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REC'D BY:

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
KENT MEMORIAL LIBRARY COMMISSION**

April 8, 2025

7:00 P.M.

Zoom-Only Meeting

Chairwoman Sinopoli called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

Roll Call

Present: Corbin Adzigirey, Michael Alexopoulos, Julie Bodnar, Ann Borracci, Denise Boutin, Joe Craven, James Irwin, Claire Kawalec, Nina Kendrick, Bob Parks, Christine Sinopoli and Despina Tartsinis

Also present via Zoom or in person: Library Director – Amy Vessella, Associate Library Director – Liz Bologna

Chairwoman Sinopoli explained that the evening's meeting was being held via Zoom to maximize participation, following a previous cancellation due to room capacity limitations. She noted that neither the Suffield Middle School nor the High School auditoriums are equipped for Zoom, and the town made accommodations for individuals who requested a physical location to participate. Chairwoman Sinopoli also reviewed the meeting guidelines for both commissioners and Zoom attendees. For clarification, she stated that the draft policies originally intended for discussion at the March 20, 2025 Policy Sub-Committee meeting—which was canceled due to capacity concerns—are not on tonight's agenda and will not be added, as they have yet to be reviewed by the subcommittee.

Commissioner Parks MOTIONED and Commissioner Boutin seconded to amend the agenda in regards to the Community Relations Subcommittee and add agenda item 6b for discussion on the funding and a vote on the disbursement of funds for the Kent Memorial Library to secure a booth for the 2025 Suffield on the Green.

Commissioner Tartsinis asked for clarification stating that the agenda item is for "Discussion and approval of securing a Suffield on the Green booth rental."

Vote: Motion passed unanimously.

Public Participation

Chairwoman Sinopoli acknowledged two letters received; one letter from Ms. Healy and the other from Ms. Begin.

- Beth Chafetz, 803 Mapleton Avenue
- Mike Haines, 50 Sunset Drive
- Neil Hornish, 864 Thrall Avenue
- Ann Franczyk, 31 Greendale Drive
- Eric Harrington, 700 North Street

- B. Rae Perryman – Director of Communications of the ACLU of CT
- Ed Hall, 53 Robbins Road, Berlin, CT
- Jonathan Metcalf, 27 Old Farms Lane
- Amanda Steben, 348 Mapleton Avenue
- John Gracey, 48 Devine Road
- Rick Sotil, 426 South Grand Street
- Kristin Keane, 820 Copperhill Road
- Glen Garrity, 526 Halladay Avenue West
- Robin Shlosser, 148 North Stone Street
- Lisa Kling, 1367 Mapleton Avenue
- John Woods, 307 Branch Road
- Deborah Ouellette, 687 East Street South
- Kim Santariello, 1127 River Boulevard
- George Austin, 520 South Street
- Mike Steben, 348 Mapleton Avenue
- Kendra Wiesel, 15 Dara Lane
- Christina Lange, 90 South Road, Enfield, CT
- Michelle Drumme, 193 Steele Road, West Hartford, CT
- Rick Aiello, 36 Tuxedo Avenue, Shelton, CT
- Tabitha Hinkle, 11 Old Farms Lane
- Julie Spagnesi, 132 Chestnut Circle
- Nick LoRicco, 305 Bridge Street
- Jeremy Lambert, 2200 Mountain Road
- Sarah Field – Rainbow Alliance Connecticut
- Jennifer Austin, Southington, CT
- Dr. Kristina Hallett, 1211 Newgate Road
- Jac Harris-Stone, 26 Lido Road, Unionville, CT
- Trish H.
- Haldan Pflueger-Smith, 935 North Grand Street
- Jack Henrie, 12 Pheasant Lane
- Shannon Watson, 333 Griffin Road
- Tom Frenaye, 489 Warnertown Road
- Shirley Leong, 10 Oxford Drive
- Kathryn Preli, 1275 East Street North
- Joe Cecchetelli, 45 First Street
- Julianne Williams, 1870 North Street
- Larry Peters, 36 Deep Brook Harbor
- Stephen Dunn, 48 Woodbridge Drive
- Tess McCool, 10 Sutula Road
- Fred Sweitzer, 165 South Stone Street
- Libby Begin, 50 Cross Street
- Bob White, 995 Newgate Road
- Robin Henrie, 12 Pheasant Lane
- Suzanne Irwin, 58 Marbern Drive
- Kristen Kling, 7 Strathmore Lane
- Kerry White, 995 Newgate Road
- Dana Kling, 5 Charles Court
- Sandra Janick, 380 Prospect Street
- Annie Hornish, 864 Thrall Avenue
- Jessica Kaleta, 197 Kent Avenue
- Garrett Pinder, Former Director of the Kent Memorial Library
- Sam Lee, Intellectual Freedom Co-Chair of the CT Library Association

Approval of the minutes from the March 11, 2025 Regular Meeting of the Kent Memorial Library Commission

Commissioner Parks MOTIONED, and Commissioner Kendrick seconded, to approve the minutes from the March 11, 2025 Regular Meeting of the Kent Memorial Library Commission. Vote: 11 in favor and 1 abstain (Parks). Motion passed.

Communications

Chairwoman Sinopoli reviewed all communications received. Commissioners Alexopoulos, Irwin, and Adzigirey expressed concerns regarding sub-committee meetings, Zoom meetings, the timing of information shared with commission members, and several other related matters.

Report of the Director

Library Director Amy Vessella provided updates on several aspects of library operations, including circulation, door count, website visits, Constant Contact subscribers, reference questions, tech help requests, computer usage, historical room usage, and museum pass checkouts.

She also shared personnel updates, noting that the library is actively interviewing candidates for the open clerk position. The first round of interviews took place last week, with a second round scheduled for tomorrow. They are optimistic about filling the position soon.

Facility updates for the month included floor and bathroom grout cleaning.

The Friends of the Library met on March 10, 2025, and selected several programs to fund, including the Kids' Poetry Contest, the Earth Day Program, and the Summer Reading Program, among others.

Ms. Vessella reported that she presented the Library budget to the Board of Finance on March 17, 2025. Additionally, the Suffield Library Foundation convened and voted to cover up to one-third of any cost overages for the atrium project—on the condition that the commission and the town provide the remaining two-thirds.

The commissioners posed numerous questions to Ms. Vessella, all of which she answered thoroughly.

Commissioner Tartsinis asked Ms. Vessella to verify the information she shared regarding the Suffield Library Foundation's agreement to cover certain cost overages for the atrium project, noting her belief that a cap of 10 or 15 percent was in place. Ms. Vessella agreed to review the details and update her report if needed.

Report of Standing Committees

Building and Grounds

Commissioner Adzigirey stated there was nothing to report this month.

Community Relations

- **Discussion and approval of securing a Suffield on the Green booth rental**

Commissioner Parks provided an overview of a recent meeting held by the Community Relations committee on March 6th. He discussed the action plan for a booth at the Suffield on the Green event in September and noted there would be a \$65.00 rental fee for the booth.

Commissioner Parks MOTIONED and Commissioner Kendrick seconded to approve spending \$65.00 to secure a Suffield on the Green booth with the understanding that there will be additional funds required to make a presentation at the booth. Motion passed unanimously.

Finance

Commissioner Craven reported that he has been in contact with the IRS to obtain the necessary forms required for him to be added as a signer on the bank account. He noted that he has been working with Commissioner Kawalec to ensure all documentation is in order. Commissioner Kawalec added that a recent meeting was held with Town Finance Director Mandi Moore to clarify aspects of the funding, ensuring she has a better understanding during the annual reconciliation process.

Historical

Commissioner Boutin stated there was nothing to report this month.

Personnel

Commissioner Kendrick stated there was nothing to report this month.

Policy

Chairwoman Sinopoli reiterated that the March 20, 2025 Policy Subcommittee Meeting was cancelled due to overcapacity and safety issues. The meeting has not been rescheduled yet.

Commissioner Irwin asked if the policy was being re-written. His question stemmed from information he said he had received from the librarians. Chairman Sinopoli said she was not familiar with any information being provided to librarians with regard to the policy.

Commissioner Tartsinis delivered a detailed personal statement, thanking Zoom attendees and fellow commission members, and noting her role on the policy subcommittee. She outlined the subcommittee's responsibilities and clarified that she was not involved in the recent events surrounding the March 20th meeting, nor did she support them. Commissioner Tartsinis shared her views on the existing policies, emphasizing how she believes policy development and revisions should be approached. She expressed concerns about the policy presented for review, highlighting aspects she found problematic. She also voiced a desire for increased collaboration within the subcommittee, suggesting that future meetings be held in publicly accessible locations and that the group work together on necessary revisions.

Technology

Commissioner Craven stated there was nothing to report this month.

Unfinished Business

Commissioner Irwin recalled that at the last regular meeting of the Kent Memorial Library Commission, an agenda item regarding the Association of Connecticut Library Boards' newsletter and its invitation for the Kent Memorial Library to join the organization was tabled. At that time, Chairwoman Sinopoli had agreed to circulate additional information for the commission's review, with the intention of revisiting the matter at the next meeting. Commissioner Irwin thanked Chairwoman Sinopoli for sending the information to the commission members for further review. He summarized the details and associated membership cost, and recommended proceeding with the purchase. While Chairwoman Sinopoli proposed adding the item to the May agenda, Commissioner Irwin pointed out that a tabled item must be addressed at the following meeting or it would effectively be pocket vetoed.

Commissioner Irwin MOTIONED and Commissioner Bodnar seconded to invest \$100 to learn more about how to do library commissioning.

The commissioners engaged in discussion, with some expressing a preference to postpone the vote until the next meeting, citing a lack of time to review the information and discomfort with making a decision that evening.

Vote: 5 in favor (Irwin, Kawalec, Tartsinis, Alexopoulos and Bodnar) 1 abstain (Adzigirey) and 6 opposed (Parks, Kendrick, Boutin, Craven, Sinopoli and Borracci). Motion failed.

New Business

None.

Public Participation

- Bob White, 995 Newgate Road
- Kacy Colston, 489 Warnertown Road
- Dr. Kristina Hallett, 1211 Newgate Road
- Shannon Watson, 333 Griffin Road
- Christina Lange, 90 South Road, Enfield, CT
- Ed Hall, 53 Robbins Road, Berlin, CT
- B. Rae Perryman – Director of Communications of the ACLU of CT
- Kim Freedman,
- Tom Frenaye, 489 Warnertown Road
- Fred Sweitzer, 165 South Stone Street
- Suzanne Irwin, 58 Marbern Drive

Commissioner Irwin requested that the voting on his earlier motion be called out as a polling vote in order for the minutes to reflect who did and did not vote for it.

Chairwoman Sinopoli – No

Commissioner Borracci – No

Commissioner Kendrick – No

Commissioner Boutin – No

Commissioner Parks – No, with a caveat that he had not had an opportunity to read it and understand what it would offer the commission.

Commissioner Craven – No

Commissioner Irwin - Yes

Commissioner Kawalec – Yes

Commissioner Tartsinis – Yes
Commissioner Alexopoulos - Yes
Commissioner Bodnar – Yes
Commissioner Adzigirey - Abstain

Chairwoman Sinopoli confirmed that the motion did not pass.

Adjournment

Commissioner Borracci MOTIONED and Commissioner Parks seconded to adjourn at 10:16 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristen O. Lambert
Recording Secretary