

Weston Public Library Board  
Regular Meeting  
February 6, 2023  
7:30 PM via Zoom

Draft Minutes

Present: Lori Goertz, Barbara Groves, Anne Hunt, Amy Jansen, Sharon Murphy, Rick Ross, Amy Sanborn, Cyprian Toczek, Anne Mastroianni

Absent: Thomas Burke

Guest Representing the Friends: Marina Coprio

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Goetz at 7:33 PM.

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

1. **New Director:** Chairman Goertz reported that the BOS unanimously approved Ian Parsells to be the new WPL Director, and everything is in place for him to start on Monday, March 6th. She thanked Member Sanborn for leading the Search Committee and all Committee members for their work.
2. **Resignation form the Board:** Chairman Goertz reported that Sharon Murphy has rescinded her resignation from the Library Board. Board members expressed their gratitude for her reconsideration.
3. **Budget:** Chairman Goertz reported on the FY 2023-2024 budget process with thanks to Interims Mastroianni and Bennett for all the fantastic work they have done to prepare the Departmental budget request. The departmental request included full funding of the Children's and Teen and Makerspace job-description required programming costs. Based on a conversation with First Selectman Nestor, it was agreed that the Departmental budget would request \$12,000 for the Expenses/Programming line (as opposed to the \$13,000 originally proposed by the Interims) and \$1,000 for equipment (versus the \$2,000 originally contemplated). This would increase the WPL operating budget by 1.5%, down from the original Departmental request with a 1.9% increase. The capital request for the last of the window replacements was moved to FY 2024-2025. The revised budget was submitted on Friday, Feb. 3rd. The BOS will review the First Selectwoman's budget on Feb. 14th.
4. **Treasurer's Report:** None
5. **Minutes:**

Member Jansen made a motion to approve the minutes for the Regular Board Meeting December 6, 2022. Second by Member Murphy. Motion carried unanimously with abstention by Member Ross due to absence at the meeting.

Member Jansen made a motion to approve the minutes for the Regular Board Meeting January 3, 2023. Second by Member Groves. Motion carried unanimously with abstention by Members Murphy and Ross due to absence at the meeting.

Member Goertz made a motion to approve the minutes for the Special Budget Committee Meeting January 12, 2023. Second by Member Hunt. Motion carried unanimously with those present at the meeting voting.

6. **Director's Report:** Interim Director Mastroianni reviewed the Interim Director's Report she distributed in advance of the meeting. The gate count for January was 4,186 an increase of 6% over the December 2022 and 126% over January 2022. January 2022 numbers were low due to curtailed meetings and programs. Physical

circulations were up 10% over December 2022 and digital circulations were up 24% for the month compared to 2022. Total circulations were up 8% from January 2023 compared to December 2022.

Interim Mastroianni reported that Laura Ivy has been doing a great job running Children's programming since Alessandra Casiello left in early January. Many new patrons have been participating and the programs are usually full.

Take your Child to the Library was held on February 4th. It was a low-key event with a variety of activities. It was well attended with many new families connecting with each other. The Director's Report delineates the activities of Interim Bennett. In particular, the last 26 rolls of microfilm have been shipped to Advantage Archives in Cedar Rapid, IA to be digitized. This should be accomplished within the next 2-3 months. The microfilm rolls will be stored by Advantage Archives.

Interim Mastroianni reported that the Winter Reading Challenge is underway and will run for 8 weeks. So far, 100 books have been read. While the goal of reading 1,000 books may be ambitious, patrons are having fun and there is a sense of excitement.

While the concept of going fine free for FY 2023-2024 is uncertain, Interim Mastroianni gave a passionate and informative presentation regarding why this would be appropriate, including mention that 126 of the 165 principle libraries in the State are now fine free. This would not eliminate the requirement that patrons are responsible to pay for lost or damaged books to be replaced.

7. **Old Business:** Chairman Goertz reviewed committee assignments and reiterated the importance of committees to meet, do their work and be prepared to report at Board meetings. It was discussed that each committee should elect a Chairman to be responsible for scheduling committee meetings and ensure that all committee members are included in discussions. FOIA requirements for committee meetings were discussed. Member Sanborn volunteered to explore the FOIA requirements further and report back to the Board. Chairman Goertz also reported as to how Town Administrator Luiz is working with Director Parsells to bring him up to speed on Library-related matters. This includes the process to hire the new Children's and Teen Librarian. The application window for this position closes next week. TA Luiz will be discussing 30, 60, and 90 day plans going forward.
8. **New Business:** The Board discussed a welcome reception for Director Parsells. It was decided that the date would be Saturday, March 18th, with consideration of Sunday, March 19<sup>th</sup> due to Board member availability. After discussion, especially with input from Friends' Rep Coprio about program timing experience they have had, the time was set for 2-4 PM. The reception is to be hosted by the WPL Board and the Friends, with Friends' Rep Coprio's support on behalf of the Friends. A number of members volunteered to help Chairman Goertz with the planning going forward.

It was decided that the March 7th Regular Board meeting will be held in person to welcome Director Parsells. There was discussion of considering a hybrid option.

9. **Friends:** Marina Coprio reported on behalf of the Friends. The wine and chocolate reception postponed in December due to illnesses has been rescheduled for Friday, March 31st. There was discussion of the Friends' supporting the all CT Reads initiative. The Friends are willing to help, but need to know more about the program and what such support might entail.

The Friends are partnering with the Weston History & Culture Center on a program for Black History month on February 28<sup>th</sup> via Zoom honoring Connecticut's Black, Indigenous and Women of Color, a talk by the Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame. They will also be co-sponsoring a two-part program with the LWV in person in March related to Women's History month. The Friends will be hosting another shredding day on May 6th. The Friends are looking forward to Director Parsells' arrival to get programming back to running again at pre-Covid levels.

Member Ross brought up the subject of ChatGPT and the possibility of a program at the Library to inform and discuss this relatively new artificial intelligence chatbot tool. Member Jansen has some experience with this in the context of her job as a librarian at Southern CT State University. It was queried as to whether Director Parsell's might have a perspective with respect to offering such a program.

**10. Adjournment:**

Ross made a motion to adjourn at 8:47 PM. Second by Member Groves. Motion carried unanimously.

Next Board meeting is Tuesday, March 7, 2023, at 7:30 PM **in person. (Possibly with hybrid option)**

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Sanborn  
Secretary

DRAFT

**Weston Public Library  
Interim Director's Report  
February 6, 2023**

**Operations**

- The library was open for 28 days in January 2023. The gate count was 4,186, an increase of 6% over December, and 126% over the January 2022 count.
- Checkouts: There were 5,213 physical item circulations and 1,675 digital circulations.

**Programs**

- Programs held in January: Adult 14, Teen 1, Children 24.
- 49 outside groups/individuals reserved library spaces for meetings/activities in January. There were several college admission interviews conducted in the study rooms.
- Children's Assistant Laura Ivy has been creating amazing programs for children which have seen very good attendance. The interim Library Directors appreciate the hard work she is doing in the absence of a full-time Children's Librarian.

**Financial**

- Check #252 written from the Director's account for program supplies for the amount of \$16.47.

**Departmental Reports**

**Technical Services- Karen Bennett**

Interlibrary Loan statistics have gone back up this month after the holiday lull. I continue to get books for 5 groups at the moment.

I have been doing testing for self-checkout, cataloging, and circulation for the new upgrade to be released in April with the ILS Steering committee. I have also been testing the new Simple Reporter for the Reports Steering committee.

I shipped the remaining 26 rolls of microfilm for the Weston Forum to Advantage Archives in Cedar Rapids, IA, to be digitized. They will store all the rolls at their facility after digitization. The process should take around 75 days.

## **Adult Services**

The Winter Reading Challenge kicked off on January 20 with the support of the Friends of the Library. Nineteen readers logged 60 books by January 30. The first of two prize drawings will be held on February 21.

Quick Pick themed book bags are back on display. These bags feature a diverse selection of fiction and can encourage circulation of overlooked titles.

### **Meetings and Webinars Attended:**

- **Fairfield County Circulation Meeting, January 19, via Zoom**  
Local department managers from Westport, Darien, Danbury, and Wilton discussed matters pertaining to circulation, such as increasing gate counts, making library cards, removing late fees, and how AI might impact library services and careers.
- **How to Use Your State Annual Report Data, January 20, via Zoom.**  
Maria Bernier from the Connecticut State Library offered a tour of the different ways to sort and interpret data on the State Report, as well as related materials on the state website.

### Circulation Statistics - This month to same month last year

	January 2022	January 2023	Percent Change
Physical Circulation	4,200	5,213	24
Digital Circulation	1,309	1,675	28
TOTAL	5,509	6,888	25

### Circulation Statistics - Last Month to This Month

	December 2022	January 2023	Percent Change
Physical Circulation	4,805	5,213	8
Digital Circulation	1,439	1,675	16
TOTAL	6,244	6,888	10

