



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

Board of Directors Regular Meeting
Tuesday, January 12, 2021

Attendance

Members present: Amanda Brouwer (Library Director), Nancy Walsh, (Board Chairperson), Alan Schwarz (Vice Chairperson), Kathleen Smith (Corresponding Secretary), Nathan Wise (Treasurer), Susan Mariani, Patricia Horn O'Brien, Michael Cameron. Absent (*notified, **did not notify): None. Others: Mandy Merritt (Board Recorder)

1. Call to Order

Chairperson Walsh called the meeting to order at 6:35pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. Approval of Minutes

The regular meeting minutes of December 8, 2020 were reviewed. A motion was made by Kathleen Smith and seconded by Nathan Wise to approve the minutes. All were in favor. The December meeting minutes were approved as presented.

3. Public Comment

None

4. Acceptance of Financial Report

Director Brouwer sited that there are two financial reports in the meeting materials - the town report is more current updated numbers. Future totals for the boiler line item may change due to the efficiency of the new boiler. Also noted, consumables are being purchased instead of in-person events due to the pandemic. A motion was made by Mike Cameron and seconded by Nathan Wise to approve the Financial Report. All were in favor. The Financial Report was approved as presented.

5. Acceptance of Non-Town Fund Report

Director Brouwer informed the Board of a discussion she had with Susie Beckman, Economic Development Director. Susie mentioned a grant opportunity of matching funds for a maker-space at the library. A motion was made by Alan Schwarz and seconded by Susan Mariani to approve the Non-Town Fund Report. All were in favor. Non-Town Fund report approved as presented.

6. Acceptance of Statistics Report

Director Brouwer reported on library statistics noting 50-60% of the activity rate before the pandemic. The number of in-library visits tends to ebb and flow in-line with the reports of the local Covid-19 statistics. There is a range of participation which includes each of the library's various audiences. A motion was made by Alan Schwarz and seconded by Kathleen Smith to approve the Statistics Report as presented. All were in favor. Statistics Report approved as presented.

7. Correspondences

None.

8. Library Director's Report

Director Brouwer provided her report beginning with the status of the process to find a Library Assistant. The budget hearing takes place at the end of January. The library has not been told when they will be receiving vaccines. Some of the other regional libraries have re-closed due to pandemic. Gutters have been installed.

Children's report indicated that the interactive activities such as origami and salt animal tracks have been popular. A variety of movie night kits including popcorn, movie, hot chocolate and candy are available (for kids and others for adults). The interactive options for teens with Brian Story, have also been interesting, including the pop tart gingerbread houses. The 'Bring Your Kids to the Library' event will be modified for the pandemic, potentially 'Bring the Library to Your Kids' instead. An upcoming all-ages community project is in the works, making Cat & Dog toy donations for local animal shelter. Upcoming adult programming includes Bald Eagles via Zoom, Harmonica playing and chocolate bark making with a nutritionist.

Susan Mariani reported that the Strategic Planning Committee will meet January 15.

9. Friend's Report

Kathleen Smith mentioned that the next Friends meeting will be January 28. Books are currently available for purchase in the library and the Friends will be selling some items online. There will also be an outdoor book sale in the Spring.

10. Old Business

Nancy Walsh reported on the Policy Subcommittee's methods for updating the Acton Library's Policy Manual. Susan Mariani commented on the challenge of finding the policies and the appropriate agreement forms. Amanda asked for suggestions for efficient organization of the content. Alan made a query about room use restrictions and requirements. Nancy suggested another subcommittee meeting to continue evolving the content. A motion was made by Nathan Wise to postpone the vote for the Policy Manual until a future date. Seconded by Kathleen Smith. All were in favor. Motion was approved

Amanda updated the Board on the FY 2021-2022 budget increases and efficiency reductions. Salaries and benefits will be aligned with other libraries in the region, highlighting the quality of the staff and the increased technology focus. During the pandemic the flexibility of the staff and the use of technology has been paramount. The support that the library has provided to the community during these challenging isolated times has been impactful in anticipated ways, and in surprising ways, as shown by the types of requests made by the community.

11. New Business

Nancy Walsh informed the Board of three resignations. Kathleen Smith and Mike Osnato have submitted letters of resignation and a verbal resignation has been received from Janet Hodge-Burke. These open seats will be appointed by the First Selectman.

12. Adjournment

A motion was made by Alan Schwarz and seconded by Susan Mariani to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:56pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mandy Merritt,
Board Recorder