

WEST HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES Draft
Monday, January 24, 2022 6:30 p.m.
VIRTUAL MEETING

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Jill Spear called the Library Board to order at 6:33 p.m. Present, via Town of West Hartford WebEx, were Board members Kim Cohen, Eileen Daly, Gail Crockett, Dr. Natalia Menjivar and Jill Spear, Library Director Laura Irmscher, Former Acting Library Director Carol Waxman, and Janet Valencis, recorder.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT - none

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

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

4. THE MEETING MINUTES of November 22, 2021 were approved as part of the consent agenda.

5. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

a. New Library Director Welcome

Jill warmly welcomed Laura Irmscher as the new library director.

b. Library Support

Jill thanked all the town staff, members of the search committee and staff members for their efforts in this long process.

c. Gail Crockett appointed to Library Board for second term.

6. OLD BUSINESS:

a. FY23 Budget update

The budget was submitted on January 3, 2022 and will be reviewed at a January 31, 2022 meeting with town officials. The submittal was in accordance with the town request. All non-personnel lines remained constant. Personnel increases were due to the hiring of the library director, the reinstatement of the Library II position that was put on hold for FY22 and any wage increases due to contractual agreements.

b. New Community Culture Center and Library Branch update

An advisory board will be formed with representation from town boards and commissions and private boards that support town constituencies.

7. NEW BUSINESS

a. Staff Professional Development Update

Staff will be participating in a webinar this week on customer service. The library has asked the board to consider closing the library for several staff training events in the next year.

b. Library Board Meeting for December 2022

The scheduled meeting for December falls on a town holiday. The December meeting is optional so we will wait till the fall the either change the date or cancel the meeting.

8. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

a. November and December Report, submitted:

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

b. Current Month Briefing.

We will be open for 10 Sundays this year, starting on January 9, from 12 noon until 4:00 PM.

We are responding to the latest pandemic protocol reflective of the rise in positivity rates in West Hartford by communicating frequently with the West Hartford/Bloomfield Health District and following all protocol. All library programming for children, teens and adults, has once again become virtual. Library patrons have a wide variety of engaging virtual programs to attend. Library visitors over the age of 2 years continue to wear a mask inside our three library buildings.

Curbside service, at the Noah Webster main library, which had slowed considerably is expected rise due to the rise in COVID positivity rates. At the Bishops Corner Branch, the use of a smart locker system has replaced curbside service. The smart locker service has proven to be very successful in terms of the number of library patrons using it and their appreciation of being able to pick up materials during closed library hours.

Studio 20 South, our new makerspace tech lab, will have a soft opening in February, opening a total of 22 hours per week and offering morning, afternoon and evening hours with full days on Saturday, staffed by technicians who are excited to introduce or instruct patrons on the devices offered.

Mayor's Youth Council is finalizing plans for its 2022 impact projects. Three subcommittees (mental health action & awareness, diversity/international night, and social media) have been meeting virtually and are in the planning stages.

A new Faxon Branch book drop is in place after the previous book drop was demolished by a car in the parking lot. It has been placed in the same location but the slot where materials are placed has been turned to the other side, after Town Engineers inspected it and determined the change needed to be made to avoid future damages

9. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: The Library Board Meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:17 pm. The next scheduled Board Meeting is February 28, 2022 at 6:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen Daly
Board Secretary
West Hartford Library Board

"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."