

HARWINTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Minutes of the Library Board of Directors Meeting

Monday, August 2, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 7:05pm by Leslie. Members attending were Art, Betsy, Carol, Debbie, Leslie and Naomi. Also in attendance was Library Director Alice Freiler and prospective Board member Paul Edwards. Absent: Patty and Jamie.

Secretary's Report: Motion to accept the Secretary's Report by Leslie; second by Naomi. All in favor.

Treasurer's Report: Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report by Carol; second by Leslie. All in favor.

Director's Report:

- The 20/21 Budget is final. We spent 98% of our funds, being slightly under on salaries due to a retirement and a pregnancy leave, as well as the resulting substitutes. July invoices are just starting to come in.
- The Board has 3 CDs (LaBreque, Weingart, and Donors) coming up for renewal on August 20th. Interest rates continue to remain abysmal so we will request a 6-month renewal. Motion: Art; Second: Debbie; All in favor.
- Currently the Library is open without restrictions. Masks are encouraged for the unvaccinated but no longer required in Town buildings or at outdoor events. The Library continues to encourage masks at children's outdoor events. The Activity Room is again available for use by outside groups without capacity restrictions but not the Conference room - too small. We are bringing furniture back into the main library and discussing the best way to reintroduce toys and activities to the children's area.
- Programs for the fall will be a challenge as the Covid continues to evolve. Children's programs will be either outside or online and we will continue Take-Home activities. We have scheduled 2 adult programs in September as Zoom presentations with a plan to invite people to attend in person and watch the program on the Library's big screen. If restrictions change in the interim, these programs can be shifted to all remote without much disruption.
- Whether or not to hire a student intern for the year remains an open question because of Covid.
- Grants and Donations:
 - Thomaston Savings Bank – We have applied for a \$3,930.13 grant to purchase, install and train staff in the use of a hybrid A/V system for the Activity Room, which will allow us to hold hybrid Library Board meetings in compliance with public meeting laws and to offer virtual access to our in-person programs.
 - ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) – Our application was approved, the money has been deposited with the town, and orders have been placed in order to lock in quoted prices and because of longer than usual delays in delivery. The \$15,653 includes mobile shelving and computer tables for the children's area, wireless door counters, mobile charging stations, reupholstery, supplies and PPE as well as shipping. Not included is the cost of installation. Alice requested the Board approve spending \$3,290 for these costs. Paul Edwards suggested approaching the HVFD about assembling and installing the new furniture and offered to explore that option. A motion was made by Leslie to approve the installation costs if the VFD is unable to assemble and install the new furniture; second: Carol. All in Favor. Also, the ARPA grant will cover the cost of reupholstering one of our 4 wingback chairs. Alice requested the Board allot \$1350 from the Annual Fund to reupholster the other 3. Motion: Leslie; second: Betsy. All in favor.
 - Association of Rural and Small Libraries – As a result of answering a survey about the Library's short and long term needs, we have been invited to apply for a private grant of \$2,500-\$5,000 to fund an individual project benefitting the Library. This is a competitive grant; the deadline is September 15.

- CT State Library Construction Grant – New bids for an emergency generator were solicited by the Board of Selectman at the behest of the Board of Finance. Tower Generator was again the low bidder; the estimate was less than the original. In spite of twice signing off on the project during the application process, both boards are reluctant to proceed with the project as the Library is not considered part of the town's emergency response and a generator for the building is not considered a priority. Matching funds must be secured by November. Alice will ask the First Selectman to attend our next meeting to discuss and explain.
- The July book sale by the Library Friends was very well attended and a huge success. There was some concern about overcrowding. A third volunteer will be added for the August sale to act as a floater and provide crowd control. The Friends would like to add some additional shelves at the entrance to the basement to regain some of the shelf space lost to the oil tanks. Alice will check the Building Inspector.
- Motion to approve the Director's Report: Leslie; Second: Betsy; All in favor.

Committee Reports:

- Art - Lori Baker is the artist for August; Justine Coleman September and October; and Paul Edwards for November and December.
- Budget – Hoopla is in the second month of its six-month trial and becoming popular. We may need to bump up the borrowing numbers.
- Computers – Staff is still working to upgrade to the TLC software. The State Library is offering Palace, one app that will give patrons access to all sources of material.
- Fundraising – The letters have gone out and so far \$11,742 has been received. This year there was a special targeted mailing to out-of-town users. The \$60 in extra mailing costs has been more than recouped.
- Property and Building – The Town is getting an estimate to replace the trim on the building with vinyl and the remaining wooden doors. An electrician will be coming to look at the automatic doors which have not worked properly since their installation. Library staff has been given permission to adjust the AC themselves. The Town Hall and Library are being measured for new floors/carpeting. This will be a major project that will require lots of time, effort and coordination to be successful. Leslie will send a letter asking that we be involved in all phases
- Governance – We have a vacancy on the Board and hope that Paul Edwards will consider joining us.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:05pm. Motion: Leslie; Second: Carol; All in favor.

Next Meeting: Monday, September 13th, 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Booth, Acting Secretary

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ON 8-6-2011 AT 10:15 AM
ATTEST NANCY E. ELDRIDGE TOWN CLERK