

**Approved Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting
Zoom Conference Call, 6:00 pm – Recorded by Town of Westport
February 24, 2021**

Trustees Present: Iain Bruce (presiding), Scott Bennewitz, Andrea Berkley, Jonathan Cunitz, Emily DiMiceli, Randy Herbertson, Sivan Hong, Fred Klein, Celeste LaCroix, Jenna Markowitz, Krishna Patel, Meena Pellerin, Jeremy Price, Stefano Pacifico, Barrie Rosen, Faye Schoenherr, Sheila Ward, Pat Wieser, Andrew Wilk

Trustees Absent: Rob Haroun

Guests: Dick Lowenstein (RTM), Amy Kaplan (RTM) & Kathie Bennewitz

Iain Bruce called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm – Rules of Order were noted.

Mission Moment: C. Erger-Fass

Carole, the Library's Exhibits Curator shared with the Board that due to the pandemic the Artist to Artist program was placed on hold. As a response to COVID she regrouped and has been working with Miggs Burroughs on a program called Artist in Residence (AIR). The two of them have been working with local artists, including sculptors, painters, collage artists, photographers, street artists and more. The artists have invited them into their studios for a sneak peek and to discuss their experiences over the last year and how COVID has affected their lives. It's a virtual treasure trove consisting of 30 videos which have been viewed over 2000 views on YouTube. They are all available through the Library website.

President's Report: Iain Bruce

Minutes of the January 27, 2021 meeting were reviewed. Sheila Ward made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded by Pat Wieser and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board. Iain noted that the Executive Committee met to discuss Board Giving Guidelines as a result of a request from the Board surveys. He shared that while this Board is not a "Give or Get" board and there is no minimum set, he strongly suggested that each member's contributions should be consistent with each family's philanthropic giving and that hopefully the Library is positioned at the top of that giving list.

He also noted that financial participation for the Annual Appeal and Booked for the evening is strongly suggested as these are the two major fundraisers for the Library. One hundred percent participation in giving from the Board is important, but the amount is up to each individual.

Finance Report: S. Bennewitz

Scott reported that Budget season is in full swing. Bill and Iain participated in a workshop with the BOF on 2/11/21. The Budget presented was well received by the committee with challenges posed to the Library in the upcoming FY being fully recognized and respected. The committee then went on to commend the Library management team as “a benchmark example” of Town management. He then shared that the Investment Committee met on January 28th and that asset allocations are all within the target range. No changes were made to investments. The next meeting will be in April.

Treasurer’s Report: J. Cunitz

Jonathan reviewed the Treasurer’s report previously circulated to the Board.

He reported that this month’s report is similar to last months. Revenues are down, as expected, due to reduced contributions caused by cancelation of Booked for the evening and other contributions. Expenses are down due to salaries and benefits being lower than budgeted and a reduction in the cost of materials. The result is a net surplus of \$66,287.

The forecast is showing a deficit.

Development Committee: E. DiMiceli & A. Berkley

Andrea reported that \$243,000 has been raised to-date for the Annual Appeal, from 748 donors. There will be one final push for the Appeal in March, which will be digital in nature. It will largely target those who have given in the past but have not thus far this year.

Fairfield County Giving Day is tomorrow, and the Library has received a matching gift of \$10,000 from a loyal donor and Library supporter. Tickets for the Lockdown Music Festival, March 13th, may be purchased and go toward this. There will be a social media blast to support this.

Andrea noted that the committee has been strategizing about how to increase the Library’s footprint within the community. A decision has been made to target the newcomers and the committee has received a list of 400 newcomers. An oversized postcard will be mailed to each household and they will be invited to the Library for a personal or group tour. Tours will be given by Board members.

Gov/Nom Committee: P. Wieser

Pat previously circulated a revised Collection Development Policy and Investment Portfolio Management Policy for review.

She asked the Board if there were any changes/edits recommended. There being none, Jonathan Cunitz made a motion to approve the revised Collection Development Policy and Barrie Rosen seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Scott Bennewitz then discussed the revised Investment Policy. He made a motion to approve the Investment Portfolio Management Policy and Sheila Ward seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Pat then shared that the new Trustee Recruitment will begin soon and suggested that if anyone has any prospective candidates to reach out to either her or Iain.

Advocacy Task Force: F. Klein

Fred reported that the Task Force met and will continue to meet on a monthly basis. Initial meetings with various local entities have begun. Meetings with members from the RTM and Finance committees have taken place to discover ways with which we can begin to collaborate with one another. A strong emphasis will be on Audience Development...who and what are some of the larger audiences within our community that are not yet tapped in to. In March, the committee will focus on Strategic Priorities.

Barrie reported that the committee has created a list of key library statistics and a narrative to go along with it as a guidepost for discussions while advocating for the Library. Both were previously circulated.

Executive Director Report: B. Harmer

Prior to the meeting, Bill distributed a detailed PowerPoint report and asked if anyone had questions.

He thanked Jeremy Price for organizing the Pfizer panel discussion earlier in month for which he has received a tremendous amount of positive feedback.

He also thanked Andrew Wilk for being able to secure Itzack Perlman as the Booked for the evening honoree this year.

Bill then shared that the Book Store which opened recently has been well received and reportedly is doing very well. They have only been open a total of 13 days and have made \$8000. They have hired 2 PT managers and have hired 4 individuals with developmental disabilities. Hours and days open can now be expanded.

Finally, Bill shared that he and Melanie Myers have been working diligently together and with staff to create the Reopening Plan which will scale up all key library operational functions to some extent by July 1. He will present an in-depth plan at next month's meeting.

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 Celeste LaCroix and unanimously approved by the Board, and the meeting thereupon adjourned at 7:24 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Andrea Berkley
Secretary