



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

Board of Directors Special Meeting
Friday, September 24, 2021

Attendance

Members present: Amanda Brouwer (Library Director), Nancy Walsh, (Board Chairperson), Alan Schwarz (Vice Chairperson), Nathan Wise (Treasurer), Susan Mariani, Patricia Horn O'Brien, Michael Cameron, Mary Delmonico.

Absent (*notified, **did not notify): Susan Hitchcock Missel* and MaryAnn Iadarola*

Board Recorder: Mandy Merritt

Presenter: Maxine Bleiweis

1. Call to Order

Chairperson Walsh called the meeting to order at 1:07pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. Public Comment - None

3. Presentation of Strategic Plan Draft

Maxine Bleiweis outlined how the planning process was implemented. By gathering input from the community the 'big issues' were identified. A 'Community Vision' was developed based on input from the community and six 'opportunities' were identified relative to the library. Maxine gave accolades to Director Brouwer for her agility throughout this process and during covid. A mission statement was presented to the Board. Maxine detailed the importance of library staff, library space, and equity. Five goals were developed for the library. Maxine validated these goals with many specific examples of potential tasks and activities that could be implemented toward achieving these goals. In closing, Maxine mentioned four success factors based on the goals and plans, along with suggested actions for the Board Members.

Nathan highlighted the high expectations of this community. Chairperson Walsh noted the high quality of the library staff, with mention of the misaligned low benefits provided. Alan verified that the town is open to discussion so the Board must speak up. Maxine reiterated the need to emphasize how the library is teaming with the community. There was discussion about staffing and additional discussion about talking with the Board of Finance. Mike validated the library's proper use of funds. Alan emphasized the lack of staffing candidates and Director Brouwer provided examples confirming recent low number of applicants. Alan reminded the Board of past missteps which were positive learning experiences, resulting in setting the library back on course.

Maxine reminded the Board of the Community's power in the form of focus groups and talking with the public.

Director Brouwer encouraged discussion for making next steps. Mary asked what the best approach might be for talking with the Advisory Group. Sue asked about timing for including the First Selectman in the discussion. Mary highlighted the importance of giving people your time. The group then talked

about best locations to discuss the strategic plan with the stakeholders. Alan suggested making a plan for sharing the strategic plan with the community, i.e. posted to Facebook, on the website, etc. Next steps will include voting for the Mission Statement and Vision.

4. Appoint new Architectural Feasibility Study Subcommittee

Director Brouwer informed the Board of the dates for this subcommittee's meetings and objectives. A motion was made by Sue Mariani to create an Architectural Feasibility Study Subcommittee and seconded Mary Delmonico. All were in favor. Chairperson Walsh asked for volunteers - Nathan Wise, Mike Cameron and Sue Mariani volunteered and were appointed.

5. Adjournment

A motion was made by Nathan Wise and seconded by Alan Schwarz to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 2:27pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Mandy Merritt, *Board Recorder*