

**WATERBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING**  
**DRAFT MINUTES**  
**28 North Main Street – SAL Room**  
**Monday, January 8, 2024, at 5:00 PM**

Present: Deanna King, Michelle Baker, Anna Black, Margaret Moreland, Kit Walker, Tom Leitz, Rachel Muse

Deanna called the meeting to order at 5:03 PM

Deanna moved to approve the agenda. Margaret seconded. All in favor.

Margaret moved to approve the December 11, 2023, meeting minutes. Kit seconded. All in favor.

Public comment: none.

#### **Municipal Manager's Report**

- Tom reviewed the current status of the 2023 budget for 2024. Most budget items are on track, with the exception of employee health insurance and other such benefits (which are not within the Library's control).
- Tom reviewed his presentation of the proposed Library budget to the Select Board. Discussion continued regarding the projected increase in Library staff salaries to begin to make them more equitable (acknowledging the fact that proposed increases will still not bring the salaries to the same point as comparable positions). Board members expressed various concerns with the proposal.
- Tom and all Board members have received copies of the 1998 Waterbury Library Trust Document and related documents.
- As many Board members as possible will soon meet with the Select Board to discuss the Library budget, and will be present when the budget is presented to the Select Board later in January and to the residents on Town Meeting Day.

#### **Treasurer's Report**

- Michelle reported on the current status of Library funds investments.
- In response to Kit's question at last month's meeting, Michelle got in touch with Morgan Stanley regarding the calculation of management fees. Joe Bedard advised that the sales charges associated with the purchase of our mutual funds were all paid up front. Therefore, for our relatively stable account with no purchases or sales, the only charge is the "Annual Account Fee" of \$120 and Joe stated that "[h]istorically [they] have gone in and reversed that fee ... as a courtesy since [the Library is] a cherished local non-profit organization."
- There was a general consensus that the Board should review financial and investment policies in the near future to clarify responsibilities and protocols.

## Library Director's Report

- Saturday hours at the Library were changed to 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM without issues.
- There were significant increases in Library usage between 2022 and 2023. Public computer usage increased by approximately 56%. Physical item circulation is nearly 30,000 and digital book circulation adds about 15,000 to that number. Adult program attendance has increased by 58% and the number of Instagram followers increased by about 56%.
- Sandra, the youth librarian, has begun monthly (at least) Saturday children's programming – a big hit for families who cannot come to the Library during the week. Miss Heather from The Children's Room came to the Saturday Storytime in December (with no charge) for a magical collaboration of music, movement, and stories. Another program, featuring a therapy dog, had 65 attendees!
- The Library will have a special sledding program during Waterbury Winterfest. Experience is showing that residents love extra events outside of regular Library hours, and that they take advantage of other Library services during those times.
- The Library closed at 3 PM on the day of the December flooding to make sure patrons (including children) and staff could get home safely as roads closed. The next day was extremely busy with children out of school and the Library responded with books, crafts, games, and fun!
- The Library staff is learning to deal with difficult, harassing, or offensive patrons in a professional – but direct – way to minimize stress on all parties.
- The Library will partner with the Vermont Historical Society in February to host a day of oral history interviews regarding experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Rachel, along with Tom and Select Board member Alyssa Johnson, will be part of Waterbury's cohort for VLCT Welcoming and Engaging Communities training over the next few months.
- Rachel was elected president of the Catamount Library Network, a consortium that shares an open-source integrated library system and discovery layer for our catalog.
- Along with the Library's ongoing programs in December, adult programs included An Evening of Stillness and Ghost Stories on a Winter's Night.
- A representative from VPR's *Brave Little State* came to the Library on the 8<sup>th</sup> and will be returning for another day to prepare for a program on how libraries stay relevant in a digital world. The program will air in February.

## Executive Session

- Margaret moved that the Board adjourn into Executive Session to discuss staff salaries. Kit seconded. All in favor.

The Board returned from the Executive Session and Deanna adjourned the meeting at 6:37 PM.

Next Regular Meeting – Monday, February 12, 2024, at 5:00 PM

APPROVED: