

Weston Public Library
Minutes
December 3, 2013

Present: Chairman Amy Sanborn, Michael Bellacosa, Director Karen Tatarka, Anne Hunt, Sherry Pallay, Treasurer Denis Toner, Rick Ross, Joan Henderson, Lynne Langlois, First Selectman Gayle Weinstein and Guest Caroline Grauberd

Chairman Sanborn called the meeting to order at 7:45 PM. She asked everyone around the table introduce him or herself to our guest and First Selectman Weinstein.

First Selectman's Remarks

Gayle Weinstein began her remarks by noting that this would be “ a difficult conversation.” She reported that the Selectmen and the Board of Finance wanted the Library Board to commit to the amount of the Vitale Bequest that the Board is planning to spend; and to have that number ready at the January 7th Budget meeting of the Town Administrator, the First Selectman and the Library Director. She opined that the Library was “out-dated and not a “comfy,cozy place.” Selectman Weinstein referenced the fact that the Fire Department had committed to spend \$650,000 from their Vitale bequest to purchase a fire truck. Board members pointed out that the Library Board's challenge was considerably more complex than the purchase of a vehicle. The Board has completed a technology plan, prepared a patron survey for January and made arrangements for focus groups to be held in January. The Space Planning subcommittee has visited more than a dozen libraries around New England, interviewed two architects, two interior designers and one space planner/ interior designer. The Space Planning Committee has also had conversations with the lead person for the projects of these design candidates. The Committee has received conflicting advice on the necessity for the removal of the vinyl asbestos tile from the original part of the Library. The Board has also heard estimates ranging from \$5.00 to \$6.50 per square foot for the removal of the VAT for a total of between \$30,000 and \$39,000. Board Chairman Sanborn and Member Langlois met with Selectman Weinstein to discuss the Town's willingness to share in this expense. Selectman Weinstein said that she did not believe it was necessary to remove the VAT and that the Town would not contribute to the cost of doing so.

Chairman Sanborn said that the Board did not have enough information to provide a firm number that the Board would commit to the renovations. Selectman Weinstein said that the Selectman and the Board of Finance wanted that number. Chairman Sanborn inquired whether or not the BOS and the BOF would be satisfied with a range and Selectman Weinstein said that she thought they would.

First Selectman Weinstein also said that she thought that there should be an open forum to gather the public's opinions about the Library renovations in addition to the survey and focus groups.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Toner reported that the bill from Weston Gardens for the planting of the daffodils had been received and that it was about \$500 which brought the total project in well under budget.

Treasurer Toner also said that he would create a segregated account for the money received from book sales and from the state for completing the state report which Director Tatarka could use for programming. He has prepared preliminary draft documents relating to the Director's Fund, The Weston Public Library Fund for day to day expenses, a Programming Fund and the Investment Policy Statement. The Library, like the Town, must follow a policy that does not put principal at risk.

Budget

Chairman Sanborn reported that the budget sub-committee had met and completed the budget request. Discussion followed and the Board agreed unanimously that the budget request should ask for an additional staff member. Weston has a very small staff in comparison to peer institutions and the pending renovations will require a great deal of Director Tatarka's time. The Board asked Director Tatarka to write a job description for the new position.

Technology Committee

The Technology subcommittee reported that the redesigned web Thesite should be available shortly after the New Year.

Space and Strategic Planning Committee

The committee agreed to ask Suzanne Harris to facilitate an open forum. The Board agreed that we should insist that she be paid for this additional work, since she is doing the two focus groups in January pro bono.

Director's Report

Director Tatarka reported that that 24 outside groups had used the Library in November, up 24%. The gate count for November was 5,301 which was a decrease of 8% when compared to November 2012, but last November's gate count was affected by the large number of citizens who used the Library during Super Storm Sandy.

The Library was reviewed by OSHA and found to be compliant. The inspectors said that the balcony railing should be made higher during the renovations.

International games day was well attended. There were 14 boys who came for Minecraft alone.

Director Tatarka has submitted the Library's annual report to the town. The information in the report will be used to launch the survey.

Friends of the Weston Public Library

The Friends have been unable to get a firm commitment from any of the Weston celebrities they had thought might participate. The new plan is to have a spring event celebrating the Library's 50 year history. Chairman Sanborn is going to ask former Director Atkinson to give a talk about the Library. Other ideas included the showing of old tapes of the Town "revues," the last done in 1987 in celebration of the town's bicentennial.

The book sale was very successful. It was well attended and raised \$5700 net.

The Library Board agreed unanimously that "the monies collected from the lobby book sale as well as cash received for completing the state report will be distributed by Director Tatarka as programs are proposed."

50th Anniversary

Member Toner said that he would investigate getting mugs made for the event.

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The November minutes were approved as amended.

Astronomy Program

The Astronomy Program in November was very well attended. The Board agreed to sponsor another such program next October or November. Member Bellacosa will contact the presenter in this regard.

Staff anniversaries

Nancy Lincoln is celebrating her 30th year at the Library. Joy Beckwith has been at the Library for 25 years. There will be a celebratory lunch this Friday. Chairman Sanborn will bring flowers.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynne M. Langlois
Secretary Pro Tem

These minutes were amended at the Board's February 4, 2014 meeting to correct three typographical errors and to add the following sentence at the end of the fourth paragraph: "Chairman Sanborn told First Selectman Weinstein that she had previously planned to discuss this at the meeting."

LML 2/4/14