

**Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees Conant Public Library, Sterling
Minutes of June 12, 2023**

Opening Meeting: 7:00PM

Roll Call: Present: Trustees Al Carlin, Judith Doherty, Daniel Flaherty and acting Chair Amanda Sayut; Heide Martin (via zoom); Library Director Alex Grebinar, in person.

Recognize Other Attendees: Pam Leonardi described herself as an RN and attorney. Pam discussed a problem she has with the News & Events Program and in particular the rules change for online registration. She felt unfairly treated. Most programs are already filled.

Ms. Leonardi said she was at the door at 10AM and signed up for several programs. She admitted that she didn't come to two programs. In one case she explained that she had called her daughter and asked her daughter to phone the library to "say I won't be there" but that her daughter didn't call. As a result of missing some programs all of her spots were given to others. Pam asks for clarification on the policy.

Judith Doherty and Alex Grebinar explained that the decision to change the registration policy was made at last month's meeting by the Trustees to allow some days for Sterling residents only before giving extra spots to non-residents due to the fact that programs have been filling very quickly. The policy change was not directed at Pam unfairly. The aim of the procedural change was to give priority to Sterling taxpayers.

Heide Martin spoke to reassure Pam that it was not personal.

Alex explained that registrations are time stamped and now a 2nd page asks, 'Where do you reside?'

Note: Our current policy does state 'At the discretion of the library staff'.

Al Carlin motioned to review this policy next meeting. Dan Flaherty seconded.

Review/Approve Minutes of May 15, 2023, Unanimous approval.

Director's Report - for complete report see Alex Grebinar

FY'23 almost done

Changed shelves on Lower level - Team effort by staff

Smaller tables funded by Friends

All trained in CPR, Fire Dept. helpful
State Aid Training. Director Trainings

Summer Reading Program starts Tuesday June 20. Theme: Find Your Voice

AI asks, "How are staff responding to meetings?" "Eager & receptive" according to Alex.

Amanda asked for more bookmarks for school kids, "a huge hit".

Budget report - goal of getting to zero.

Circulation - Huge increase in program attendance - up 45% in May. About 40 more programs than last year.

Heide commented - program types are more varied.

Alex gave example of a Murder Mystery scheduled for July 25.
Different staff have contributed to different programs.

Dan asked if any Sterling History programs were planned. In November 2023 a Native American is scheduled to present. Alex reached out to Historical Society.

Leominster Credit Union partnered with the library for story time, called *M is for Money*, to celebrate Financial Literacy month. The library looks forward to future partnerships.

May & June kids programming slows down.
Library musical instruments and things are very popular.

Alex detailed the method of the new registration process.

New Business

Security Camera policy

AI recommends following protocols that other departments in town are doing.

Parking

The group discussed recent Board of Selectpersons meetings and exchanges with Town Administrator as to parking. Sarah, AI, Dan, Amanda and Alex attended.

Communication was lacking before the parking plan was begun according to local businesses. The meeting was well-attended, some in the hallway.

Alex said both Town Administrator & Selectboard are open to talk. A subsequent meeting with the Library may be upcoming with the Town Administrator who expressed interest in the "Plan" and Al's suggestions. Al expressed that he had developed his ideas with previous head of the DPW years ago.

When library has big programs staff will park elsewhere to keep the area free from staff cars.

Censorship Training Update

Amanda reported on the MBLC training on "book challenges".

Best to have a "well articulated and well communicated" policy.

Focus on the policy, not the particular book.

Explain why it merits inclusion in the collection. Justify the collection policy.

View challenges as a customer service opportunity; it may be a sign of engagement.

Beware soft censorship.

In the current climate not all book challenges are in good faith. Targeted books include LGBTQ and race for instance - political challenges.

Activate stakeholders.

Board of Trustees - welcome public input.

Book challenges are on the rise.

As far as youth are concerned: choices come down to the parents.

Motion to Adjourn. Adjourned at 8:05PM

Next Meeting: July 10, 2023