



Acton Public Library
60 Old Boston Post Road
Old Saybrook, Connecticut 06475

Board of Directors Regular Meeting
Tuesday, December 14, 2021

Attendance - Members present: Amanda Brouwer (Library Director), Nancy Walsh, (Board Chairperson), Alan Schwarz (Vice Chairperson), Nathan Wise (Treasurer), Susan Mariani (Corresponding Secretary), Michael Cameron, Mary Delmonico, Susan Hitchcock Missel, MaryAnn Iadarola, and Ann Derouaux-Welch. Absent (*notified, **did not notify): none. Others: Mandy Merritt (Board Recorder).

1. **Call to Order** - Chairperson Walsh called the meeting to order at 6:33pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and new Board Member Ann Derouaux-Welch was introduced to the Board.

2. **Approval of Minutes** - The meeting minutes of November 9, 2021 were reviewed. A motion was made by Mike Cameron and seconded by Alan Schwarz to approve the minutes with the addition of Sue Mariani's last name in point #7. All were in favor.

3. **Public Comment** - None

4. **Acceptance of Financial Report** - Director Brouwer highlighted that the library is underspent in most line items, including employee salaries, as of half the fiscal year. A motion was made by Mary Delmonico and seconded by Susan Mariani to approve the Financial Report as presented. All were in favor.

5. **Acceptance of Non-Town Fund Report** - Director Brouwer informed the Board of spending down the gift funds, including hiring a social justice facilitator and the purchase of gift supplies. The Director explained that gift funds come from donations and some of those donations are designated restricted funds that are earmarked for specific uses. A motion was made by Nathan Wise and seconded by MaryAnn Iadarola to accept the Non-Town Fund Report as presented. All were in favor.

6. **Acceptance of Statistics Report** - Director Brouwer indicated that circulation is up from last year. Alan Schwarz asked about APL's circulation relative to other libraries throughout Connecticut. Amanda indicated that APL offers many unique options for our town (curbside, online, etc.), computer classes are popular, in-person use was lower over the course of last month, possibly due to the nice weather and the holiday season. Outdoor story time ended and might offer indoor story time early next year. Ann asked about the attendance at the library's Zoom events. Amanda indicated a decline. Chairperson Walsh asked about general library trends in Connecticut. Director Brouwer informed the Board that there are many variables, which makes comparisons difficult to assess, but most libraries are noticing hesitancy. A motion was made by Susan Mariani and seconded by Alan Schwarz to approve the Statistics Report as presented. All were in favor.

7. **Correspondences** - None

8. Library Director's Report - Director Brouwer provided her report beginning with the announcement of the new Administrative Assistant, Ria K. The door system and heat pumps have been ordered with a significant fee increase due to the current economy. The Middletown Library leaving the Consortium ends APL's access to their extensive lending collection. The Architectural Feasibility Study Subcommittee (Mike C., Nathan W., Sue M.) is to have a decision by December 17. Amanda extended a thank you to the Board members for attending the Starlight Festival. The outdoor lockers have been delivered. APL will be presenting the budget on Jan 25, 2022. To attract more seniors, games and typing assistance will be offered. Historical items are being digitized. Adult programs included musical, nature-related, historical and poetry, along with a workshop for writing memoirs and an introduction to keeping a seed library. The Children's Report included mention of chess and the popularity of '12 days of books,' Young adult programs included a game night and now a 16YO+ program will be offered. Open mic night will be indoors, OSHS Musings club collaboration, memoir-videos for teens, and tech Times support for a wide variety of topics, experience levels and devices. Director Brouwer highlighted appreciation for Donna's efforts in genealogy and other support she provides. Patron's compliments are being sent to the library for the library's extra efforts made during the pandemic. On another note, Director Brouwer informed the board of the results from the survey taken at the Starlight Festival and a lively discussion ensued.

9. Friend's Report - Nathan informed the Board that the next Friend's Report will be in February

10. Old Business

- A. Strategic Plan goals were discussed along with how to proceed and take the lead. Nathan explained that the Rotary Club might be able to help by allowing the library to present at a Rotary meeting. Amanda suggested including a 'Goal Update' at each APLB meeting.
- B. Logo & Branding Subcommittee (Nancy W., MaryAnn I., and Mary D.) - Nancy outlined the processes that the committee will put in place including the release of an RFP. The Board discussed the need for a new logo and various perspectives on the current logo.
- C. Architectural Feasibility Study Subcommittee - Mike spoke very positively about two of the firms that have presented. Board members mentioned various priorities and community needs for the new facility. Nathan outlined the selection process. Funding and timing was also discussed.

11. New Business

- A. January Election of officers discussion - Chairperson Walsh reiterated the bylaws and informed the board of the upcoming election process. Current officers interested in continuing and any Board members that are interested in holding an office are to self-nominate by informing the Board Recording Clerk before January 4, 2022 via email. Ballots for the elections will be available and submitted at the January 11, 2022 APLB meeting.
- B. APLB 2022 meeting calendar - A motion to approve the APLB 2022 meeting dates was made by Mary Delmonico and seconded by Nathan Wise. All were in favor.
- C. Review of projected FY23 APL budget - Director Brouwer mentioned the anticipated increasing costs of electric, water, supplies, programming and the need for more senior-level staff. The Town's Finance Director will work with Amanda to further develop the FY23 budget. Amanda also pointed out the line items that will remain the same or decrease. The Board will have the opportunity to review an updated version of this budget at the January meeting.

12. Adjournment - A motion to adjourn was made by Alan Schwarz and seconded by MaryAnn Iadarola to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:09pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Mandy Merritt, *Board Recorder*