

Library Board of Directors  
Somers Public Library  
December 5, 2022

Members present: Lisa Gladysz (arrived at 6:45), Gene Grayson, Mike Gruber, Jack Kertenis, Ann Levesque, Andy Phillips, Bob Socha, Shirley Warner  
Absent (excused): Kathryn Lerz  
Also present: Joanne Nichting, Library Director

Chairperson Andy Phillips called the meeting to order at 6:33pm.

Minutes from the November 7, 2022 meeting were presented and reviewed. It was noted that the date at the top is incorrect and should read "November 7, 2022." B. Socha moved to approve the minutes, as corrected; seconded by J. Kertenis. Abstentions: G. Grayson, A. Levesque, S. Warner. Approved.

*First Audience to Citizens:* G. Grayson introduced two individuals who served with him on the Strategic Planning Committee, Beth Settje and Francie Clark. The three explained the chronology of their work, the other members of the committee, their use of Survey Monkey, and the process they used to develop the Strategic Plan. (See separate handouts.) At the conclusion of their presentation, A. Phillips asked the Board members to review the Plan and identify items that resonate with each member and be prepared to discuss it at our February meeting. Members should identify items that we can tackle relatively quickly, along with items that would be suitable stretch goals, and email their thoughts to Andy and J. Nichting prior to the February meeting. S. Warner made a motion to accept the Strategic Plan as presented and thank the Committee for its thoughtful approach and hard work. A. Levesque seconded. Motion approved.

*Correspondence:* The Board (via J. Nichting) received an email from Andy Rockett requesting that he be added to the agenda for the January meeting to discuss concerns over the John C. Rockett fund.

*Treasurer's Report:*

The Treasurer's Report was distributed and presented by G. Grayson. He outlined the investment accounts, transactions, and new deposit information. The Treasurer's report will be filed for audit.

*Financial Business:*

The FY23 year to date financial report was presented by J. Nichting. She once again reiterated that the utility expenses, especially the heating fuel, may far exceed the budgeted amounts. The Board is concerned about the plan for the deficit. The Town didn't lock in an oil price this season, leaving the Library and other town departments vulnerable to market pricing which is currently double the rate used in the budget. J. Nichting also noted that the Town requested the Library's proposed budget for FY24 by 12/16/22. The Budget Committee will get together to work on the budget this month. The report will be filed for audit.

*Committee Reports:*

**Building Committee** - B. Socha provided a brief update on maintenance items – the front door is fixed, one panic device is not working properly, and he still has issues to sort out with Sonitrol. J. Nichting noted that some mechanical

equipment adjacent to the children's room occasionally sounds like a jet engine. B. Socha indicated he would take a look to see if he can determine a cause.

**Friends of the Library** – J. Nichting reported on the Friends' activities, including: Spring book sales dates – 4/21 – 4/23; Fall book sale dates – 10/20 – 10/22; a possible home tour fundraiser; and the new FOL Instagram page – “friendsofsomersctpubliclibrary.” In addition, she reported that the Santa Celebration was a huge success with over 100 children participating over 4 different time slots.

*Old Business:*

**MBA Dismissal Concerns** – J. Nichting discussed the dismissal concerns with the school resource officer (Craig Jones); however, he didn't have any suggestions to improve the situation. After more discussion, it was agreed that A. Phillips will discuss it with the MBA Principal, Margot Martello, to express the Board's safety concerns and see if she has any suggestions.

**Clarification of Revised By-laws** – after brief discussion about the voting rights of the Chairperson, it was determined that no modifications to the by-laws are necessary.

*New Business:*

**Holiday Gifts for Staff** – M. Gruber moved to approve Geissler's gift cards for the library staff in an amount that is \$20 more than the prior year's gift per person. Seconded by S. Warner. Motioned passed. In addition, J. Nichting noted that there are 9 people who volunteer their time at the library for whom she would also like to give a holiday gift. L. Gladysz made a motion to spend up to \$120 in total for volunteer gifts; M. Gruber seconded. Motion passed.

**Library Road Signs** – J. Nichting proposed the idea of installing library road signs on the main streets surrounding the library to indicate its location. These are standard and used in many towns. She indicated that the request would need to be submitted and approved by the traffic authority (Board of Selectmen) and signs installed on state roads would need approval from the State of CT Department of Transportation. G. Grayson motion to move forward with an application to the town traffic authority; seconded by M. Gruber. Motion passed.

*Director's Report:*

J. Nichting presented her Director's Report to the Board, which included general library information, program attendance, and circulation and other statistics. The report was accepted as presented.

*Second Audience to Citizens:* None

Meeting was adjourned at 8:14pm. Next meeting will be January 17, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lisa Gladysz

MINUTES NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED AT A SUBSEQUENT MEETING