

WEST HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES

Monday, May 24, 2021 6:30 p.m.

VIRTUAL MEETING

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Jill Spear called the Library Board to order at 6:35 p.m. There was a brief pause and the meeting resumed. Present, via Town of West Hartford WebEx, were Board members Kim Cohen, Eileen Daly, Gail Crockett, Dr. Natalia Menjivar and Jill Spear, Acting Library Director Carol Waxman, and Janet Valencis, recorder.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT – Present from the public were Karen Polmatier, Library Branch manager and Gen Francis, Library IT.

3. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA (Items 4 & 8a i, 8a ii)

MOTION: On a motion made by Gail Crockett and seconded by Eileen Daly, the Board unanimously approved the Consent Agenda.

4. THE MEETING MINUTES of April 26, 2021 were approved as part of the consent agenda.

5. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

a. West Hartford Board Training – Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

Jill, Gail and Natalia have completed the training. Jill urged other members to complete the training by June 30, 2021.

6. OLD BUSINESS:

a. FY22 Budget Update

Carol Waxman updated the board on the status of the FY22 budget. Budget hearings were held in April and there were no public comments at either of the hearings. The April 22, 2021 Budget Adoption date was postponed due to the impending arrival of the American Rescue Plan Act funds as well as information as to how these funds may be appropriated by the Town. The funds are reimbursements for emergencies and COVID-19 related expenses that the Town endured during the pandemic and weather and power outage emergencies. The budget has been amended and reduced slightly from a 2.79% increase to a 2.77% increase. The new Budget Adoption date will be May 25, 2021.

We are presently working on the impact of the expected final FY 22 budget in terms of an operating schedule for all library buildings for post-COVID hours.

b. New Community Culture Center and Library Branch Update

Town Manager Matt Hart briefed the board on the status of the St. Brigid School potential purchase by the town.

c. Juneteenth Celebration Update

The library will have a table outside the library during the June 19th celebration. There will also be an art show in the library.

d. Smart Locker Project Status

Carol Waxman, Karen Polmatier and Gen Francis briefed the board on the status of the Smart Locker Project. This project will be a beta test for smart lockers and will be installed at the Bishops Corner Branch. This project is being privately funded.

7. NEW BUSINESS - none

8. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

a. April Report, submitted:

- i. Library Administrative Report
- ii. Budget Report
- iii. Circulation Statistics (issued quarterly)

b. Current Month Briefing.

Carol Waxman updated the board on the library's hours. Everyone is now welcome to stop into each of our library buildings during open hours without an appointment. Appointments ended on May 15, as did the quarantine of library materials.

While we are aware of the updates made by the CDC regarding face masks, we will continue to require that all patrons wear them during their library visits. Given the number of children visiting the library buildings, we are utilizing the guidelines set forth by the West Hartford Public Schools:
Facemasks and cloth coverings have proven to be an effective way of stopping the spread of COVID-19 and are required. Your safety remains our top priority. We will revisit policies as the situation changes.

A small amount of furniture has been moved from storage back to the floor to add seating at tables, still keeping social distancing while sitting and standing in mind. The amount of time patrons remain in the building will no longer be limited to 30 minutes for browsing. Computer appointments will be one hour.

We do not have a Greeter any longer now that appointments have ended. Patrons can enter and exit through both the Blue Back door and South Main Street doors. The curbside table has been moved to the side of the entry foyer. Curbside delivery service will remain in place at all buildings.

Starting June 7, library hours at NWL will increase from 5:00 to 6:00 PM Mondays – Wednesdays and from 1:00 to 2:00 PM on Saturdays. On Thursdays

and Fridays, we will continue to close at 5:00 PM. The Bishops Corner Branch will now offer computer access.

We plan to open additional evening hours during the summer at the Noah Webster Library, similar to pre-COVID hours and are presently working on a plan for this. Branch hours will increase significantly after Labor Day. We have hired additional part-time staff to work. After Labor Day, all buildings will be open on a schedule similar to pre-COVID.

9. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: The Library Board Meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:38 p.m. The next scheduled Board Meeting is on June 28, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen Daly
Board Secretary

"This meeting was held remotely in accordance with Governor Lamont's executive orders concerning the conduct of virtual meetings and proceedings and the public had the ability to view the meeting in real-time on West Hartford Community Interactive: Comcast Channel 96, Frontier TV Channel 6099, and streaming on the WHCI website."