Approved Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting
Zoom Conference Call, 4:00 pm
May 20, 2020

Trustees Present: Iain Bruce (presiding), Russ Baris, Jocelyn Barandiaran, Ken Bernhard, Scott Bennewitz, Andrea Berkley, Jonathan Cunitz, Emily DiMiceli, Rob Haroun, Randy Herbertson, Sivan Hong, Celeste LaCroix, Maggie Mudd, Meena Pellerin, Jeremy Price, Faye Schoenherr, Pat Wieser, Andrew Wilk

Trustees Absent: Puja Dhanraj

Guests: Dick Lowenstein from the RTM/LMA attended the meeting.

Iain Bruce called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm.

President’s Report: Iain Bruce
Iain opened with Rules of Order for the Zoom call which is being recorded by the Town of Westport.

He then asked for a motion to accept the minutes from the April 22, 2020 meeting with two grammatical corrections. Meena Pellerin moved to accept the minutes and Sivan Hong seconded the motion. The minutes, as amended, were approved unanimously by the Board.

Iain deferred his report to the committee chairs as they will be touching on all items in their reports.

Treasurer’s Report: J. Cunitz
Jonathan reviewed the Treasurer’s report previously circulated to the Board. He noted that the forecasted deficit for the fiscal year has increased further due to decreased revenues during the Library’s closure due to COVID-19. He also noted the deficit would be impacted by the amount that the PPP loan is not forgivable. He reported that Capital Campaign contributions, however, are on target YTD.
Finance Report: R. Baris
Russ reported that the committee has spent time since last month focusing on two things:
1. The committee has been assisting with the financial planning of several different scenarios regarding the reopening of the Library. He shared that Bill, Iain and he have been had conversations with Jim Marpe and members of the Town Finance Department regarding the PPP Loan. Russ also reminded the Board that the FY2020-2021 Budget presented to the Town was approved before COVID-19, and that it is uncertain at this time, if that will remain in effect.
2. The second item of focus was meeting with the auditors so that they can begin the Fiscal Year-end audit. The team does not feel that working remotely will impede the audit process.

Development Committee: E. DiMiceli & A. Berkley
Emily DiMiceli reported that the Development Committee has been working with Nancy and Bill and have had many discussions regarding the direction of the Annual Appeal this year. Based upon the lack of certainty due to present economic and environmental conditions, discussions have centered on how the Library can support and serve the community in a more meaningful way.
Supporting school aged children and Career Development support topped the list. The Summer Learning program hence has been enhanced. There will be 128 classes, with a maximum of 10 children per class. Emily asked that Board members reach out to friends and colleagues to ask for financial support of this initiative. Nancy will send out a script for everyone to use as a template for the ask.

Gov/Nom Committee: P. Wieser
Pat Wieser reported that the year end Board surveys have all been sent out. The committee is asking for 100% participation from the Board. Responses are due by May 31, 2020.
She also shared that the committee will be interviewing 16 candidates who have expressed an interest in joining the Board. Together with the RTM/LMA, the interviews will be conducted over a two week period to be completed by May, 29, 2020. RTM/LMA will select three candidates and the Library will select 3.

Executive Director Report: B. Harmer
Prior to the meeting, Bill distributed a detailed report to the Board regarding plans for the incremental re-opening of the Library. He shared the extensive measures that will be implemented in order to maximize staff and patron safety and minimize risks of contamination from materials soon to be circulated. He talked about the many challenges surrounding reopening during this uncertain time, but assured the Board members that
he is working closely not only with the Town, but has also reached out to his professional colleagues and State Rep Jonathan Steinberg.

June 15, 2020 is currently the launch date for curbside pick-up, Phase 1 of reopening, for many of the lower Fairfield county libraries.

Bill also reviewed some of the anticipated financial effects of the pandemic. He noted that new strategies are being worked on to ameliorate the loss of revenues due to cancellation of a few major fund-raising events, namely BOOKED for the evening and the July Book Sale.

Jocelyn then shared that the Summer Book Sale was being canceled. The “virtual” fund raiser mentioned at the last Board meeting is being planned for mid-June, and will be an on-line silent auction and book sale. The Book Sale Committee also continues to explore other methods and venues for selling books. She also noted that it is still uncertain as to when book donations will be accepted once again.

Another unfortunate outcome of COVID-19 is that the book sale’s pilot employment program, launched — and then suspended — in early March, is still on hold, due to social distancing limitations within the Annex itself.

Other Business

There being no further business to come before the meeting, Iain entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made by Andrew Wilk, seconded by Scott Bennewitz, and unanimously approved by the Board, and the meeting thereupon adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Jeremy Price
Secretary