

**WATERBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING**  
**DRAFT MINUTES**  
**28 North Main Street – Red Room**  
**Monday, March 15, 2024, at 5:00 PM**

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

Absent: Kit Walker

Deanna called the meeting to order at 5:02 PM

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

Board roles for 2024: Anna Black, chair; Deanna King, vice-chair; Michelle Baker, treasurer; Margaret Moreland, secretary.

Deanna turned the meeting over to Anna.

Anna moved to approve the March 11, 2024, meeting minutes. Margaret seconded. All in favor.

The Board received a thank you note from the Library staff expressing appreciation for the Board's work on the recent salary increases.

**Public Comment:** none.

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

- Tom reported that the Library's 2024 budget items are on track.
- Tom advised the Board that all efforts to repair the building's heating/cooling system appear to have been unsuccessful. If the system is still not working properly next winter, the large expense of replacing it will have to be considered. As the Library pays a percentage of the MBOF annually (approximately 50%), this may have a substantial impact on our 2025 budget.

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

- Michelle reported on the status of the Library's funds and investments. The Morgan Stanley account has continued to increase in value.
- Tom suggested that the Board may want to consider re-balancing our accounts, possibly moving more to cash to capture some of the recent investment gains.

#### **Library Director's Report**

- Eclipse Day was amazing! While 100-125 people visit the Library on an average day, 885 passed through the Library's doors on April 8. In addition to using the bathrooms (!), visitors used the Library computers, read books, checked out the exhibits, and made purchases from the Friends' book sale. The Friends also received \$350 in donations from appreciative visitors.
- Duxbury's donation of \$3,500 to cover Library card fees for Duxbury residents will be made on July 1.
- Staff pay raises went into effect on April 8.
- Unfortunately, the evening cleaner found a used needle in one of the town bathrooms. While common elsewhere, this was a first for Waterbury. The Saturday morning staff appropriately secured the room and contacted Bill Woodruff. Rachel will work with the town on procedures and mediation going forward in case this happens again. Obtaining needle pickup kits will be considered.
- Because it was found that some municipal building doors may not always be locked properly, Tom noted that the town is considering moving to a card access system.
- The Friends generously sponsored Library Workers' Day last week with a sit-down lunch for the staff.
- The annual "Friends" program featuring gardening expert Charlie Nardozi will be on April 29.
- Sandra, the Youth Librarian, attended Library Legislation Day at the statehouse. A bill presently working its way through the legislature, S. 220, includes measures to protect librarians, the freedom to read, and patron privacy. One provision would require a strong policy for dealing with book challenges – which we already have. To extend patron privacy protections, another provision would lower the age at which minors can have a library card in their own name from 16 to 12.
- Two of the most well-attended programs in the past month were *Vermont for Vermonters* and *How to Safely View the Solar Eclipse*. About 50 people attended the first program which was co-sponsored by Bridgeside Books and the Waterbury Historical Society. Presenters were Prof. Mercedes de Guardiola, author of the recently published book, state archivist Mariessa Dobrick, and State Rep. Tom Stevens. The program on the eclipse was presented by Jim Bosek of the Vermont Astronomical Society who clearly and enthusiastically conveyed the geeky science stuff! Again, almost 50 attended, spilling out into the Library after all the chairs were taken, and there were requests for more science programs.
- The Library will be collaborating with Bridgeside Books and other community organizations and businesses on a series of Silent Reading Parties around town, a type of programming has been very popular elsewhere. The first will be at The Phoenix on May 30.
- Work on the new Children's Garden has begun, in collaboration with the Recreation Department. All the lumber was donated and raised beds are being built. A story walk is also planned for the site.
- Sandra held the first meeting of the "TAB Teens" group (Teen Advisory Board), brainstorming collection and programming ideas over pizza.
- Deanna, the Outreach Librarian, completed the VTLIB Core Course on Reference/Information Services & Resources.
- The Library summer reading programs are about to begin, including an adult reading program. More campers are expected this summer and the Library will be partnering with the Rec Department.

**Old Business – Investment Policy Committee:** Margaret and Michelle reported that they have completed an initial analysis of the policy draft proposed last year, comparing it to the town's policy, policies of other libraries, and Department of Libraries recommendations. Margaret will prepare a revised draft, highlighting proposed changes and remaining questions, and send it to Michelle and Tom. We plan to meet again before the June Board meeting.

**New Business:** Tom updated the Board on the status of a proposed homeless shelter at the Armory. It appears to be off the table for now, although the state's appeal regarding Waterbury permitting requirements may be pursued for various reasons. Nevertheless, as there may be an increase in Waterbury's unhoused population this summer, Tom has reached out to the Washington County Department of Mental Health regarding possible collaboration.

Deanna moved to adjourn the meeting. Margaret seconded. Meeting adjourned at 5:45 PM

APPROVED: