

Weston Public Library Board
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, November 4, 2020
7:30 PM, Via Zoom

Minutes

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

Guests: Lynne Langlois, Trustee Emerita, and Susan Richard, representing Friends of the Library, Ted Craft, Weston Today

Meeting called to order by Chairman Hunt at 7:37 PM

1. **Space Planning:** Director Tatarka gave an update on the status of the Children's Room remodel and Town projects related to the State Grant. The revised budget for the project has been submitted and approved by the State Library. Town Administrator Luiz needs to close the loop with the CHRO (Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities) and file a Set Aside Plan. Director Tatarka will attend a webinar to review how to complete the required documents. During the 2016 renovation, this was addressed by the general contractor, Gennarini Construction and Town Administrator Landry. Once sent and approved by the CHRO, contracts may be signed with Creative Library Concepts and Town contractors. Once the contract is signed, CLC will prepare shop drawings for review by the Space Planning Committee. CLC has communicated that with many factories having been closed for a while and operating at 50% capacity due to Covid, there will likely be delays in delivery of the components to complete the project. Projects under the grant must have commenced by April, one year from release of the funds by the Bond Commission.

Member Sanborn gave an update on the history of the Offutt Center project since May of this year. The recap can be viewed at the Vimeo link below. The discussion begins at approximately 3:20 into the video. At the end of the recap, she reported that a letter was received yesterday from the Trustee regretfully withdrawing the project.

11-04-2020 Weston, CT Library Board on Vimeo:
<https://vimeo.com/477648108>

Member Ross made a motion to move agenda item #11 to this point in the meeting. Second by Member Goertz. Motion carried unanimously.

Member Sanborn made a motion to go into Executive session to discuss negotiations with Trustee on various aspects of the Offutt Center project. Friends' representative Richard and Trustee Emeritus Langlois were invited to attend. Second by Member Goertz. Motion carried unanimously.

Guest, Ted Craft from Weston Today left the meeting.

Member Ross made a motion to leave Executive session. Second by Member Goertz. Motion carried unanimously.

There were no motions made after returning to the Regular Meeting.

2. **Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Toczek gave an update on account activity during October. There was a transfer of the donation received by the Huisiking Foundation for \$2,037.49 from the Director's Account to the Endowment Fund. The Endowment Fund earned \$280.48 of interest. The Director's Account had just under \$10,000 at the end of the month.

Member Ross made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report for October, 2020. Second by Member Jansen. Motion carried unanimously.

3. **Minutes:**

Member Burke made a motion to approve the Minutes for the Regular Board Meeting of October 6, 2020. Second by Member Murphy. Motion carried unanimously, with an abstention by Member Burke due to his absence at the October meeting.

Member Ross made a motion to congratulate Member Burke on his marriage to Gretchen Taylor Wright on October 10, 2020. Second by Member Groves. Motion carried unanimously.

4. **Budget:** Director Tatarka reported the budget letter from the Town for the 2020-2021 FY is expected later in November. The staff is still operating on a limited schedule. Not all staff are able to work all of their regular hours. Some is by choice, some by necessity given the reduced operating hours at the Library based on the cleaning protocol/schedule available. This includes no cleaning on Sundays.

There was also a discussion of the increased need and cost for digital resources and the possible tradeoff with part time staff salary savings.

5. **Director's Report:** Director Tatarka reviewed her previously distributed Director's Report with the Board. She reported that Karen Bennet, Library Technology Assistant and Interlibrary Loans, has been busy supporting five book groups. She has also found that with people working from home there are more research-related interlibrary loan requests. Library Technology Assistant Lomas, with support from the Friends, will be offering an adult Take and Make craft every month beginning in November. She will also assist in the lending of MakerKits starting mid-November.

Director Tatarka also reviewed the infographic she created related to The Library's Covid Response. (Attached) This has been shared with First Selectmen Spaulding and Town Administrator Luiz. Director Tatarka received a positive response from TA Luiz. The gate count of 1,313 for October was about 20% of the normal gate count. The circulations of 3,620 is not as high as the post-renovation circs, but still higher than the pre-renovation counts. The infographic will be publicly distributed in the near future including a short explanation.

Weston resident, Lisa Brodlie, had offered the Library a framed Remington print to the Library. It was the sense of the meeting not to accept the print.

A resident requested that the Library consider circulating its Chromebooks for patrons who do not feel comfortable spending extended periods of time at the public computers. The Board supported Director Tatarka's plans to make this happen, including procuring appropriate cases to protect the computers.

Director Tatarka reported on the extremely successful Halloween Storywalk in October as well as other October festivities organized by Children's and Teen Librarian Petrino. This was possible in part by generous support from the Friends.

The Director's Report, Departmental reports are attached.

6. **Old Business:**

Member Jansen reported that she had sent the Board's gift to retired Member Toner.

Library signage still needs to be addressed with TA Luiz. Member Sanborn has mentioned it, but there has not been time for TA Luiz to transmit the information we requested to prepare our proposal.

7. **New Business:** None

8. **Chairman's Reports:** None

9. **Friends:** Susan Richard reported for the Friends. She reported that the Friends' New Yorker, book groups, and Short Story Hour are going very well. The KonMari program had 36 attendees and the Frances Palmer Life in the Studio program had 64. The Photography Club has joined with the Stamford group two times a month with them for information, tutorials and competitions and once a month in Weston. All of the programming has been incredibly well-received. Director Tatarka echoed that sentiment and mentioned how important it has been to patrons to connect at programs. She thanked the Friends and shared how much she appreciates the Friends' efforts. The Friends received a generous donation of a library chair from Carol Mack. They are assessing value and will then auction the chair as a fundraiser.

The Friends Board will be meeting on October 14th and will discuss additional programming opportunities.

10. **Adjournment:**

Member Ross made a motion to adjourn at 9:30 PM. Second by Member Burke. Motion carried unanimously.

Next Board meeting is Tuesday, December 1st at 7:30 PM via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Sanborn
Secretary

As approved December 1, 2020

Weston Public Library
Director's Report
November 4, 2020

Space Planning

- Children's Room and Related Projects eligible for State Library Construction Grant
 - The State Library approved the revised budget for the funded projects. Before progressing, Town Administrator Luiz wants to close the loop with the State CHRO requirements. I have reached out to the CHRO office, and the Town will need to file a Set Aside Plan. I will be attending a webinar on November 5 to review how to complete the required documents. In the 2016 renovation, this requirement was addressed by Gennarini Construction and Town Administrator Landry.
- Other Offutt Center related meetings:
 - 10/2 – OCC Library Board representatives met with Architect Przada for a finishes review.
 - 10/6 – OCC Library Board representatives discussed next steps

Strategic Planning

- With the data from the Library Use survey, I created an updated infographic about services during the pandemic and distributed it to First Selectman Spaulding and Town Administrator Luiz (attached to email). I would also like to post it on social media and the Library's website. With the last infographic, the Board wished to develop the wording that would go with the post. Would the Board like to take this on for broader distribution of this infographic as well?

Finances

- Discussion/decision regarding reinstating late fees – scheduled for another review at November meeting.
- The budget letter from the Town is scheduled to be received in November.

Staff

- In conjunction with Town Administrator Luiz and WWHD, we have developed and distributed a policy to Library staff regarding procedures should we be notified if a patron or staff member tests positive for COVID.
- Due to revised findings from OCLC/Batelle, Circulation staff has increased the quarantine period for returned materials to 6 days. This will put further strain on the budget as we try to meet demand on popular titles.

Library Programming

- November programs are available [here](#).
- Virtual programming is going well. The KonMari program had 36 in attendance and the Frances Palmer program had 64 in attendance.
- Library Technology Assistant Anneliese Lomas, with financial support from the Friends of the Library, will be offering an adult Take and Make craft every month starting in November. As they are labor intensive to pull together, we are limiting kits to 15 per month and patrons can register for them.
- With assistance from LTA Lomas, the Library will also be lending MakerKits starting mid-November. These kits are based on some of the more popular Makerspace activities. In order to borrow a kit, a patron must have a Makerspace Agreement on file and we will follow the same protocol for access that we would if the kit were being used in the building.

Facilities

- The Town's electrician will install an outdoor quad box by the patio soon to provide outlets for patron use.

- The Town's electrician will also be providing a temporary extension cord for use by the Beautification Committee for holiday lighting.
- DPW patched a hole in the driveway made after core samples were taken for the Offutt project.
- DPW installed an additional Library Staff parking sign to insure enough parking remains available for Library staff while Hurlbutt uses a portion of the Library's parking lot.

Operations

- The Gate Count for October was 1,313 which is about 20% of the normal gate count. October circulations were 3,620, which is not as high as post-renovation numbers, but still higher than pre-renovation circulations.
- The Library was contacted by Weston resident Lisa Brodlie regarding the gift of a framed Remington print to the Library. An image of the print is attached to the email with this report. Would the Trustees like to accept this gift?
- We have had a request from a patron to begin circulating Chromebooks outside of the Library for those who do not feel comfortable spending extended periods at the public computers. These Chromebooks were downcycled from the schools and were given to the Library about 3 years ago. They are currently managed by the schools and have a generic log in. As this is a policy change, I would like the Board to review it. We would need to quarantine returned Chromebooks as we do books, so a hard case would need to be purchased so that they could go in the book drop. I would support starting with 3 Chromebooks available for checkout to determine demand before investing in a large number of hard cases.
- The Weston Garden Club presented the Library with a collection of books on native plants. These items were added to the collection with a bookplate indicating the gift.
- The working group of Fairfield County Libraries that developed to coordinate COVID responses will be meeting again on 11/2 to discuss the current increase in COVID cases and when/if to begin rolling back services.
- Annual State Report will be resubmitted in November. Bibliomation found errors in the statistical reports they provided, which requires updating the State report.

Departmental Highlights

Children's and YA

October 2020 Highlights from Children's and YA Department:

Notable Children's/YA Notable Programs:

- In October we allowed families to request "Horror Halloween Buckets" which consisted of 2 movies, 1 book per child/teen, 1 movie theatre candy, 2 microwavable popcorn bags, and 1 Halloween Bucket. Requests were made through a Google form. We filled 61 requests from October 5-October 30th and 51 of those buckets were picked up.
- In October we allowed parents to request Trick-or-Treat bags for their children and teens ages birth-18. Each bag was filled with 5 edible treats and 5 non-edible treats and were to be picked up the week before Halloween. They were themed based on the age of the children/teens. We had 121 bags requested and 101 bags picked up.
- In October we offered a Virtual Halloween Party with a Party Pack to be picked up beforehand. The party pack included decorations, masks, crafts, a candy bag, a carving kit and a large pumpkin to carve. We had 14 families register for the event and pick up party packs and pumpkins. 11 Families attended the Zoom event with a total of 31 people.

- We will continue our Halloween Storywalk that began on October 19th on the Library's side-lawn through November 8th before taking it down. We have had many families walk through and send thank you e-mails and pictures.

Upcoming:

- In November we will be starting a new weekly teen program on Tuesdays called "Teen Scene," each week we have a different program for young adults and teenagers ages 12-18.
- In November we will be starting up a "Show and Tell" program again for ages 5-11 on Zoom. Each week we have a different theme.
- With the assistance of Anneliese we are beginning to prepare for a December program all about winter cookie decorating. We will be packing a bag with 5 cookie cutters made from the 3D Printer (thank you Anneliese), along with frosting, piping bags, food coloring and pre-made store-bought cookie dough. 12 families will be able to register for a cookie decorating program via Zoom and be guided through how to frost cookies for winter celebrations. There will also be a video component on how children can use these cookie cutters to cut out their cookie shapes and cook before our zoom decorating guide.

Other:

- We continue to fulfill Binge Box requests weekly for those that continue to request.
- We will begin to allow Teens to volunteer for us virtually beginning in November. These volunteer opportunities are small and include: Teen Book Reviews to be posted on our website, BookFace photos for our Instagram account, and YA Book Trailers. Teens will have to fill out our volunteer form and parents will sign to understand these opportunities will be only virtual for the time being and will be reassessed in the future.
- We are planning for Winter Buckets, much like our Halloween Buckets. These will include a winter-themed movie, candy, popcorn and hot cocoa packets. This is in very beginning stages.
- We will be purchasing Launchpads for our Children's collection. These are learning tablets that families can use to assist with at-home-learners. We have requested the Friends of the Library fund the first part of the collection. As new customers to the company Playaway, we will be able to choose 10 launchpad's for \$999.00. Each Launchpad normally ranges from \$129.00-\$189.00. We will be ordering these in November.

Administrative Department – Karen Tatarka (meetings not included above)

Professional Meetings/Outreach

- October 6 – Attended the Virtual Library Journal Summit
- October 13 – Bibliomation Finance Committee Meeting
- October 14 – Fairfield County Library Administrators Group meeting
- October 15 – State Library webinar on patron needs assessments
- October 21 – Advisory Committee for Library Planning and Development (State Library) meeting



COVID-19 Response

Serving The Community

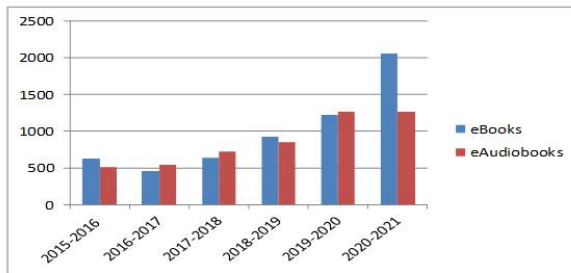
Timeline



Digital Collection Use, 1stQ Comparison

eBook usage up 68% over previous FY;

90% of patrons indicate that they will continue to make greater use of digital products**

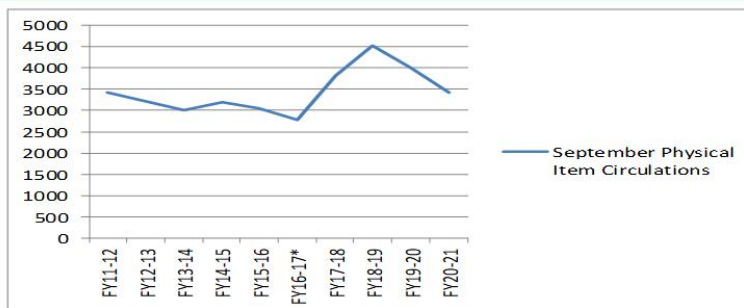


Physical Collection Use, September Comparison

Library reopened for browsing August 20, 2020;

September physical collection use remains higher than pre-renovation;

83.5% of patrons indicate they plan to continue to use the physical collection at pre-pandemic levels**



* Library was under renovation

** Data from August 2020 Weston Public Library Use Survey

Digital Product Cost Comparison

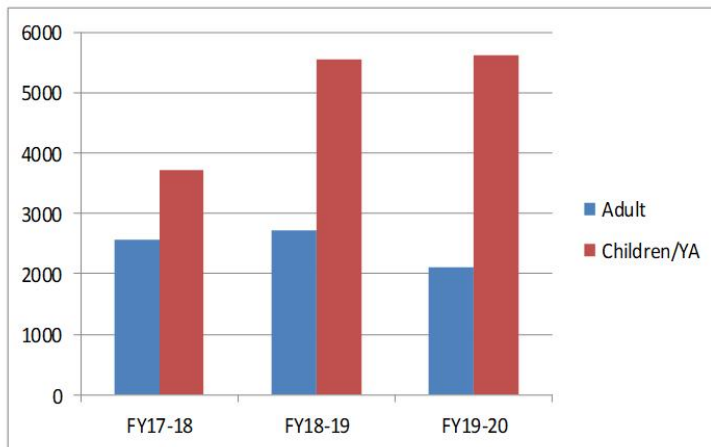
Increased demand for digital products and the need to quarantine all print items returned has had a significant budget impact



	Print Copy	Digital Copy
Cost	\$14.90 (permanent ownership)	\$59.99 (for 24 months, 1 simultaneous user)
Checkouts (3 week loan)	45+ (based on previous Backman titles)	35 maximum
Cost Per Checkout	< \$0.33	\$1.71

Program Attendance by FY

Children's/YA program attendance remained at pre-pandemic levels



How We Compare*

Materials funding per capita

Weston	\$6.48
Easton	\$9.93
Redding**	\$10.33
Westport **	\$14.37
Wilton**	\$10.21

Full-Time equivalent staff per 1,000 residents

Weston	.55
Easton	.97
Redding**	.96
Westport**	1.33
Wilton**	1.47

* CT State Library Annual Report for 2019

** Association Library