

**WEST HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES**  
**Monday, November 27,2023, 6:30 p.m.**  
**VIRTUAL MEETING**

1. CALL TO ORDER

In Eileen Daly's absence, Gail Crockett called the Library Board to order at 6:37 p.m. Present, virtually, were Board members Kim Cohen, Gail Crockett, EJ Greenspan. Director Laura Irmscher, Leah Farrell, and Heidi Reagan, recorder. Eileen Daly was able to join us shortly after the meeting began and resumed the chair's duties. Member Natalia Menjivar was absent.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

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

MOTION: On a motion made by Kim Cohen and seconded by EJ Greenspan, the Board unanimously approved the Consent Agenda.

4. THE MEETING MINUTES of October 23, 2023, were approved as part of the consent agenda.

5. CHAIR'S REPORT - None

6. OLD BUSINESS:

- a. Laura introduced Leah Farrell, the Programs and Outreach Librarian who joined the library on August 28, 2023. Leah provided a short synopsis of her experience and described the projects she is currently working on
- b. Strategic Plan Update - Laura
  - i. Feedback was received from a variety of sources which includes 1250 survey responses, in-person and virtual community engagement sessions, Post-it comments from boards located in all three branches and Town Hall, the Library Board discussion, and the staff meeting
  - ii. Responses were compiled into a spreadsheet and common themes were used to develop the strategic initiatives
    1. Expanding access to library resources (hours, services, other languages)
    2. Improve communication about what we already do
    3. Support staff to ensure they have the tools necessary to succeed
    4. Focus on the collections and programs to make sure they represent our diverse community and are responsive to current interests and needs
    5. Improve building use by creating welcoming and inviting spaces that adapt to our users changing needs
- c. New Community Center and Library Update – Laura
  - i. Town has issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the design
  - ii. 11 firms have responded

- iii. Town Directors chose the top six and they will be interviewed next week with a final selection made by late January

## 7. NEW BUSINESS

- a. The Library Board will continue to meet virtually until the spring, 2024
- b. A decision will be made whether to hold the December meeting by the second week of December
- c. Kim Cohen recommended we hold the January, annual meeting, in person, weather permitting

## 8. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- a. October documents submitted:
  - i. Library Administrative Report
  - ii. Budget Report
- b. Library Updates
  - i. 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Kindness Project
    1. Donations will go to the WH Food Pantry and Fern Street Universalist Church Backpack Program
    2. Donations can be dropped off at the library until December 8
    3. Amazon wishlist has been created to make donating easier
  - ii. Art Banner Contest – “The Wonder of West Hartford”
    1. 24 banners are on light poles in the Center
    2. Partnership between WHPL and the Municipal Parking Department
    3. Great way to promote the library beyond our walls
  - iii. Health District Partnership
    1. Faxon is sponsoring a program series
    2. Topics include Domestic Violence Awareness (in partnership with Interval House), Children’s Health: Lead Poisoning and Immunization, and Holiday Safety and Winter Preparedness
  - iv. Excerpts from The Nutcracker were performed by the CT Concert Ballet at Town Hall for our preview performance
    1. Funding provided by Ellen Jeanne Goldfarb Memorial Charitable Trust
    2. 240 people attended which is the best turnout we have ever seen
    3. Performers posed for pictures with children and their families afterwards
  - v. Mayor’s Youth Council
    1. Subcommittees have been working on their impact projects
    2. They have been working with Liz Buczynski from Social Services to collect donations for the Adopt-a-Family program
    3. They are meeting with the Registrar of Voters to organize a teen voter registration drive in 2024

## 9. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: The Library Board Meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:17 p.m. The next scheduled Board Meeting is scheduled for December 18, 2023

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Cohen  
Board Secretary  
or  
Eileen Daly, Secretary Pro Tem  
West Hartford Library Board

"This meeting was held remotely and the public had the ability to view the meeting in real-time live on West Hartford Community Television at [www.whctv.org](http://www.whctv.org) and [www.youtube/whctv5](http://www.youtube/whctv5)."