

Weston Public Library Board
Regular Meeting

Tuesday February 4, 2020
7:45 PM, Public Library Conference Room

Minutes

Attendance: Thomas Burke, Lori Goertz, Barbara Groves, Anne Hunt, Amy Jansen, Sharon Murphy, Rick Ross, Amy Sanborn, Cyprian Toczek, Karen Tatarka

Guest:

Susan Richard, representing Friends of the Library

Meeting called to order by Chairman Hunt at 7:46 PM

1. **Treasurer's Report:** The Board discussed the draft October 2019 and draft January 2020 Treasurer's Funds Activity Reports distributed by Treasurer. They will be finalized and redistributed at the March board meeting.

2. **Minutes:**

Member Ross made a motion to approve the Minutes for the Regular Board Meeting of January 7, 2020. Second by Member Burke. Motion carried unanimously.

3. **Space Planning:** Member Sanborn gave a brief update on the Offutt Center project, the January 16, 2020 OCC meeting and the meeting on January 30, 2020 among the First Selectman, the Town Administrator, Hanna Przada and the Trustee. Cost estimates and leveling were discussed as well as the plan going forward and the nature of the conversation to be had with the Trustee and Ms Przada. The next meeting of the OCC is scheduled for February 6, 2020. The agenda for the meeting on the 6th was shared with the Board.

4. **Director's Report:** Director Tatarka reviewed various items in the Director's Report including the topics highlighted below.

Director Tatarka reported that she had no news regarding the First Selectman's proposed Library budget for operating expenses. She did send a revised Budget Review schedule to the Budget Committee that was transmitted to the Board in advance of the meeting.

Director Tatarka gave an update on the Children's Room remodel. The Board of Selectmen will vote to authorize the First Selectman to enter into an agreement with the State of CT related to the State matching grant for the remodel at its meeting on Thursday, Feb. 6th. It will then be sent to the State Librarian to be signed. No work may be done until the contract is signed by the Town and the State. With the length of time this has taken since the original grant application was filed in 2018, the cost for the Library Board's portion of the project has increased due to inflation and tariffs. The incremental cost to the Board could be approximately \$12,000-\$13,000 over its \$41,500 commitment. (This is taking into consideration the cost increases and the generous contribution from the Friends. There was a \$9,000 contingency built into the cost estimates and there is \$3,653.64 available from a Library renovation roll over capital account.) It is important to approve an amount in case orders may be placed before the March board meeting.

Chairman Hunt made a motion to approve up to \$13,000 to cover a potential shortfall in the Board's funding the Children's Room remodeling from the Nicolet Fund and the Endowment Fund, if necessary, with the understanding that the contingency portion of the State Grant will be applied to the Children's Room remodeling, excluding the windows. Second by Member Ross. Motion carried unanimously.

Director Tatarka reviewed the proposed Weston Public Library Strategic Plan 2020-22 circulated to the Board in advance of the meeting.

Member Burke made a motion to approve the Weston Public Library Strategic Plan 2020-2022 as amended. Second by Member Ross. Motion carried unanimously.

Director Tatarka distributed the FY 2019-2020 2nd Quarter Report. She highlighted a number of areas. Increases in categories that have demonstrated significant growth after the renovation are beginning to level off as expected. Increases continue in eBooks, downloadable audio books and interlibrary loans (as DeliverIt issues are being sorted out). Interlibrary loans are up as the Library is supporting more book groups. Downloadable periodicals and Ancestry.com are both down. The latter is attributed to an Ancestry class not having been offered in a while. Gate counts and room reservations are up YTD compared to prior fiscal years for the same period.

With respect to social media, the Library's Facebook presence is increasing, but Instagram is lagging with the recent departure of LTA Phillips and no replacement yet in place.

Town resident, Karin Giannitti has volunteered to pay to have the wooden Library sign that had hung out by Norfield Road refurbished. While the sign does not have historical significance, the logo was designed by John Held Jr., an American cartoonist, printmaker, illustrator, sculptor and author who resided in Weston for a period of time. The Board graciously accepted Mrs. Giannitti's offer. The company that made the sign in 2004 is Granata Sign Co. in Stamford.

Director Tatarka shared a recent incident of a student vaping in the Library. The Board reviewed the Code of Conduct policy posted on the Library's website. The sense of the meeting was to support Director Tatarka in consulting with appropriate parties and determining any repercussions from this transgression.

There is no news on the coin/bill tower for printing/photocopying. Director Tatarka is working with the staff to ascertain the staff's copying needs in order to estimate possible revenue

Director Tatarka reported on the January statistics. January gate count was 5,823, a 2.9% decrease of over last year, but still the second busiest January on record. Circulations were 3,811. This is a 9.7% decrease from last year, but still trending much higher pre-renovation circulation numbers.

The Director's Report, Departmental reports are attached.

5. Chairman's Reports:

Car Show: Member Toczec made a presentation related to the Car Show to be held in the fall of 2020. Member Toczec has met with the Friends who are on board to support this venture. Dates were discussed, subject to the availability of the WHS parking lot. Pricing models, judging/awards, and publicity were discussed. Members Ross, Burke, Groves and Goertz volunteered to work on the car show with Member Toczec and the Friends.

Daffodil Days: Members Groves and Goertz share their feelings regarding the upcoming Daffodil Days to be held this spring. Ideas were discussed regarding the best ways to make this a focused, meaningful event to celebrate and show appreciation for supporters of the Library. Of paramount importance is getting the wonderful donors and volunteers to the event in order to celebrate and thank them for the contributions they have made to the Library. This will require a strategic approach including on line and physical invitations. The Board also discussed the appropriate use of the "Thank You for Our Most Successful Year" infographic, the "How we Compare" section, and what information should be included on the reverse side.

Member Murphy made a motion to approve up to \$300 to have the flyers printed outside. Second by Member Burke. Motion carried unanimously.

Since the February 29th date to recognize former Library Board members Langlois and Toner will not work, we are tentatively looking at Sunday, April 19 to honor them and make it the cornerstone of the donor/volunteer recognition. Member Groves distributed a document including her ideas for Daffodil Days events/programs. The celebration will also include the unveiling of the Franc Vitale plaque. Food for the event was also discussed.

6. **Old Business:**

Member Hunt reviewed the Committee List distributed in advance of the meeting. There were a few places where names were omitted. This list will be revised and circulated to the Board.

Speak Up will be Saturday, February 8th from 10:30 AM to Noon.

The Library Board is hosting a classical music concert with Francesco Barone on Sunday, February 9th at 3 PM. Member Groves has volunteered to organize refreshments for the event and Member Toczek volunteered to do the set up and break down to avoid having to pay someone to do it.

Member Sanborn noted that “Library Planting to be done” is on the Beautification meeting agenda for Wednesday, February 5th.

7. **New Business:** None

Friends: Susan Richard reported on upcoming Friends programs: The photo show reception by Weston Commission of the Arts was well attended; there will be a show of student photography in June; the January 26th presentation, War with Russia? A Citizen Guide to Understanding Kremlin Aggression and what we can do to Stop it with Weston Resident Scott Licamele, was attended by approximately 45 people; on February 23rd the LWV and the Friends are screening the documentary, Let the People Decide with a Q&A with the filmmaker and Weston resident, Gavin Guerra, to follow the screening. Other upcoming events are: Readers and Writers series, First Time authors on March 1st; an award-winning theater piece by Kimberley Wilson capturing the spirits of Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Rosa Parks, Maya Angelou and other courageous black women cosponsored by the Friends and the LWV on March 8th; and Founding Mothers with Monica Peterson, story-teller and actress on March 22nd.

8. **Adjournment:** Member Ross made a motion to adjourn at 10:34 PM. Second by Member Jansen. Motion carried unanimously.

Next Board meeting is **WEDNESDAY, March 4th at 7:30 PM. (Change due to BOF meeting to review BOS proposed budget)**

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Sanborn
Secretary

As approved March 4, 2020

Weston Public Library
Director's Report
February 4, 2020

Space Planning

- Children's Room –All paperwork necessary to complete the contract with the State Library is in place and has been given to Town Administrator Luiz. First Selectman Spaulding will be signing the contract at the Feb. 6 Selectmen's meeting. The contract then needs to go to the State Library for review and signing. Only when we receive the completed contract back can we begin any ordering, bidding, or construction work. In the meantime, Town Administrator Luiz is working to get revised quotes and finding companies to bid on the larger Town projects. We also received a revised cost estimate from Creative Library Concepts. The anticipated increase is \$10,800 due to inflation and tariffs. If the breakdown of the grant funds remains the same and the Town uses all of the matching funds for their projects, this means that the Board would have to approve, at the very most, \$12,246 more to complete the Children's Room as designed, still figuring in the very generous \$12,000 donation from the Friends of the Library. We did plan a \$9,000 contingency (matched at 50%-- I think the Board should keep this for the remodeling since the Town did not contribute the shelving money that was originally set aside for the project), there is \$3,635 left in a capital account that Member Sanborn asked be left in place for this project, and we do know that some of the Town's projects will come in under the projected amount, so hopefully the actual overage will be closer to \$5,000. If we wish to place an order as soon as the contract comes back from the State, I believe the Board should approve additional funds as an "up to" amount at this time. We will not know what the Town's projects will actually cost for a month or more after the contract is signed, and if we wait, we will miss any possibility of completing the Children's Room before summer reading.
 - For full disclosure, there will also be a cost for renting book carts (\$1,014 with a security deposit of \$5,000 that will be returned when the carts are returned). If DPW will pick up scrap metal/discarded furniture again and we can get volunteers to help move books, we will not incur any other moving charges.
- The First Selectman and Town Administrator met with Offutt Charitable Trust Trustee Orenstein and Architect Przada on Jan. 30 to discuss next steps.

Strategic Planning

- I have distributed the draft of the interim strategic plan. This plan is adapted from the previous plan and is meant to serve as a temporary solution until we have a better understanding of the timeframe for the Offutt Center completion.

Finances

- I have no additional information to share at this time about the budget. The Board of Selectmen will review the First Selectman's budget request on Feb. 18 (please note this is a date change).
- The 2nd Q financial report will be distributed at the meeting as part of the 2nd Q report.

Building

- Town Administrator Luiz has worked with TriCity Heating and Cooling to review the Library's boiler to replace all parts that are at the end of their life expectancy. This should prevent additional heat outages.
- The Library received some shelves that were no longer needed at Town Hall. Town Handyman Cobelle installed the shelves behind the stage and they are being used to organize Children's programming supplies. Children's Librarian Petrino has devoted time to this project.

Library Programming

- Full list of February events is available [here](#). The Board is hosting Francesco Barone on Sunday, Feb. 9. I recall Member Groves was going to provide refreshments. Member Toczec was going to help set up chairs. I also have 2 Boy Scouts coming to help. We currently have over 40 people registered.

Operations

- The 2nd Q report will be distributed at the meeting.
- January gate count was 5,823, a 2.9% decrease of over last year, but our second busiest January on record. Circulations were 3,811. This is a 9.7% decrease from last year, but still trending much higher than pre-renovation circulation numbers.
- The vendor we use for printing/photocopying has not yet provided a cost estimate for a basic coin/bill tower. I have reached out to the manufacturer to see if we can buy direct, but that is not an option. As soon as I receive the quote I will send it to Member Murphy. Starting Feb. 3, Library staff will also be tracking all of their photocopying as the staff use the same equipment as the public. I hope this will provide a clearer idea of what the revenue stream should be.
- Franklin Bronze has received the deposit for the Vitale sign and it is in production. It will take 6-8 weeks.

Staff

- Children's Library Assistant Essagof has resigned and her last day at the Library will be Feb. 11. On a positive note, Library Assistant Ivy will be assuming Ms. Essagof's schedule, and will now work in the Children's and Teen Department every week. I reopened the discussion with First Selectman Spaulding and Town Administrator Luiz about the staffing situation at the Library and the impact that a cap of 15 hours/week has on our operations.
- Response to the PT Library Technology Assistant position has been slow. I will keep the position posted for several more weeks.
- Staff have been training on the Evergreen web client (please see departmental reports below). We expect to go live with the web client on Feb. 10.

Departmental Reports

Children's and YA Department – Alessandra Petrino

Professional Development:

- January 12: Attended Middle School Nutmeg 2022 Committee meeting to discuss our first list of books up for possible nomination of the award.
- January 14, 21 & 28: Attended Storytelling 4-week series workshop with Storyteller Jennifer Munro in Wallingford. Each week we learned how to tell different types of stories- traditional, personal, humor. Final week will be presenting a story to the class that we can take back to our libraries.
- January 17: Attended YA Librarians Fairfield County Roundtable (I am co-chair of this group). At this month's meeting we discussed programming for special groups including LGBTQIA+, ASD, and New Adults. We will be coordinating a shared calendar of these programs to share with our patrons that have interest.

Meetings/Local Outreach:

- Jan. 22 - Attended Department Head meeting with Karen T, Karen B, and Nancy
- Jan. 29 - Attended programming meeting with Karen T to discuss upcoming February programs, Daffodil Days and Summer Reading planning.

Notable Children's/YA Notable Programs:

- Jan. 13 - Coding with Anna and Elsa - Single session makerspace program to teach grades 3-5 basic programming with Frozen characters using our chromebooks.
- Jan. 17 - Snowman Party- All things snowman related- we read stories, did snowman crafts, and had snowman snacks. Full program and lots of happy families.

- Jan. 24 - “My Intent” Jewelry making workshop - First time using this new kit we have for the makerspace. People can use to “stamp” letters and make words on metal washers and create jewelry or keychains. Very successful, scheduled a second class for February.

Upcoming:

- February 1 is Take Your Child to the Library Day and we have a full calendar of programs:
 - 10-11: Contests- I Spy, Guess How Many, What Book is this?
 - 11-12: Performance by author and songwriter Ryan SanAngelo
 - 12:30-1:15: Cookie Decorating and Oreo Tasting Contest
 - 1:30-2:30: Building Challenges: Sink or Float? Lego Challenge. Tallest Cup Tower. Block Bridges.
 - 3:00-4:00: Book Tasting
 - 10-4:00: Puzzles, Crosswords and mazes throughout the library.
- We are starting a new children’s monthly program called “Little World Travelers.” Each month we will stamp our “child passports” and travel to a new country to learn about what they are known for. We will do special activities specific to the country, enjoy a food from that country, and have books to check out about the country and by authors from there. First session will be February 25.
- I have started booking performers for the Summer Reading program and have already booked Singer Mr. Joe, and The Spoon Man. More bookings and plans to come in February.

Technical Services – Karen Bennett

- Last week I attended a webinar on launching the SimplyE platform for eContent for our patrons. I will be able to get that implemented in the next few weeks.
- With Maureen Johnson's help I have changed location codes for our television and foreign language dvds to make them easier to find.
- I have trained all but 2 staff members in the new web-based circulation system. It went very well with positive responses from them.

Circulation – Nancy Lincoln

- In keeping with the anticipated changes within Evergreen, the staff is being trained on the changes in the system.
- Hottest fiction titles are Dutch House & Where the Crawdads Sing. Educated and Becoming by Michelle Obama remain very popular non-fiction.
- Eric Weeks has been helping us at the desk every Tuesday afternoon since Abigayel Phillips left the staff.

Administrative Department – Karen Tatarka

Town/Library Meetings

- Jan. 6 – Budget meeting with Town Hall
- Jan. 7 – Space Planning Committee meeting to review status of Children’s Room project
- Jan. 13 – 2nd Budget meeting with Town Hall
- Jan. 14 – Follow up meeting with Friends of the Library regarding car show
- Jan. 16 – Offutt Center Committee meeting
- Jan. 22 – Library Department Heads meeting
- Jan. 23 – Meeting with Town Administrator Luiz to review requirements for State Library Construction Grant contract and discuss protocol with Grants Coordinator Dawn LaValle
- Jan. 29 – Programming meeting with Children’s Librarian Petrino
- Jan. 29 – Meeting with Town Administrator Luiz to review required documentation for State Library Construction Grant contract
- Jan. 30 – Meet with Town Administrator Luiz and Selectman Spaulding regarding Library staffing.

Professional Meetings/Outreach

- Jan. 8 – Attended Fairfield Library Administrators’ Group Meeting at Fairfield Public Library. This month’s presentation was conducted by Miranda Creative and reviewed website optimization, new marketing tools, and branding.
- Jan 16 - Contacted by Marcia Hamelin on behalf of WEF. They will be donating 25 books to mark the 25th anniversary of WEF. Children’s Librarian Petrino and I are pulling together a list. Once they arrive, WEF will provide bookplates to commemorate the anniversary.
- Jan. 28 – Provided a library presentation and update on the Offutt Center project to the local PEO chapter