

**Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees
Conant Public Library
Sterling, MA
Minutes of March 13, 2023**

Open Meeting:

Call to order 7:05 PM

Roll Call:

Present: Trustees Lisa Akerson, Dan Flaherty and Sara Petullo in person; Trustees Heide Martin and Amanda Sayut via Zoom; Library Director Alex Grebinar, in person.

Recognize Other Attendees:

None

Review/Approve February 13, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Motion to accept: Akerson. Second: Martin.

Motion carries unanimously.

Trustee Al Carlin arrived at 7:07 PM, very shortly after meeting minutes were approved, and just as Director Grebinar was just beginning her report.

Director's Report

Director Grebinar reported that weeding of collections continues with adult fiction. Discarded books are placed on a "free" shelf near the library entrance, and patrons are welcome to help themselves.

Programming has been booked for several months out. Per the library's long range plan, efforts have been made to collaborate on programming with other local groups – for example, a joint program will be offered with the Sterling Garden Club in either late spring or fall.

A new Library Associate I has been trained, with a second slated to start soon. With the addition of the two new associates, the library will be fully staffed again.

Director Grebinar noted that she had followed up on a question from the previous board meeting, regarding whether the library's program registration management software could be set to require participants to click a button or link in their reminder email to confirm their attendance. She reported that the software doesn't offer this functionality, but that it can be set so that staff have to manually approve participants. Staff could then follow up with participants on a case-by-case basis. She said this would be labor-intensive, but may be an option for selected programs where ensuring attendance has been a challenge.

Director Grebinar further reported that she had attending a variety of meetings, including a CW MARS directors' meeting via Zoom; some publishers' previews to inform future ordering; and the Massachusetts Legislative breakfast in Lancaster, along with Trustee Flaherty and Assistant Director Orr. She participated in a training with other library employees, offered by the Alzheimer's Association, and

in an additional training with members of the Age and Dementia Friendly Committee, offered by Dementia Friends.

Trustees briefly discussed venues in town that are available for library programming. The newly renovated 1835 Town Hall is available free of charge, but currently does not have enough seating for larger programs. The Senior Center has excellent facilities and plenty of parking, and is also available free of charge for library programs. The Chocksett Middle School auditorium is available for a small janitorial fee but requires additional coordination to access the school building. The Parish Hall at First Church is also available for a nominal fee and allows participants to easily walk to the library before or after events. Trustees encouraged Director Grebinar to continue to take advantage of these community spaces, given the limited event space in the library building.

Director Grebinar further reported that two all-staff meetings had taken place, with the next one scheduled for March 27.

The library has been hosting a very successful pajama drive, organized by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, the Boston Bruins, Cradles to Crayons and Wonderfund, which is about to wrap up.

The Worcester State University research project is in its final stage, a survey on library usage that is now available for patrons to complete. WSU is providing a free book to each participant.

Graphic novel adventure sets have been added to the children's room collection, and have been popular so far. Staff have also begun to assemble a Library of Things in the children's room, including games and toys, a metal detector, and a fort-building kit. Patrons will be able to check these items out for home use.

Director Grebinar noted that paperwork has been submitted to secure funds awarded from the Massachusetts Cultural Council Cultural Sector Recovery grant program. Funds will be used to diversify materials and increase programmatic offerings.

The Friends of the Library met on March 9 and are currently accepting applications for the 2023 craft fair.

Budget

Director Grebinar reported that the budget is on track. Materials spending continues to outpace its budget line since, as noted at previous meetings, the library is required to spend 16% of its total budget on circulating materials (about \$15,000 more than is allocated in the budget presented at town meeting) to remain eligible for state funding. This overage is covered by the state aid received, but does cause the materials line of the budget to track high in the meantime.

Circulation

Director Grebinar reported healthy circulation, noting especially that many puzzles were circulating in advance of the predicted Nor'easter!

Youth Services

The Children's Room was busy as usual, particularly given the weeklong school break February 20-24. In addition to the usual slate of book clubs and story hours, passive programs like bulletin board activities and drop-in days were increased, in alignment with the library's long-range plan. Picture book weeding was completed.

New Business

Trustees inquired whether the library is on the elevator contractor's calendar for 2024. Director Grebinar said that we are, and added that there is no update on the lift project.

Trustees agreed to move the May meeting to May 15 to avoid conflicting with the town meeting or town election. The change in schedule will be publically posted as required.

Trustees also agreed to carry out Director Grebinar's first evaluation as part of the April meeting. Trustee Carlin said he would distribute the evaluation form for trustees to fill out and return at their earliest convenience. With the evaluation tool developed and in use, trustees discussed dissolving the Director Evaluation Subcommittee.

Dissolution of Director Evaluation Subcommittee

Motion to dissolve Director Evaluation Subcommittee: Flaherty. Second: Akerson.
Motion carries unanimously.

Security Cameras

An appropriation to install security cameras on library property has been approved by finance committee, and will be on the docket for the upcoming town meeting. The appropriation is based on a quote previously received for a complement of nine interior and exterior security cameras utilizing the same system as other town buildings (as per town government's preference). Trustees discussed how best to configure cameras to achieve a balance of security and patron privacy. In some areas, Director Grebinar noted that security may also be enhanced by improving staff sightlines.

Review of Behavior Policy

Trustees reviewed the current library behavior policy. Some minor updates had been proposed by Director Grebinar, and trustees suggested adding a vaping prohibition to the existing smoking prohibition.

Motion to approve behavior policy with amendments: Sayut. Second: Petullo.
Motion carries unanimously.

Next posted meeting date: April 10, 2023

Motion to adjourn: Martin. Second: Petullo.

Motion carries unanimously.

Adjournment: 8:10 pm

Amanda Sayut, Secretary