

Weston Public Library Board
Regular Meeting

Tuesday, March 2, 2021
7:30 PM, Via Zoom

DRAFT Minutes

Attendance: Thomas Burke, Lori Goertz, Barbara Groves (joined meeting late), Anne Hunt, Amy Jansen, Sharon Murphy, Amy Sanborn, Cyprian Toczec, Karen Tatarka

Absent: Rick Ross

Guests: Susan Richard, representing Friends of the Library

Meeting called to order by Chairman Hunt at 7:35 PM

1. **Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Toczec has been locked out of the TD account on line and needs to visit the branch to regain access. Director Tatarka reported that donations in the Director's Fund will be transferred to the Endowment Fund. There were no big changes during the month.
2. **Budget:** Director Tatarka reported on the two BOS meetings on Feb. 23rd and Feb. 25th for the Board of Selectmen to review the First Selectman's proposed budget for FY '21-'22. The requested \$3,374 for shared equipment for virtual programming (and patron use), and the equipment to extend the wireless mesh system to cover the parking lot was in the First Selectman's proposed budget. If the mesh system is extended to cover the entire Town Hall campus, it is suggested it be hard wired at Town Hall so it would be covered by the Town's generator in the event of power loss at the Library.

Director Tatarka reported on the BOS discussion of the materials line (Books & Audio/Visual). While it looks like a large increase, the Finance Department chose to change how it accounts for late fees and book replacement money. It is now added to the materials line in anticipation of money to be received, estimated at \$6,500. Should the amount be less than anticipated, the Library may spend the full amount appropriated to the material line. The Library did not receive its full Departmental materials request in the First Selectman's proposed budget. At the first meeting, Selectman Grossinger requested that the BOS review the Library's budget again in light of the supporting documents provided with the Departmental budget proposal. At the BOS meeting on Feb. 25th, the BOS approved an additional \$5,150 for the materials line. This makes a total of \$12,650 of new funds (plus the \$6,500 of pre-credited late/lost book funds). While still behind our library "peer group," the funding does have a significant impact on our 7-year plan to move the Library materials expenditure per capita to \$10.

The request for additional staffing was denied for a second year in spite of the demonstrated degree to which the Library's FTE equivalent staff per 1,000 residents is severely below its library "peer group" staffing. The additional money requested to support programming was also denied.

While disappointed in the denials, the Board expressed its gratitude to the BOS for the degree of support it was able to provide to the Library and the Community.

Capital budget: Money is proposed as included in the Town's requested capital budget to fund the roof replacement (Town working with HB Fishman to obtain bids) and HVAC balancing (Building Committee is involved in the process). Place holders are \$225,000 and \$10,000, respectively. Replacement of the 1980s windows is projected to be in the FY '22-'23 capital budget at \$23,000+.

The BOF will review the BOS proposed budget on March 10th.

3. **Minutes:**

Member Burke made a motion to approve the Minutes for the Regular Board Meeting of February 2, 2021. Second by Member Toczek. Motion carried unanimously.

Member Hunt made a motion to approve the Minutes for the Special Space Planning Committee Meeting of February 10, 2021. Second by Member Sanborn. Motion carried unanimously with the votes of Members Hunt and Sanborn, present at the meeting.

Member Groves joined the meeting at this time.

4. **Director's Report:** Director Tatarka discussed the process underway to update the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Planning Committee will be meeting tomorrow, March 3rd, to begin working on the Plan. In advance of the meeting, Director Tatarka distributed a variety of information the Committee members for their review.

Director Tatarka discussed reviewing the Library's policies. In particular, she noted the Circulation Policies needs to be updated for some modifications and changes in services provided and how they are delivered. Member Burke volunteered to join Member Jansen on the Policies Committee.

Late fees will continue to remain suspended as the staff is not yet comfortable handling cash.

As of February 16th, with a drop in the number of Covid cases and after conferring with Town Administrator Luiz, the Library returned to a service model with browsing/computer access by appointment. Director Tatarka hopes to move away from appointments for services in the near future. Children's room visits continue as appointment only. The possibility of potential outdoor programming as the weather warms was discussed. Director Tatarka will be discussing what other departments in Town are contemplating.

The Director's Report, Departmental reports are attached.

5. **Chairman's Reports:** Member Hunt reported that the Beautification Committee decided to plant three mountain laurels to the left front of the Children's Room. The Board determined the Buildings and Grounds Committee needs to meet to discuss this proposal. A meeting will be scheduled as soon as possible via a Doodle Poll.
6. **Space Planning:** Director Tatarka reported on the status of the Children's Room remodel. She confirmed with the State Library that the projects, as described, and with the State Library having reviewed the CLC proposal, were ready to move forward according to the FY 19-20 State Construction Grant Guidelines. CLC is finalizing proposals after a few questions were sent after the Space Planning committee met on February 10th. The shelving company was kind enough to hold its pricing which was to go up on March 1st. The shop drawings will be done after the contract is signed with CLC. Town Administrator Luiz is aware of the urgency here.

Documents related to the window bidding will need to be filed with the State Library. They will be sent overnight when the required documents have been pulled together.

7. **Old Business:** Member Sanborn needs to follow up with Town Administrator Luiz related to the "new" signage. There has been no response from an email sent last year.

The Board also discussed the status of installing the Vitale plaque and scheduling the celebration to honor Trustee Emerita, Lynne Langlois, for receiving the ACLB Lifetime Achievement Award, the ceremony for which had been scheduled for last April.

8. **New Business:** Member Sanborn mentioned that her family had listed the Library to be considered for

donations in her late father's memory.

9. **Friends:** Susan Richard reported for the Friends. All ongoing programs are doing quite well, including the New Yorker Group, the Classic Short Story programs, the Photography Club and the book groups. The New Yorker Group will disband for the summer, but plan on reading two French novels and celebrating with a French meal.

The Friends and the LWV of Weston hosted two programs by Dr. Van Gosse in February for Black History Month. The first session, on Feb. 10th, included powerful visuals of artist Jacob Lawrence's Great Migration Series. The second session on Feb. 24th, was titled African Americans in New England, drawing on his new book, The First Reconstruction, to trace the history and evolution of the African American experience in New England through the Civil War. Both programs were extremely well-received.

On March 14th, Jim Lomuscio will be presenting a program related to his book, Village of the Dammed, discussing the flooding of the Valley Forge to create the reservoir.

The Board discussed the possibility of holding the car show this fall that Member Toczek was working on with the Friends last year. While relatively optimistic it will be possible, we will continue to monitor the State and Town guidelines amid Covid.

10. **Adjournment:**

Member Burke made a motion to adjourn at 8:18 PM. Second by Member Jansen. Motion carried unanimously.

Next Board meeting is **Wednesday, April 7th**, (due to BOF budget deliberations on Tuesday)
7:30 PM via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Sanborn
Secretary

Weston Public Library
Director's Report
March 2, 2021

Space Planning/Buildings and Grounds

- Children's Room and Related Projects eligible for State Library Construction Grant
 - I emailed CHRO regarding the status of the SAP plan on January 30. CHRO indicated that since the SAP plan is in the queue for review, there was no reason not to move forward with the scheduled projects. I shared this information with Town Administrator Luiz.
 - I confirmed with the State Library that the projects, as described, were ready to move forward according to the FY19-20 State Library Construction Grant Guidelines, and received an affirmative answer after the grant coordinator reviewed the Creative Library Concepts proposal. The Space Planning Committee met on 2/10 to refamiliarize themselves with the project as so much time has elapsed. I forwarded several questions to Charlie Cohen for review and we made small adjustments to the plan, as needed. Creative Library Concepts is finalizing the proposals, which will be signed this week. The shelving company was kind enough to hold the pricing (which was scheduled to go up March 1) until the end of the week. The Town has signed the contract for the windows, and I am awaiting a copy. The windows documents, as this project was competitively bid, will need to be put on file with the State Library along with the Invitation to Bid and the bidding analysis. I am awaiting a few more documents from Town Hall and will overnight them to the State Library when they are ready. They must be filed within 30 days of signing. Other grant-funded projects underway:
 - The order for the non-emergency lighting fixtures was placed 2/26/21 with an installation date TBD.
 - Restroom ventilation fan replacement for energy conservation has been completed.
- Library Roof
 - The Town has retained H.B. Fishman to prepare the bidding documents for the roof replacement project and guide the Town through the bidding process. The roof will remain cedar. Bids are due 3/19 and there is a pre-bid meeting on 3/5. The Town has allocated an additional \$225,000 for the project in the FY21-22 capital budget proposal as the cost of materials has increased significantly since 2018.

Strategic Planning

- The Strategic Planning Committee has its first meeting scheduled for 3/3 to review a variety of self-assessment tools and determine next steps. Finding a time to meet that works for all Committee members has been challenging. Could the Committee discuss briefly some days/times that generally work well at the Board meeting?
- There is some discrepancy with what Town Hall has on file for Union job descriptions and the revisions that were submitted in 2015. I am working on confirming the 2015 descriptions are on file now. In the meantime, I have sent the 2015 descriptions to staff for review and asked them to think about their responsibilities in light of changes brought about by COVID; what we will continue to do differently post-COVID; how that meshes (or doesn't) with what they currently do; how we alleviate pressure points; what training/equipment, etc. they need to do their job better/more efficiently; and how we ensure there is still adequate time for professional development and engagement. I am hoping as we discuss these issues we can figure out how to move the Library forward in a way that doesn't overburden our very small staff. I will also be sending a skills assessment to PT staff, and enquire what skills, that would also benefit the Library, they would be interested in learning. I hope by expanding the skill set of our PT staff, we can also help alleviate some strain on the FT staff.

Finances

- Discussion/decision regarding reinstating late fees – scheduled for another review at the March Board meeting. Staff have noticed that some patrons have discovered they are not being charged late fees and there is some abuse; however, the staff who have noticed the abuse are not yet comfortable handling cash. While we do offer a credit/debit payment option, I do not feel it is appropriate to start charging late fees until we have a cash payment option in place again.
- The First Selectman presented his budget on 2/23. The Library received the \$3,374 it requested to purchase equipment for virtual/hybrid programming and extend the Library's WiFi mesh network, as well as a \$7,500 increase towards the materials line. The Town is also changing its accounting for late/lost fees, and will credit the Library's materials line for \$6,500 (expected annual late/lost fee revenue) at the start of the FY. This resulted in a \$14,000 increase in that line, even though only a portion of that is newly budgeted funds. The Library did not receive additional funding for programs or part time staff.
 - Selectman Grozinger requested that the Board of Selectmen review the Library's budget again in light of the supporting documents provided with the budget proposal. At the Selectmen's meeting on 2/25, the Selectmen approved an additional \$5,150 for the materials line. This makes a total of \$12,650 of new funds (plus \$6,500 of pre-credited late/overdue funds) and has a significant impact on our 7 year plan to move the library materials expenditure per capita to \$10. The Board of Finance will review the budget on 3/10.
 - In addition to the \$225,000 for the Library Roof, Town Administrator Luiz has also included in his Capital Budget for FY 21-22 \$10,000 for HVAC balancing. In FY22-23 he plans to include in the Capital Budget additional funds to replace the remaining 1980s windows in the Library (where periodicals was before the renovation).
- Checks written in February from the Director's Fund include:
 - 209 - \$116.79 – Friends of the Library, this reflected the total of the payments for the Art Journaling workshop that came in through credit card in January and February
 - 210 - \$76.39 – Alessandra Petrino for program supplies
 - 211 - \$350 – Sal Giannitti for the electrical box installed by the patio in the fall
- Deposits made in February into the Director's Fund include:
 - \$193.90 – PayPal transfer, donation from David Macklem
 - \$57.76 – PayPal transfer, Art Journaling workshop registration from Sarah Hutchison
 - \$28.83 – PayPal transfer, Art Journaling workshop registration from Barbara King
 - \$96.80 – PayPal transfer, donation from Jansen & Minkov family
- Stripe revenue for February: \$26.49 (in FY21-22 we will have Stripe funds deposit directly with the Town)

Staff

- I met with First Selectman Spaulding and Town Administrator Luiz on 2/9 to review Library services. Due to the decline in cases, the Library moved back to browsing/computer access by appointment on 2/16. I do hope that we will be able to move away from appointments for adult services in the near future. All full time staff are working their full hours in the building again as of 2/16 and part time staff are on a modified schedule to reduce the rotation of staff in the building on a given day.

Library Programming

- March programs are available [here](#).
- I am thankful to the Friends, League of Women Voters, Senior Center, and Historical Society for the recent increase in partnership opportunities for programs. This is helping to draw in wider audiences as well as defray the cost and staff time needed to pull together these events.
- *Children's Department Highlights:* The Children's and Teen Department had a very busy month with a twist on the annual TYCTLD, which this year was Take the Library To Your Child Day. Children's and Teen Librarian Petrino created swag bags for children who registered and coordinated a full week of recorded and live virtual events. Statistics on attendance will be included in the 3Q report. The Friends of the Library financed the supplies for this program. The Friends also offset the costs of another very successful cookie decorating program. Children's Librarian Petrino teaches children how to mix primary colors and how to pipe the frosting onto cookies. The Food Explorers program theme this

month was Cinnamon Knots. This program was well received by those who participated and Children's Librarian Petrino and I both received posting feedback from parents.

- With the good weather approaching, Children's Librarian Petrino and I will meet on Wednesday with other Town departments that host programs to determine how/if to offer some level of outdoor programming later this year and if this effort needs to be coordinated/consistent.

Facilities

- The Town electrician has repaired the clock and fan in the Library.
- The Library had two late openings and two snow days in February. All staff were expected to work from home to the best of their ability.
- The sliding glass doors malfunctioned on 2/5. I was able to address the issue without a service call.
- The POTS line that serves the Library's public fax machine and emergency phone is no longer operational. There is some confusion over how that line is managed as I do not receive the invoices for that service. The public fax company offered a new option that allows fax transmission via an Internet connection. That solution was implemented 2/25 and we will not seek to repair/reinstate the POTS line. Not having a traditional land line will be taken into consideration when deciding if the Library should close during emergencies. VoIP needs both Internet and power to operate and the Library is not on a generator.

Operations

- Gate Count – as the Library opened by appointment only on Feb. 16, there is no gate count for this month.
- Circulation: 2,152 physical items. This is a significant decrease (40.5%) over the previous fiscal year. Digital circulations continue to increase. Those statistics are pulled quarterly.
- The Library had two late openings and two snow days in February. All staff were expected to work from home to the best of their ability.
- The Schools provided 15 newly downcycled Chromebooks to replace the aging Chromebooks at the Library. Staff assessed and recorded the condition of each device. 3 are now available for 2 week loan and the remainder will be for in-house use, when that is possible again. We are appreciative of this partnership with the schools and their continued management of the Chromebooks.