Walton. (The Board discussed arranging for the piano to be tuned in advance, discussing past tuning and repair experience. Member Burke provided the name used in the past and used by Norfield Church, Jim Birch.) There is also a concert series in development spearheaded by relatively new Friends' Board Member Ed Crafts. She also reported on the selling of old and rare books on eBay, also initiated by Friends' Board member Crafts. Library Giving Day was yesterday so no report on its success was available. The next Friends' meeting will be Monday, April 17th.

9. **Adjournment:**

Member Groves made a motion to adjourn at 9:25 PM. Second by Member Burke. Motion carried unanimously.

Next Board Meeting is Tuesday, May 2nd at 7:30 PM. Hybrid or Zoom TBD.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Sanborn
Secretary

Weston Public Library
Director's Report
April 5, 2023

Incidents

No incidents to report.

Personnel

Anne Mastroianni and Ian Parsells, along with Town Administrator Jonathan Luiz, performed the first round of interviews for the Children's and Teen Librarian position. There were four candidates interviewed via Zoom and two of those four were selected to proceed to a second round of interviews to take place in April, administered by Karen Bennett, Anne, and Ian. Those interviews will have taken place by the date of the April board meeting. Additional updates will be provided in person.

The two part-time temporary employees hired during the director transition, Martine Bove and Terry Tortora, completed their work with the Library on March 15 and 17 respectively. We greatly appreciate their work during the transition and wish them only the best.

General Updates

We began accepting donations again on weekends only beginning on March 15. Deanna Whittredge expects that we can accommodate an additional 3,000 titles, but the Friends will try to reestablish the relationship with Emmanuel Episcopal Church who has graciously allowed the Friends to use their space for storage in years past.

The Library's old logo has been removed from a number of locations within the building and online including but not limited to: library cards, flyers, bookmarks, brochures, signage, policies, labels, notices, the website (including favicon), newsletter, social media, Google search, and EventKeeper. We are also awaiting Bing to update their search, but we have notified them of the needed change. The Friends have also been notified about updating their website. As more locations are identified, we will do our best removing those as well. When a new logo is designed, we will update all the aforementioned locations at that time.

Additionally, a new library card has been designed and approved. The picture of the library used in the design was supplied by Friend and member of the Weston Library Photography Club, Susan Urbania. Anne provided the layout with Ian advising. We are awaiting the final proof from Bibliomation and the vendor before final approval can be given and an initial batch 500 cards ordered. In the meantime, we have been assigning library card numbers in advance from that upcoming batch of cards. When the new cards arrive, all those who signed up during this period will receive their physical card in the mail.

The April newsletter was sent on April 1. Ian will continue using the Booksite interface until a suitable replacement is found. He will also investigate the desire for a pre-printed newsletter format, rather than the existing blog style.

Operations

In March, the library was open 31 days. The gate count was 5311 patrons (27% increase over March 2022 and equal to pre-pandemic levels). We circulated 5522 physical items (2% increase over March 2022) and 1608 digital.

The third quarter report will be presented at the May meeting.

Facilities and Grounds

Jonathan Luiz submitted the final paperwork to the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) for the State Library Construction Grant – Town of Weston awarded in March 2021 with the project completed February 2022. This report covered the Lighting Upgrades portion of the grant.

The air handler project quote that was generated by Tri-City, the Town's HVAC/plumbing service company, came to a total of \$97,133. Due to the high cost and assumed life remaining on the unit in question, it was determined to not be an emergency and could be planned for in a future Town budget.

Finances

March Expenses:

| Check Number | Date | Amount (programs) | Amount (other) | Deposit | Payable To | Details |
|---------------------|-------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|---------------------|--|
| | 3/14/2023 | | \$289.99 | | debit card purchase | Document scanner for Director's office |

Total Expenses: \$289.99

March Deposits:

- The library received \$86 in Book Sale funds.

Technology

A new Macbook Pro 14” laptop was ordered for the Makerspace. This was identified early in the fiscal year with earmarked funds, but staff were waiting on Ian’s arrival to make the purchase, due to the cost. Ian conferred with Anneliese Lomas to determine what models would meet her standards with the one purchased being a nice compromise between performance and size. It has since arrived and she has already begun using it. She says that it has been an amazing addition, not only for use with programs and equipment, but also how much better it is for editing social media and marketing.

The Library’s camera system is antiquated and losing support both from the manufacturer (Speco) and Windows. In order to view the live or recorded footage, the system requires Internet Explorer, which is no longer available in Windows 10 and 11. It is still usable in a special mode within the Edge browser, but a replacement system should be considered a priority moving forward.

Programs

For April programs, please visit:

<http://www.eventkeeper.com/mars/xpages/W/WESTON/EKMONTH.cfm?zeeOrg=WESTON>

The Friends have coordinated with Anne regarding a pair of events to celebrate the State Library’s All CT Reads annual program. The Friends have scheduled a music program for Sunday, April 23 at 3pm called “A Musical Introduction to *The Final Revival of Opal & Nev*” with local pianist Joseph H. Bush and actress, singer, and dancer Chavon Hampton. Their performance will incorporate song selections featured in the book as well as others of the era. Anne will follow that performance with a book discussion on Thursday, May 4 at 7pm that she will moderate.

Adult Services

The Winter Reading Challenge concluded on March 21. Patrons logged 561 books read, mostly by using Beanstack online. Two happy participants each won a \$25.00 gift certificate to Barnes and Noble, thanks to the Friends of the Library. Although prizes were not linked to the amount read, we had one adult reader log 30 titles, and one child 46.

Meetings Attended:

- Bibliomation meeting on new features in Evergreen via zoom, March 1
The Evergreen operating system will be upgraded on April 2; this meeting presented an overview of the changes that will be implemented.

Children's and Teen Services

Book and media selections continue to be ordered for the Children's Room by Anne. She will continue doing so until a new Children's and Teen Services Librarian is hired.

Laura Ivy is providing all programs for our youngest patrons with weekly series like Owl's One and All Storytime, PreK Craft Time, Melty Mondays, and Tigger's Tiny Tales Storytime. When the new librarian is hired, Laura will continue offering programs for this age group, with the new librarian building upon that foundation across this and the remaining youth age groups.

Summer Reading is not far off and the new librarian will need to hit the ground running in preparation. We will support this new person as a team to ensure we have as robust a set of offerings as we can across all age groups.

Administrative

- Ian was invited to do a story time and meet some of our youngest patrons at the Norfield Children's Center. The theme of the day was Sports & Fitness so he selected a title called *Rupert Can Dance* by Jules Feiffer drawing attention to dancing as a great way to get the blood flowing.
- He also attended the March 8 FLAG (Fairfield County Library Administrators Group) meeting via Zoom. Aside from hearing member updates, Victoria O'Neill, Program Coordinator at The Hub, presented on Suicide Gatekeeping Training and how to be a resource. Suicide is the most preventable kind of death and with the right intervention at the right time, can be avoided. She showcased the Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) model of intervention with good, better, best approaches with examples.
- On March 22, Ian participated in the state library's learning session titled ADA and Beyond: Disability Accommodation in the Library Workplace. It was an eye-opening experience, especially for an administrator learning what you can and cannot say in these situations, by law. He will follow up with Town Hall to determine what Weston's accommodation process entails.

For Discussion

Policy on Use of Community and Conference Rooms review/revision:

Through discussions with the staff, Friends, select community members, and from feedback at the March Board meeting, it has become clear that there is confusion regarding the current Policy on Use of Community and Conference Rooms. There is also a lack of consistency when it comes to for-profit use of those rooms. Ian will attempt to compile these concerns to spark discussion, an eventual revision of this policy, and potentially other related policies as well.

- It is unclear if food is allowed in the Conference Rooms. According to the policy as written, it is expressly stated that refreshments are allowed in the Community Room, but nothing is stated in the sections for Conference Rooms A, B, and C. This has led to inconsistent enforcement amongst staff.
- Although it is stated in the policy that the room must be reserved by a Weston resident aged 18 or older, exceptions have been made for individuals such as music teachers that are not Weston residents, but want to schedule a recital for their Weston students. We shouldn't expect staff to know when to make these exceptions or determine when they would be appropriate. This can lead to awkward staff/patron exchanges when the latter says "but so-and-so let me do it last year!" It is Ian's belief that we should allow non-resident adults to reserve the spaces at a lower priority than Weston residents.
- There is no process in place for businesses to reserve rooms for purposes beyond being vendors for library programs. However, for-profit use is occurring in these spaces due to prior arrangements (DIG and tutoring for example), creating an inequitable and unenforceable situation. In order to combat this, Ian believes that implementing a fee schedule for businesses (both for-profit and not-for-profit) to reserve these spaces would be prudent and comes with added benefits. First, it provides the pathway for businesses to reserve spaces. Second, it provides a new revenue stream, which can be used to offset losses from other dwindling sources (i.e. late fees). Third, it can create new opportunities for the Friends to engage corporate donors and provide benefits to being a library sponsor.
 - A sample fee schedule would look like the following:
 - Not for profit organizations: No charge for use of the Conference Rooms or Community Room. No admission fee, donations solicited, sales requested, or private meetings allowed (otherwise For Profit Organization fees will apply).
 - For Profit Organizations: The Community Room may be reserved for \$100 for the first hour and \$75 for each additional hour. Conference Rooms A, B, or C may be reserved for \$25 per hour.