

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

Draft Minutes

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

Absent: Thomas Burke

Guest Representing the Friends: Marina Coprio

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Goertz 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 began the meeting by welcoming new Director Ian Parsells with gratitude on his second day at the WPL.
2. **Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Toczek began by screensharing reports. He reviewed the Funds Activity for November (reported, but unable to screen share at the December meeting) and December, 2022 and January and February, 2023.  
November, 2022: There were \$222 of donations and \$1,343 of interest income; additional income from Coffee and eStripe was just over \$165. There were only minor expenses related to program supplies.  
December, 2022: Donations were \$1,180 and book sale revenue was \$250. eStripe and coffee funds were just under \$300. Interest income was \$1,843. The only expenses were \$468 for coffee supplies.  
January, 2023: eStripe and coffee revenue were just under \$200. Interest income was just over \$2,000. Expenses for program supplies were \$275.  
February, 2023: Interest income was just under \$2,000. Book sales were \$117 and coffee funds were \$36.84. Supplies were \$80.51  
eStripe money received related to late fees and lost materials are transmitted to the town quarterly.

Member Sanborn made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Reports for Nov. and Dec., 2022 and Jan. and Feb., 2023 as presented. Second by Member Murphy. Motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer Toczek told the Board he would no longer be able to serve as Treasurer given his current work commitments. Chairman Goertz thanked Treasurer Toczek for all he's done and asked the Board to think about a willingness to take on the Treasurer position.

3. **Budget:** Chairman Goertz reported on the FY 2023-2024 budget process to date. The BOS reviewed the First Selectwoman's budget on February 16th. She thanked the participants from the Library and from the Friends, Leslie Geller. Questions were asked about the lines for Expenses/Programing and Materials. Explanations were provided and the budget was passed by the BOS. Thanks were given to Director Parsells for his participation in what was a long meeting, with the Library discussion near the end reviewing accounts in order. The BOF is scheduled to review the BOS budget on March 9th at 6 PM. While there was no discussion, the budget as presented includes continuing with late fees—to be addressed again during the next budget cycle.

#### 4. **Minutes:**

Chairman Goertz made a motion to approve the minutes for the Regular Board Meeting February 6, 2023 as amended. Second by Member Groves. Motion carried unanimously.

5. **Director's Report:** The March Interim Director's Report was the last to be prepared by Interim Mastroianni. The Board thanked her and Karen Bennett for all they did in their roles as Interim Directors since July, 2022.

The Interim Director's Report was distributed in advance of the meeting. The gate count for February was 5,843 an increase of 40% over January and 122% over February 2022. Physical circulations were up 6% over February 2022 and digital circulations were up 45% for the month compared to 2022. Total circulations were down 6% for February 2023 compared to January 2023.

Director Parsells reported on the progress with the Children's and Teen Librarian search. He is pleased with the applicant pool and has a plan in place via zoom and in-person to interview selected candidates including Library staff and Town Administrator Luiz. He hopes to have made progress in the next couple of weeks.

He also reported on the situation with the air handler in the basement and the process underway to determine what may need to be done. It is possible that it could cost \$100,000 or more to rectify the situation. Town Administrator Luiz is in this loop.

#### 6. **Committee Reports:**

Buildings and Grounds: B&G Chairman Hunt gave the Board an update related to Beautification planting around the Library. The sense of the meeting was to allow the B&G Committee to coordinate with Beautification to approve an appropriate plan. She also reported on the situation with "destruction" of the lawn to the south of the building out towards Norfield. The B&G Committee is working with the Town Administrator to devise a solution to repair and then protect this space going forward which could result in a change(s) to current Library Policies. TBD.

7. **Old Business:** Chairman Goertz introduced Agenda item #7 Weston Public Library Logo. The Board reviewed the history of the logo and related Board discussions in the past. This review included discussing a letter received from a Redding resident in 2020 questioning the logo's appropriateness and additional logo-related discussions since then. Also reviewed, as recently as the Feb. 2023 Library Board meeting, was the concept of rebranding the logo to reflect the Library's mission, as well as the recent letter, dated February 13, 2023, distributed in advance of the meeting, from a Weston resident outlining her concerns about the logo's imagery. (Both letters attached). The Board had a robust discussion about the overall situation, including the logo's history, appropriate rebranding of the Library logo, the sensitivity of the Board to the nature of the logo's imagery, and various options to be considered.

Member Goertz made a motion to change the Library logo. Second by Member Murphy. Motion carried with Members Goertz, Groves, Jansen, Murphy, and Sanborn voting in favor of the motion. Voting against, Member Hunt.

Member Goertz made a motion to remove the current Library logo as soon as possible from applications, at the discretion of the Director. Motion carried with Members Goertz, Groves, Jansen, and Murphy voting in favor. Voting against, Members Hunt and Sanborn. Motion carried.

Chairman Goertz reviewed the details for the welcome reception for Director Parsells to be held on Saturday, March 18<sup>th</sup> from 2:00-3:30 PM.

Member Sanborn reported on what she had learned from Town Administrator Luiz related to FOIA and committee meetings as she had volunteered to explore at the last meeting. If there is a quorum of a Committee attending a meeting, it must follow the FOIA rules including proper posting and minutes. If it is a "working group" subset, not a quorum, of the Committee, work may be done to be reported to the Committee or the Board.

8. **New Business:** Member Sanborn referenced the list that has been created of Library-related items to review with Director Parsells. This will take place at the appropriate time.
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 will be a shredding day in May and possibly a book sale in the fall. The Friends are looking forward to working with Director Parsells with respect to their programming and other activities in support of the Library.

10. **Adjournment:**

Member Goertz made a motion to adjourn at 9:42 PM. Second by Member Murphy. Motion carried unanimously.

Next Board meeting is Wednesday, April 5, 2023 at 7:30 PM Hybrid or via ZOOM; TBD

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Sanborn  
Secretary

Letters and documents received by the WPL Board (copied from pdfs into word document to include here)  
discussed at WPL Board Meeting March 7, 2023

1. From Jennai Williams, 146 Old Hyde Road, Weston Letter and APA Resolution

A. Letter

146 Old Hyde Road  
Weston, CT 06883

February 13, 2023

Lori Goertz, Chairperson  
Weston Public Library Board  
56 Norfield Road  
Weston, CT 06883

Dear Ms. Goertz:

My name is Jennai Williams and I live on Old Hyde Road with my husband and elementary school-age daughter. I am writing in reference to the library's use of a stereotypical image of an indigenous person as its mascot and logo.

As early as 2005, the American Psychological Association's Council of Representatives adopted a public resolution calling for the immediate cessation of the use of American Indian mascots, symbols, images, and personalities by schools, colleges, universities, athletic teams, and organizations. I have attached a copy of that resolution to this email so that you can read its exact language and review the lengthy list of academic, governmental, and scholarly references that the Council cited in support of its statements and conclusions. As stated on the APA's webpage discussing this issue:

Research has shown that the continued use of American Indian mascots, symbols, images and personalities has a negative effect on not only American Indian students but all students by:

- **Undermining the educational experiences of members of all communities – especially those who have had little or no contact with indigenous peoples.** The symbols, images and mascots teach non-Indian children that it's acceptable to participate in culturally abusive behavior and perpetuation of inaccurate misconceptions about American Indian culture.
- **Establishes an unwelcome and often times hostile learning environment for American Indian students that affirms negative images/stereotypes that are promoted in mainstream society.**

American Psychological Association, <https://www.apa.org/pi/oema/resources/indian-mascots>.

I appreciate that the Weston Public Library's adoption of this logo predates much of this academic research. However, today, in 2023, the weight of academic authority is clear. Racist, stereotypical imagery of the type being used by the library is psychologically harmful to children of all backgrounds. It is a scourge on our civil and enlightened society.

For these reasons and others, many private companies have voluntarily changed their logos and mascots in the last few years so as to stop propagating stereotypes of American Indians, African-Americans, and other groups. The library is not a private company, however: it is a place of public accommodation subject to state law and supported by public funds. The time has come for the library to follow the lead of these private companies and the weight of public opinion and voluntarily retire its logo and mascot.

The fact that this use of racist imagery persists, and that this Board and the town's residents have allowed it to continue for so long, disappoints me on a deeply personal level. As an HR executive and personal friend of several indigenous people, I do not feel comfortable keeping my daughter's Weston library card in my wallet or anywhere else where it could be seen by others. I am embarrassed to live in a community where my town library's website and library cards display racist imagery.

When we were choosing a place to settle and raise our interracial family, it was important that the place reflected our values of inclusivity and placed a primacy on education. Had I known about the pervasive utilization of this imagery by

this town's library, it likely would have affected our decision. At a minimum, it would have raised questions for me about this town's degree of racial inclusivity and levels of educational and cultural awareness.

The public discourse that has occurred in the last two years about this issue in Connecticut should have already led this Board and other responsible public officials in Weston to take action. Representatives from the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation and the Mohegan Tribe have called repeatedly for the elimination of these demeaning and offensive mascots and logos. They have spoken in starkly personal terms about the harm and pain they cause.

In 2021, the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) issued a press release announcing its focus on "eliminating the racist practice of using American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) names, symbols, and imagery as school mascots in Connecticut." Also that year, our state legislature enacted a law that was designed to financially penalize municipalities whose public schools or athletic teams engage in this type of behavior (see P.A. 21-2 sect. 63 (1)). Although the law's focus is on schools and athletic teams, its underlying logic is equally if not more applicable to public libraries. Libraries are the symbolic repositories of all human knowledge. No library should be using imagery that is emblematic of cultural ignorance. No library should be engaging in behavior that the American Psychological Association aptly characterizes as culturally abusive, and has scientifically determined creates an unwelcome and hostile learning environment for kids.

The pain and harm that this Board is causing is not merely hypothetical. I am aware of at least two Weston families who identify fully or partly as Native American. Their children attend our town schools and visit the town library. There are likely additional families in Weston who do not feel comfortable identifying themselves publicly. If I were Native American, I am not sure that I would self-identify given the pervasiveness of demeaning, stereotypical representations of Native Americans by the town library and other local organizations. Again, if I had been aware of these facts before we moved here, my family likely would have made a different choice.

I look forward to swift action being taken by this Board to rectify this situation. If there is no action, I will be advocating for an amendment to Conn. Gen. Stat. sec. 3-55j that will add public libraries and other places of public accommodation to the list of institutions that would disqualify a municipality from receiving money from the Mashantucket Pequot/Mohegan Fund.

I also will be surrendering my daughter's library card to this Board when we return to town from February break. It deeply pains me to take this action because my daughter is a budding bibliophile who loves visiting the Weston library. I fervently hope that this Board makes it possible soon for her to receive a new card soon that is devoid of racist imagery.

Sincerely,

Jennai Williams

Cc: Anne Hunt, Any Kindwall Sanborn, Barbara Groves, Amy Jansen, Cyprian Toczec, Sharon Murphy, Richard Ross, Thomas Burke, Martin Mohabeer, Amy Jenner, Samantha Nester

B. APA Resolution provided by Ms Williams with her letter:

**APA Resolution Recommending the Immediate Retirement of American Indian Mascots, Symbols, Images, and Personalities by Schools, Colleges, Universities, Athletic Teams, and Organizations**

WHEREAS the American Psychological Association has recognized that racism and racial discrimination are attitudes and behavior that are learned and that threaten human development (American Psychological Association, June 2001);

WHEREAS the American Psychological Association has resolved to denounce racism in all its forms and to call upon all psychologists to speak out against racism, and take proactive steps to prevent the occurrence of intolerant or racist acts (American Psychological Association, June 2001);

WHEREAS the continued use of American Indian mascots, symbols, images, and personalities undermines the educational experiences of members of all communities-especially those who have had little or no contact with Indigenous peoples (Connolly, 2000; U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 2001; Society of Indian Psychologists, 1999; Webster, Loudbear, Corn, & Vigue, 1971);

WHEREAS the continued use of American Indian mascots, symbols, images, and personalities establishes an unwelcome and often times hostile learning environment for American Indian students that affirms negative images/stereotypes that are promoted in mainstream society (Clark & Witko, in press; Fryberg, 2003; Fryberg & Markus, 2003; Fryberg, 2004a; Munson, 2001; Society of Indian Psychologists, 1999; Staurowsky, 1999);

WHEREAS the continued use of American Indian mascots, symbols, images, and personalities by school systems appears to have a negative impact on the self-esteem of American Indian children (Chamberlin, 1999; Eagle and Condor Indigenous People's Alliance, 2003; Fryberg, 2004b; Fryberg & Markus, 2003; Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs, 2001; Society of Indian Psychologists, 1999; The Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes, 2001; Vanderford, 1996); WHEREAS the continued use of American Indian mascots, symbols, images, and personalities undermines the ability of American Indian Nations to portray accurate and respectful images of their culture, spirituality, and traditions (Clark & Witko, in press; Davis, 1993; Gone, 2002; Rodriquez, 1998; Witko, 2005);

WHEREAS the continued use of American Indian mascots, symbols, images, and personalities presents stereotypical images of American Indian communities, that may be a violation of the civil rights of American Indian people (Dolley, 2003; King, 2001; King & Springwood, 2001; Pewewardy, 1991; Springwood & King, 2000; U. S. Commission on Civil Rights, 2001);

WHEREAS the continued use of American Indian mascots, symbols, images, and personalities is a form of discrimination against Indigenous Nations that can lead to negative relations between groups (Cook-Lynn, 2001; Coombe, 1999; U. S. Commission on Civil Rights, 2001; Witko, 2005);

WHEREAS the continued use of American Indian symbols, mascots, images, and personalities is a detrimental manner of illustrating the cultural identity of American Indian people through negative displays and/or interpretations of spiritual and traditional practices (Adams, 1995; Banks, 1993; Nuessel, 1994; Staurowsky, 1999; Witko, 2005); WHEREAS the continued use of American Indian mascots, symbols, images, and personalities is disrespectful of the spiritual beliefs and values of American Indian nations (Churchill, 1994; Gone, 2002; Sheppard, 2004; Staurowsky, 1998);

WHEREAS the continued use of American Indian mascots, symbols, images, and personalities is an offensive and intolerable practice to American Indian Nations that must be eradicated (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 2001; Society of Indian Psychologists, 1999); WHEREAS the continued use of American Indian mascots, symbols, images, and personalities has a negative impact on other communities by allowing for the perpetuation of stereotypes and stigmatization of another cultural group (Fryberg, 2004b; Gone, 2002; Staurowsky, 1999; U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 2001);

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the American Psychological Association recognizes the potential negative impact the use of American Indian mascots, symbols, images, and personalities have on the mental health and psychological behavior of American Indian people;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the American Psychological Association encourages continued research on the psychological effects American Indian mascots, symbols, images, and personalities have on American Indian communities and others;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the American Psychological Association encourages the development of programs for the public, psychologists, and students in psychology to increase awareness of the psychological effects that American Indian mascots, symbols, images, and personalities have on American Indian communities and others;

AND

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the American Psychological Association supports and recommends the immediate retirement of American Indian mascots, symbols, images, and personalities by schools, colleges, universities, athletic teams, and organizations.

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Fryberg, S. A. (June, 2003). Free to be me? The impact of using American Indians as mascots. Invited address at the 16th Annual Convention of American Indian Psychologists and Psychology Graduate Students, Utah State University, Logan, Utah.

Fryberg, S. A. & Markus, H. R. (2003). On being American Indian: Current and possible selves. *Journal of Self and Identity*, 2, 325-344.

Fryberg, S. A. (November, 2004a). "Dude, I'm honoring you": The impact of using American Indian mascots. Invited address at the North American Society for Sociology of Sports, Tucson, Arizona.

Fryberg, S. A. (June, 2004b). American Indian social representations: Do they honor or constrain identities? Invited address at the Mellon Humanities Center Workshop/Research Institute for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity network, "How do identities matter?" Stanford University, Stanford, California.

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2. Letter from Cole Tucker-Wald, Redding, CT

June 19, 2020

To the Weston Public Library and Weston Historical Society:

In recent communications with other town members about the use of Native American depictions, I was struck by the comment that in Weston, rather than invite political discord, people focus on “providing loving families with lifelong memories.”

In those words I hear values frequently spoken of by Indigenous communities today: family, tradition, heritage. Moreover, I grew up and still live next door in Redding, and I know that White people in these towns strongly



relate to, and work to protect, the woods and the wetlands and the water; that value of connection to the land is also embodied in Indigenous communities today.

In those words I hear a request that the community's culture of care and togetherness, and the townspeople's good intentions, be recognized. I support that. We are proud of our values and our culture, and nobody wants to see their culture misconstrued or forgotten. Yet for hundreds of years, that natural desire for accurate representation has been frustrated for Native Americans. Native and White Americans have been exposed to generic depictions of Native Americans on everything from coins, cigars, and butter to town seals, high school stadiums, and professional sports paraphernalia—while real histories and current experiences have been displaced.

Often, the White people who use these images say they are meant to “honor” Indigenous contributions to American history, but it's clear that the impact does not match this intention/explanation. Large, careful studies show that even positive stereotypes of Native Americans have harmful psychological effects on Native Americans, contribute to bias among White Americans, and actually make it harder for White Americans to develop meaningful, accurate understandings of Indigenous cultures.

Those cultures are rich and varied: There are more than 600 federally- and state- recognized Indigenous nations in the United States. Despite centuries of unfair treatment (treatment which continues to produce striking disparities in socioeconomic, physical, and mental health), Indigenous communities emphasize their resilience, resistance, creativity, and spiritual strength. Even today, in Connecticut, tribal nations are working to revive languages, teach history. And their history is American history, in myriad specific ways that deserve recognition: from the political design of our country to shared struggles for civil rights and climate stewardship.

This is not my idea, it's not a White person idea, and it didn't spring up two weeks ago out of a sudden desire to “make the world a better place.” Black and Indigenous people have been calling for removal and reevaluation of dehumanizing public portrayals of their bodies for decades, for a century and a half. It's time to listen to Indigenous voices and end the use of Native American figures as decoration for White spaces, and to honor our connections in new and creative ways. But I can only speak for what I see. Ask Native Americans (many, not just one!) what they have to say about these images.

You are centers of celebration and education. This is an opportunity to expand celebration and education to include real people alive today whose frozen image we have used in mostly-White spaces for decades. Imagine our children being able to look back at this national turning point and see that their small town cared enough to do something. Rather than a picture of a generic, “noble” Indian who, for half- explained reasons, looks curiously unlike anyone in town, they could remember real histories—and their role models' courage, trust, and commitment to preserving everyone's dignity. That is the kind of lifelong memory our families deserve, and that the Indigenous communities of Connecticut deserve.

Cole Tucker- Walton Redding, CT

**Weston Public Library  
Interim Director's Report  
March 7, 2023**

**Operations**

- The library was open for 27 days in February 2023. The gate count was 5,843, an increase of 40% over January, and 122% over the February 2022 count.
- Checkouts: There were 4,838 physical item circulations and 1,597 digital circulations.

**Programs**

- Programs held in February: Adult 16, Teen 1, Children 24.
- 32 outside groups/individuals reserved library spaces for meetings/activities in February.
- Take Your Child to the Library Day and the Makerspace Petting Zoo both drew many people, including new residents, to the library. Take Your Child to the Library Day featured a few simple crafts in the lobby, including the button maker, a scavenger hunt with prizes for children, and snacks. The Makerspace Petting Zoo was organized by Makerspace Coordinator Anneliese Lomas, who set up the 3d printer, button maker, and other items from the makerspace in the Community Room for people to experiment with. Free crafts and technology are popular with families!

**Departmental Reports**

**Adult Services**

The Winter Reading Challenge held the first raffle drawing, with the prize awarded to one of our most dedicated readers. Many patrons are participating using the paper forms so we won't know the total books read until the program ends.

February is marketed as Library Lovers Month. Desk staff encouraged patrons to write down what they love about the library and posted their messages on the bulletin board outside the Children's room. Some of the comments:

- Fun children's programs
- It's nice here, when I'm here I feel calm
- Fabulous Wi-Fi for remote workers!
- I love the wonderful staff at Weston Library
- Helpful and kind staff

- Our lovely, helpful librarians

### Meetings and Webinars Attended:

- Streaming Video with Kanopy and Overdrive, recorded webinar, February 15.  
Streaming video provider Kanopy is now owned by Overdrive and can be featured on the Libby app as an option to patrons if the library chooses to participate. Kanopy is known for classic cinema, foreign and indie films, and documentaries. Many of the films come with public performance rights. The lending model is pay per use.
- Meeting with Matt Geeza from CT Library for Accessible Books, February 16  
Karen Bennett and Anne Mastroianni were shown how the adaptive equipment works so the library can serve as a hub to introduce the public to this free service from the state. The Ct State Library is working on marketing materials that will be displayed.

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

	February 2022	February 2023	Percent Change
Physical Circulation	4,575	4,838	6
Digital Circulation	1,099	1,597	45
TOTAL	5,674	6,435	13

### Circulation Statistics - Last Month to This Month

	January 2023	February 2023	Percent Change
Physical Circulation	5,213	4,838	-7
Digital Circulation	1,675	1,597	-4
TOTAL	6,888	6,435	-6

