

Library Board of Trustees

Somers Public Library

January 22, 2024

(rescheduled from January 16, 2024 due to snow)

Members present: Catherine Embriano, Lisa Gladysz, Mike Gruber, John Kelleher, Jack Kertenis, Andy Phillips

Absent (excused): Ann Levesque, Marybeth Marquardt, Bob Socha

Also present: Joanne Nichting, Library Director

Chairperson Andy Phillips called the meeting to order at 6:34 PM.

First Audience to Citizens: None

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from the December 12, 2023 meeting were presented and reviewed. Mr. Kelleher moved to approve the minutes; seconded by Ms. Embriano. Abstention: Ms. Gladysz. Minutes approved.

Correspondence: Two thank you notes were received during the month - one from Francie Clark for the Christmas gift and the other from the Northern Connecticut Radio Control Club for allowing them to use the library for their meetings. Ms. Nichting informed the Board that the NCRCC note was accompanied by a monetary donation to the library.

Treasurer's Report:

In Ms. Marquardt's absence, Ms. Nichting presented the Treasurer's report. She highlighted the endowment fund growth and several transactions in the checking account. The report will be filed for audit.

Financial Business:

The FY24 year to date financial report was presented by Ms. Nichting. Other than automated services (the majority of which is spent at the start of the year), expenses are in line with where they should be mid-year. The report will be filed for audit.

Mr. Phillips noted that the FY25 budget presentation to the Board of Selectmen went well, noting that several people in attendance were complimentary of the library's budget presentation.

Committee Reports:

Friends of the Library – Mr. Kertenis reported on the most recent FOL meeting. Notable items included the success of the Santa program in December and the dates of the upcoming spring book sale: April 19 - 21, 2024. He also noted that the Friends approved Ms. Nichting's wish list with the exception of the Library Speakers Consortium membership which will be discussed during New Business.

Old Business: None

New Business:

Angel Fund – the Board discussed the tragic house fire and the unprecedented loss suffered by the families, along with the overwhelming community response. Ms. Gladysz made a motion for the Board to donate \$1,000 to the Angel Fund. Seconded by Mr. Gruber. Unanimously passed.

Teen Room Update – Ms. Nichting confirmed that the \$5,000 grant, originally approved for the Human Services Department, was approved for use in the Teen Room. Library and Human Services Dept staff will meet to discuss and coordinate joint programming opportunities. Recent donations made to the library in memory of Carol Palomba have provided funds for additional furniture and improvements.

Library Speakers Consortium – Ms. Nichting presented the Board with information about the Consortium and the opportunity it provides for smaller libraries to offer virtual programs with high profile authors. Discussion ensued regarding the benefits, how attendance could be tracked, subscription terms, and advertising. The Board agreed to table the topic until the next meeting, giving the Board members time to review the online sample site provided by Ms. Nichting.

Vending Machine – Ms. Nichting proposed a vending machine option for library patrons, particularly the young patrons who visit the library after school. There would be no cost to the library as the vending machine company would manage the device, keep it stocked, and collect the money. The proposed location is the lobby. The Board asked whether a short-option could be tried without committing to a longer-term contract. The Board agreed to table the topic until the next meeting.

Director's Report:

Ms. Nichting presented her Director's Report to the Board, which included general library information, program attendance, circulation, meeting space usage, and other statistics. She also presented some 2017 versus 2023 comparative statistics to highlight changes in patron habits and borrowing trends. The report was accepted as presented.

Second Audience to Citizens: None

The meeting was adjourned at 7:46 PM. The next meeting will be February 20, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Gladysz

MINUTES NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED AT A SUBSEQUENT MEETING