



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

Board of Directors Regular Meeting
Tuesday, September 14, 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, Susan Hitchcock Missel and MaryAnn Iadarola. Absent (*notified, **did not notify): None. Others: Mandy Merritt (Board Recorder). Guest presenters: Dawn La Valle/Connecticut State Library, Gail Richmond/ACLB President.

1. Call to Order

Chairperson Walsh called the meeting to order at 6:33pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. 'Board Basics' Training

Dawn La Valle and Gail Richmond presented the ACLB's detailed explanation of the functions, roles, and expected behavior of a library board in the state of Connecticut.

3. Approval of Minutes

The special meeting minutes of July 13, 2021 were reviewed. A motion was made by Alan Schwarz and seconded by Mary Delmonico to approve the minutes. All were in favor. The July meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

4. Public Comment - None

5. Acceptance of Financial Report

Director Brouwer explained that the electric bill is showing signs of improvement based on the replacement of the boiler. Expenditures were highlighted. A motion was made by Sue Mariani and seconded by MaryAnn Iadarola to approve the Financial Report as presented. All were in favor. The Financial Report was approved.

6. Acceptance of Non-Town Fund Report

Director Brouwer informed the Board of initial spending of the state grant. Unrelated to the state grant, the Friends and the library will be purchasing lightweight tables in effort to phase out use of the heavy wooden tables. Paper printing is now an operating expense of the town, retroactive to last year.

A motion was made by Pat O'Brien and seconded by Susan Mariani to accept the Non-Town Fund Report as presented. All were in favor.

(Continued on next page)

7. Acceptance of Statistics Report

Director Brouwer reported on library statistics noting that the library is getting busier, including computer usage, meeting room use, seven-day checkouts, and more in-person activity. The 'library of things' (corn hole game, metal detector, etc) is popular and the community is using them. Self-serve is used and a few people in the community are still using curbside pick-up.

A motion was made by MaryAnn Iadarola and seconded by Susan Hitchcock to approve the Statistics Report as presented. All were in favor.

8. Correspondences - None

9. Library Director's Report

Director Brouwer provided her report beginning with an update on the plans for opening on Sundays in October, hiring of a part time reference person, USDA grant came to a vote at the special town meeting, now discussing the RFP with the First Selectman, There is a need to form a new sub committee for the selection of an architect. There was discussion about the use and administration of the Tucker Fund. The changes to the consortium were discussed along with the impact made with the departure of Middletown.

The Strategic Planning Work Group met. Sue Mariani mentioned the creation of 'five goals' and a new mission statement. A meeting is scheduled for September 24 to present the strategic plan.

Amanda provided Children's Programming statistics to the board which illustrated how impressively active participation has been with the many events and options to choose from.

The teen report indicated participation in meditation time, the open mic night participation talents are varied and entertaining. Crafts remain popular. Chairperson Nancy called out the notation that computer classes are being offered, along with thematic monthly technology group teaching sessions. There are also 'special helper' story times featuring service providers (construction, fire, police, etc) from our community.

Susan Hitchcock questioned the rationale of offering tarot cards reading and wondered about the library's promotion of banned books. Director Brouwer explained that the library is an open institution and the topic of banned books is an historically significant topic.

10. Friend's Report

September 23 is the next meeting. The Friend's financial statement is included in the Board's meeting materials this month.

11. Old Business - none

12. New Business - Alan inquired about fair and balanced representation of news publications, referencing as example, the NYTimes and Wall Street journal.

13. Adjournment

A motion was made by Pat O'Brien and seconded by Alan Schwarz to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:16pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Mandy Merritt, *Board Recorder*