

Hall Memorial Library Board of Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, April 2, 2024
7:00 p.m.
Hall Memorial Library, 93 Main Street, Ellington or Zoom

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TOWN CLERK

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Chair Mary Blanchette. In attendance: Mary Blanchette (via ZOOM), Mary Cone, Peg Busse (also FOL Chair), Library Director Susan Phillips, YA Librarian/Assistant Director Ashley Dabbondanza, Recording Secretary/Bookkeeper Rhonda Villanova

II. Citizen's Forum – no one to speak

III. Chairman's Report

Chair Mary Blanchette had two points to report: 1) Felicia LaPlante from Finance read the previous month minutes and commented on Pam McCormick's concerns about the Town possibly paying bills late, incurring late fees. 2) Tiffany Pignataro asked when the BOT would be transferring the library funds to the new Town account. Mary said she and Sue Phillips would be meeting next week to go over the list of vendors to notify before any movement took place.

IV. Approval of March 12, 2024 meeting minutes

Moved (Blanchette), Seconded (Cone) to approve the March 12, 2024 meeting minutes; all in favor. (Not sure of quorum numbers for non-financial motions, may need to repeat motion next meeting)

V. Treasurer's Report

Director Sue Phillips pointed out a couple items including the funds spent from the McDermott Trust donation equaling \$298.64 for Children's Room items. Also, the "Pass Thru" sale collections were tallied in an effort to clean up monies owed. Checks will be made to Friends of the Library, Ellington Historical Society, and Ellington Women's Club in the amounts noted on the report. Peg Busse asked how the Book Bundles will be handled in the future. It was determined that collections of funds, which only FOL would handle and no pass thru would be ideal.

VI. Current Year Budget Report

The report was reviewed with Sue Phillips noting that Office Supplies will likely go over, due to the supplies needed to outfit a second desk in the upstairs office for Ashley. Asked where the funds might come from if that happened, Sue responded there are a couple of options, but still time to determine what would work best.

VII. Library Director's Report

Sue Phillips pointed out the highlights of the report including: the Eclipse Extravaganza on April 8th, the elevator was fixed, trees were taken down for the future parking area, she will be meeting with the contractor regarding the sequence of the work to be done, landscaping will begin soon, and the planning meetings are moving forward. Peg Busse asked about advertising the Fine Free Month. Sue responded it was included in the newsletter and announced on FaceBook.

YA Librarian, Ashley Dabbondanza, reported on the YA area being spiffed up. Staff assisted for 8 hours moving shelving and books to create a new layout. Genre collections are now grouped together.

VIII. FOL Report

FOL Chair Peg Busse reported on the funding of museum passes - \$905.00, and total fiscal year expenditures to date as \$8280.12. Sue Phillips shared there were orders building for the Summer Reading Program and requests for funding from the FOL would be forthcoming.

IX. Old Business

Update on Planning Cohort – Sue Phillips gave the update on planning committee activities, which included putting up boards with post-its for public input (in the library and at the Senior Center), and online surveys. The responses were divvied up into goals related to the building itself, communication, and program/activities. The draft of the report is due April 17th. The committee will be working to finalize the report.

Safety Concerns - Mary Blanchette reviewed the current situation, i.e., opening with less than 3 people does not feel safe to those employees. She contacted the police Sergeant in town to see if they had any suggestions. The same points have been brought up for years. Guidelines need to be established to make sure it is safe for everyone. Peg Busse had concerns about authority when Sue Phillips was not on the premises to address a safety concern – safety needs to be a top priority. Mary Blanchette suggested meeting in two weeks to discuss. Sue said she would reach out to other small libraries to see what they do. Discussion will continue at the next meeting.

X. New Business

IT Issues – Emails, Active Directory, Ticketing –As the result of a town-wide network security audit conducted by the BOE/Town IT department a meeting was held with BOE IT Director Aaron Fliss, Town Administrator Matt Reed, Sue Phillips and Mary Blanchette, as Mr. Fliss had some questions and concerns about library operations. Emails: Currently, except for Sue Phillips, library employees have biblio.org email addresses vs. town email addresses (Ellington-ct.gov). Mr. Reed requested that library employee emails address be switched to town addresses, as recommended by CRCOG. Aaron stated that biblio.org accounts could be moved over to the ellington-ct.gov accounts. Active Directory: Fliss suggested this method of login for library staff computers. Mary Blanchette has questions for Aaron about 2nd step validation where employees are required to use a personal phone to receive an authorization code. The board discussed authentications and private networks. Ticketing: The process of differentiating between issues for Bibliomation attention and those that could be managed by BOE IT was discussed, as well as the way to request help. There is another meeting scheduled for Wednesday, 2:15, at the library.

Probation over: Approval – The approval to end the probationary period for Trish Brudz and Ashley Dabbondanza tabled until next meeting due to lack of quorum.

Review of By-Laws – possible word changes – Peg Busse commented that wording of section H under Duties needs to be changed. Suggested new wording: h) *Establish rules and regulations for the use of the building and property. In conjunction with the Ellington Public Works Department, ensure proper care and maintenance of the facility.*

Review of Personnel Policy –Peg Busse had suggestions for changes to the HML Personnel Policy Statement, specifically the section about meal breaks being paid time. She feels that as the staff has grown, this is no longer necessary except on weekends. As Town Manager Matt Reed is currently reviewing the Town employee personnel policy, any definite changes will be held until the outcome of that process.

Art Library – This idea was previously introduced by former Programming Librarian Francie Berger, and EHS Art Dept. Head Katherine Lanz is ready to implement. The Little Art Library would be installed outside, similar to the Little Libraries that have been popping up. Her father is willing to build it. The plans are to make it look like a miniature version of Hall Memorial Library. Students would create tiny works of art to display inside the Art Library with a look/take/add element to it, similar to the books in a Small Library. Katherine Lanz says she would maintain it. When asked, Kath said funding would be appreciated, with an amount of \$200 being sufficient. Mary Blanchette suggested adding it to next month's agenda to allocate funds. Peg Busse stated the FOL could also provide funding.

YA/Children's Purchases – YA Librarian Ashley Dabbondanza gave an overview, with illustrations, of new furniture for the YA area which included soft seating in bright colors, a movable table and colorful chairs. The choices made are in line with the survey comments to refresh the YA area. The style choices are modern and bright which would change the atmosphere and better define the space. Funding for this could possibly come from the FOL.

XI. Correspondence – none

XII. Trustee Concerns – none

XIII. Adjournment

Moved (Blanchette), Seconded (Cone), to adjourn at 7:56 p.m.; all in favor, motion passed unanimously.

Submitted by
Rhonda Villanova
Recording Secretary



