

Portland Library Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes
Van Beynum Room
April 18, 2024

Board Members Present: Olenka Castelli, Betsy Graziano, Melissa Kelley, Jade Richardson, Laurel Steinhauser

Absent: Don Eiler, Myra Finkelstein,

Others Present: Jennifer Billingsley (Library Director), Ralph Zampano

Laurel Steinhauser called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. . Public & Staff Comment

No public comment.

2. Additions and Approval of the Agenda

A motion was made by Betsy Graziano, seconded by Jade Richardson, to approve the agenda, all were in favor, motion carried.

3. Review Minutes:

a. Action on the Minutes of the March 21, 2024 Meeting

The following correction was made to the March 21, 2024 report: “Five leaves, three green and two copper, reflecting a total of \$800.00 donation, were taken to Mr. Trophy for engraving.....” The approval of the minutes was tabled until the May meeting.

4. Corresponding Secretary’s Report

Betsy Graziano said five engraved leaves (three green and two copper) reflecting a total of \$800.00 donated to the Endowment Fund have been affixed to the Donor Tree. In addition, two rocks from last year (one small and one medium) reflecting gifts of \$5,000 and \$10,000 respectively have, at last, been affixed to their designated spots by the trunk of the Donation Tree.

5. Old Business

a. Budget Update

Jenn said that no changes were made to the library budget between the First Selectman’s Proposed FY2024-2025 Budget and the Board of Selectmen’s proposed budget, and will not be attending the upcoming town meeting.

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b. Funds for Summer Window Art

Jenn said that requests under \$500 do not require approval by the Board. There is a standing agreement between the Library and the Friends of the Portland Library to alternate covering the cost of the window art, now done three times a year. The Friends paid for the flowers, so the next art will be done toward the end of June and will be paid for from the Memorial Fund. No action needed.

6. New Business

• **a. Memorial Funds Policy and Memorial Fund Rules and Regulations Document**

The process for evaluating these two policies was discussed and whether it was best to merge the two documents or keep them separate. Laurel mentioned plaques but wasn't sure if it was happening from the endowment fund. It was noted that the Association of Connecticut Library Boards (ACLB) may have some model policies that may be of help. It was decided to continue the discussion about these two policies in the next meeting.

Jenn distributed the list of library policies including the dates when they were last updated; these should be incorporated into the board member binders.

8. Friends of the Portland Library

Monica Jensen provided the following update:

- March Read and Recycle donations were affected by the heavy rain that morning; however, the quieter pace allowed us to organize and better stock the ongoing book sale. Next Read/Recycle is June 15.
- The Friends have been invited to help staff a table at the Brownstone Quorum event on June 8th. We will bring a variety of lawn games that are available to borrow for attendees to try out. Decided to have seed library on the 8th but not the 9th.
- A subcommittee is exploring ideas to enhance the on-going book sale area. The Friends are looking into adding Venmo (or similar) payment app as an option for Friends dues and payment at the Fall Book Sale. This effort recognizes that many younger patrons prefer using payment apps vs. writing checks. Details pending.
- Library Staff Appreciation Week will be celebrated June 3 - 7, 2024. The Friends will provide a catered lunch and daily treats to honor the library staff.
- The annual meeting will be on Monday June 3rd.

8. Chair's Report

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- Laurel referred to the anniversary markers that were highlighted in the monthly report, including the one-year anniversary of Jenn. According to the bylaws, there is to be a yearly evaluation of the library director. Jenn asked for parameters of the evaluation; Laurel will send something out as a resource and noted that the evaluation may be done in an executive session at the May meeting.
- Melissa has been doing a tremendous job on the seed library. On April 27th, she will be having another seed-sorting session.

9. Director's Report

In addition to Jenn's report, she told of the new TV display above the front desk that scrolls through a slide show. Directly beneath is the community's "Birds of a Feather" drawings. Part of the nesting balls provided by the Community Foundation of Middlesex County which were quite popular. Compared to last year, the monthly total circulation was down; however, the library was open fewer days than last year, so the average circulation per day was higher than last year for the same month. Jenn also shared that Portland was awarded the State Summer Enrichment grant and that the funds have been recieved.

10. Other Discussion

No other discussion.

11. Adjournment

Betsy Graziano made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Melissa Kelley, all were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon R. Hoy
Recording Clerk