

**LUCY ROBBINS WELLES LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
FEBRUARY 8, 2021**

**BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE VIA ZOOM MEETING**

Anna Eddy, Laurel Goodgion, Lisa Jones, Pauline Kruk, Iris Larsson, Beth Livingston (joined at 7:07 PM),  
Maureen O'Connor Lyons, LeeAnn Manke, Neil Ryan, Christine Shooshan, Diane Stamm

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT**

Judy Igielski, Pam Raynock

**STAFF**

Lisa Masten, Library Director  
Karen Benner, Assistant Library Director  
Gail Whitney, Secretary for the Board

**FRIENDS**

Sheila Rowell

**TOWN COUNCIL LIAISONS**

David Nagel (left at 8:33 PM)  
Chris Miner

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Diane Stamm at 7:00 PM.

**I. ROLL CALL**

**II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no Public Participation.

**III. TOWN COUNCIL LIAISON**

David Nagel commented that he was aware of a leak in the library this past weekend which he is sure Lisa Masten will discuss later. He spoke briefly to the Town Manager about the Library's plans to have the Town Council liaisons discuss a quarterly report to the Town Council; he explained there is a process of putting this on the Town Council's agenda.

**IV. SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Iris stated that she had no report. She will send a sympathy card to Marie Dowling's son Michael but she needs an address. Diane responded that she is working on getting addresses for both of Marie's children. Maureen commented that she spoke with Marian Amodeo who has been in touch with Michael and suggested putting her obituary into the local paper as Marie's fame spread beyond the Library and Newington. The Newington Town Crier is not physically available, and suggested that Marian tell Michael about the Hartford Courant. Marian indicated that Michael will request that memorial donations be made to the Library or Friends of the Library.

RECEIVED FOR RECORD  
NEWINGTON, CT  
2021 MAR -5 PM 3:37  
*Pamela O. Higgins*  
Town Clerk

## V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Laurel Goodgion stated that on page the word "parody" noted twice should read "parity." Town Engineer Gary is mentioned, but not his last name which is Fuerstenberg. On the bottom of page 5 and continuing on page 6, Anna stated that the wording should read: Anna noted that this discussion started after a suggestion for a vote by the Board on the proposed budget. **MOTION: LeeAnn Manke made a motion to approve the minutes of January 11, 2021 as amended, Laurel Goodgion seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion passed with a 10-0 vote.**

## VI. REVIEW OF ANNUAL ACTIVITIES CALENDAR AND COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Diane stated that typically in February the calendar includes finalizing the 5K Race sponsors, reviewing the budget, and PEP working on the Library Director's evaluation; all of these are in progress, and some have changed a bit due to timing.

## VII. TREASURER'S REPORT

LeeAnn reviewed the following:

### LRWL Treasurer Report January 31, 2021

#### ACCOUNT STATUS

##### Santander Checking (Unrestricted Funds)

Beginning Balance (12/31/2020)		\$ 18,829.24	
Income:			
Network for Good	\$ 24.01		
United Way	\$ 36.00		
General Donations	\$ 100.00		
		\$ 160.01	
		\$ 18,989.25	
Expenses:			
Memorial Expense:			
Staff Lunch December	(\$ 85.86)		
Gifts to the Library:			
Subscriptions	(\$ 96.59)		
		(\$ 182.45)	
Ending Balance (1/31/2021)			<u>\$ 18,806.80</u>

##### Money Market in Kingston Investment (Unrestricted Funds)

Opening/Beginning Balance (12/31/2020)	\$106,966.47	
Change in Value/Interest Earned	\$ .90	
Ending Balance (1/31/2021)		<u>\$106,967.37</u>

##### Santander Money Market (Restricted Funds)

Beginning Balance (12/31/2020)	\$ 7,997.59	
Income:		
Sliva Fund – Family Donations	\$ 1,000.00	
Interest Earned:	\$ .71	
Ending Balance (1/31/2021)		<u>\$ 8,998.30</u>

As of 2/3/2021:

All reimbursements from restricted funds have been made to unrestricted accounts.  
No change in checking account balance as of this date.

Accountant / 1099s Filing Update:

The necessary subcontractor information was submitted to accountant early January for preparation, filing and issuance of 2020 1099s. Documents have been completed, filed with the IRS and individual 1099s have been mailed to subcontractors.

Kingston Money Market (Unrestricted Funds):

Our advisor, Dean Spada, continues to review possible options for this account which potentially could increase our earnings but still maintaining the necessary liquidity as well as continued risk aversion.

Restricted/Unrestricted Funds PE January 31, 2021):

	<u>Restricted</u>	<u>Unrestricted</u>	
Kingston Investment Fund	\$487,317.05	\$251,801.19	\$739,118.24
Kingston Money Market	<u>0.00</u>	<u>\$106,967.37</u>	
Total Kingston Portfolio	\$487,317.05	\$358,768.56	\$846,085.61
Santander Money Market	\$ 8,998.30	0.00	
Santander Checking	<u>0.00</u>	<u>\$ 18,806.80</u>	
Totals	<u>\$496,315.35</u> (56.79%)	<u>\$377,575.36</u> (43.21%)	<u>\$873,890.71</u>

Respectfully Submitted,  
LeeAnn W. Manke  
LRWL Treasurer

LeeAnn mentioned that there was a donation made in memory of Anita Wilson that should be reimbursed to the Friends.

## VIII. LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Lisa Masten reported that staff has been really busy with the Lucy To Go service with 125 pickups; typically in the morning 15-20 are scheduled, and the rest are same-day service scheduling. Patrons are very pleased with the same day service. Staff pulls materials at least three times a day. The delivery system is working, getting items from other libraries, and that is helping patrons. The Winter Reading Program began on February 1st<sup>th</sup> for teens, February 4<sup>th</sup> for adults, and February 8<sup>th</sup> for children. Children receive an activity sheet to record how many minutes per day they are reading and then are eligible for prizes. Teens read books, submit an online book review and receive a ticket for a prize. Adults get tickets for any book that they have read and there is a drawing every Friday at noon. 145 adults registered the first day, and registration is now up to 190. Grab n' Go continues for all ages, and as of March puzzles-to-go will be available twice per month; patrons can pick up a packet of puzzles that they can do at home with answering sheets. Michelle Royer is working on offering a delivery system for people who can't get to the Library. There have always been six to eight people that books have been delivered to, but now we are trying to come up with a plan to expand that service to deliver to more people. There have been some volunteers who have stepped up and offered their delivery service, along with help from some of the Friends and other organizations. LeeAnn and Anna both commented that they would be willing to volunteer to deliver items to housebound patrons. Information on this will be in the March newsletter. There are so many people who are avid readers who were seen all the time at the Library, but obviously are unable to do this. Lisa is working with Dianne Stone from the Senior and Disabled Center and Carol LaBrecque from Human Services to assist seniors townwide with information on being safe, Covid, staying connected, and staying healthy. A newsletter is being prepared to send out to seniors townwide. As David Nagel reported, there was a leak last weekend and two ceiling tiles collapsed downstairs in the adult area fiction section. Dave Brown walks around the building several times a week and looks up because there have been so many leaks. He noticed something dripping and completely saturating the area. Paul Boutot was contacted and sent someone over from Facilities to help clean up the area and put tarps over the stacks. A roofer needs to come and see what is causing this leak. There is a lot of ductwork in that area. No books were lost. Anna asked if this is different from the leak in the skylight and Lisa responded yes, this leak is two aisles over the

leak that happened in October and is right near one of the big pipes in the ceiling. Diane commented that it is tough to hear about all of these leaks.

## **IX. ASSISTANT LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Karen followed up last month's report regarding the two open part time positions and substitutes; testing was held virtually last week through Survey Monkey and there were over 20 people taking the test on Thursday and Saturday mornings. The results are back and the next step is to review the test results and schedule some interviews which are targeted for next week.

Karen reported that she spends a good portion of her time training the two new full time staff members, along with the two part time staff members who moved into those vacated full time positions. A joint virtual program series on genealogy will be held in conjunction with Berlin, Wethersfield, and Rocky Hill; they are all talking about collaboration and staff time for this series. With regard to the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Karen has been communicating with Lisa Masten and Beth Mendelsohn from Children's regarding a story walk that will consist of the history of the Library. They are a little bit ahead of the game with this information as it was used in a presentation at the Historical Society a few years ago. This story walk will be placed in Mill Pond. The Friends are also working on something to participate in the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and Sheila will speak on that in her Friends report.

Diane questioned how staff is handling all the increases in responsibilities with half staff working on alternate days, with extra phone calls, the Winter Reading Program, and everyday tasks. Karen stated that staff is working very hard and working together. Lisa added that everyone is pitching in and assisting in different departments that need help. She said that some days are challenging if anyone calls in sick. Diane commented that as always we are so appreciative of the Library staff and the reality of the logistics during this time, and always.

## **X. FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY**

Sheila Rowell reported that the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary is on the Friends' agenda for their Wednesday night meeting. She is happy that the Friends are now able to get into the basement a few times, and the shed, and are making bags for people with their choices of authors; this has been going well. Everyone has been enjoying getting back together and working on sorting. The Friends continue with book sales through Karma's Closet and Facebook; these are both very popular and going well. Neil stated that either he or Anna will attend the Wednesday night Friends meeting. Diane commented that Anna and Neil have been attending the Friends meetings for quite a while and in past years this was rotated amongst other Board members. She said if anyone is interested in attending on occasion then they can get into the rotation, especially the newer Board members to see the good way that both organizations work well together. Laurel and Lisa Jones both commented that they are happy to attend a Friends meeting. Laurel also commented that the Friends have found creative ways during a pandemic to fund raise with the book sales; it is a very difficult situation and they have made a lot of it.

Sheila thanked Laurel for her comments and said she will pass them along.

## **XI. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **A. Budget**

#### **1. Budget Update**

Maureen reported that a budget meeting was held with the Town Manager, staff, Diane, LeeAnn, and herself and that there is nothing new in the budget that staff worked so hard on. The obvious increases are

in personnel. The Town Manager has to present the budget to the Town Council. Lisa stated that there were personnel increases, not in numbers, but in dollar amounts. The budget was submitted at -6.52%. The two full time positions are still in the budget but are unfunded. The increases that did take place are contractual full time union people and these are offset with decreases in other areas. There was an assessment decrease in the consortium this year so that was a good thing. The consortium is a group of 30 libraries who are working hard to reduce costs without reducing services. The budget is status quo except for the personnel changes. Sunday hours are still in the budget, and Maureen stated this is exciting because they were approached by the Town Manager last year about Sunday hours. There are no promises, but it is on the radar. Diane commented that it was a very congenial meeting and moved along smoothly. She also stated kudos to Jen Hebert as it was her first time working on the budget. Maureen stated that Jen is a great asset and is very pleased that she stepped into that position and she is filling Lynn's gap quite nicely and proficiently.

## B. PEP Committee

### 1. Proposed Library Board Job Description

Laurel emailed to the Board the proposed Library Board job description, background information on the job description, along with roles and responsibilities guidelines. She stated that this is an essential document to keep on hand, and will be very useful when recruiting new members. Diane asked if this would be added to the handbook, and Laurel responded yes. Maureen commented that it is a great tool for new members, but also wonderful for existing members showing what we need to do. She thanked Laurel for being so diligent and tenacious in gathering this information, pulling it together, and presenting it in such a concise way. Neil agreed with Maureen and stated that it clarifies what the Board does and puts it in writing. Anna stated that she provided comment last time on the job description with regard to #11 and #14 and adding the word "encouraged." Maureen commented that for many years it was a given that a Board member join the Friends at whatever level, and she thinks this should be a requirement. Diane responded that it doesn't need to be a requirement, but strongly encouraged to become an official member of the Friends. Laurel stated that adding the word encouraged would be good. Anna stated she would be fine with that. Laurel added that she is shocked that Board members are not members of the Friends. Diane stated that the Board and Friends support each other, but it might be off-putting to say please become a Board member and also join the Friends at some cash value; certainly want to encourage this, but not make it mandatory. Maureen and Neil also agreed to strongly encourage this. Lisa Jones stated that it is a good document and as a newer member she thinks joining the ACLB also makes total sense to her as part of the Board. LeeAnn responded that the Board is a member of ACLB and that documents such as newsletters go to the president, but they don't have a lot of mailings. There is a membership fee that the Board pays every year. Laurel commented that ACLB is not as active as they have been in the past. Anna stated that when they did meet in person there were paper copies of documents that were distributed, and Diane can go online and see what is happening with regard to seminars. Anna stated this is a great way to network with other library directors and board members. Diane asked the Board if this job description clarifies things, and the response was yes. Anna stated that the CLA Conference is scheduled for May 10-14 and is being held virtually, but a program list is not out yet; they are accepting program submission topics. Laurel stated that ACLB usually has a presentation at a CLA conference. LeeAnn asked if a motion can be made to accept the document as proposed and amended. **MOTION: LeeAnn Manke made a motion to accept the proposed and amended Job Description for the Lucy Robbins Welles Library Board as a whole and individual, Anna Eddy seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion passed with a 10-0 vote.** Laurel thanked everyone. Diane thanked Laurel for all of the work she put into this.

## 2. Discussion of Chapter 8: Advocacy of the ACLB Manual

Laurel commented that this is one of the shortest chapters in the manual, but it echoes what the Communications Committee has been doing. Lisa Jones agreed that reviewing this chapter showed some key elements. Laurel stated that the chapter identifies different members and sections of the community to advocate with and that's exactly the ideas of the Communications Committee. She said that chapters 7 and 8 will be mailed to the Board members soon.

Anna asked about reviewing the Library Director's evaluation. Lisa Jones responded that she did receive some feedback wherein she either received an email or spoke to a Board member personally. Some feedback was focused on the ability to answer only line items that the reviewer is comfortable with, or has knowledge in, so if it is not appropriate for that person to give a valid assessment than indicating N/A is acceptable. She would like to just get a general sense of where the evaluation is, and then it can certainly be modified so it can be weighted appropriately. LeeAnn commented that newer Board members wouldn't have the knowledge of the Library Director's responsibilities, and possibly have that member be on the Board for at least six months or a year depending on how involved that member is. Anna asked Lisa Jones if she could incorporate the feedback that she did receive and send out a revised document for the Board to evaluate; Lisa responded she would be happy to do that. Diane stated that she thinks new Board members should complete the document to the best of their ability, and that everyone complete it as honestly as they can. The timeframe is to respond to Lisa Jones with any feedback by March 7<sup>th</sup>. Laurel commented that as a former library director, she feels this is an outstanding form and better than anything she encountered during her time. She feels it is much more detailed, however she would appreciate the ability to make comments at the end of each section. Anna agreed that it is beneficial to have an area for comments, especially this exceptional year due to Covid. Christine commented that there already is an area following each section for comments on the document.

### C. Investment Committee

Neil emailed the January report to the Board members today. He noted that the month was down a bit for the month - \$2,012.08 month, but as of January 31<sup>st</sup> the portfolio is \$739,118.24 of which \$487,403.62 are restricted and \$251,714.62 unrestricted. He stated that LeeAnn mentioned the money market fund that Dean Spada would like to move into another fund; he hasn't heard if this has been done, but Neil will call Dean this week.

### D. House Committee

Laurel emailed the updated walk-through report that Jen Hebert sent to her. Diane and Laurel spoke earlier today and commented that the staff is doing a really good job in following up on everything, and addressing a lot of the deficits that were seen during the walk-through. Laurel thanked Lisa Masten and her staff for all that they do. Diane asked about the carpet tiles which are being stored in the attic and is concerned about the leaks in the attic. Lisa responded that yes the carpet tiles are up there but in a different area and were not affected by any leaks. Diane is very nervous about collateral damage from these leaks, but understands that just about everything that could be done has been done until warmer weather. She also would like to see a water filling station installed and the drinking fountain removed.

### E. Facility and Site

Maureen stated that there have been previous discussions about the signed drawings for the parking lot. Diane reported that there was an issue with the architect on the final drawings. Town Engineer Gary Furstenberg and Town Clerk James Krupienski have been overseeing this; Diane reviewed it with the lawyer Peter Alter who indicated that everything was appropriately done. At this time the drawings have been

signed, sealed, and delivered, and are stored so that if in 20 years somebody is looking for these documents they will be available. LeeAnn stated that copies of these documents will be placed in the safety deposit box. Diane explained that the original drawings done by the architect were approved with an original amendment; the original contractor left and the Town took over the work. Gary revised the drawings and put the official engineering stamp on it and completed all the appropriate paperwork. LeeAnn commented that we may need a bigger safety deposit box to fit the drawings, as there is no storage area for the Board of Trustees in the Library. Maureen stated that for years there has been discussion on storage for the Board of Trustees documents and not just a filing cabinet, or housed in the Treasurer's home. Laurel asked if there was a Town vault. James commented that he was just going to mention that and he will work with LeeAnn about getting the Library's important papers and placing them in the vault which is in a caged area away from the public. The Board thanked James for this.

#### F. Fund Development/Legacy Society

Anna reported that she and Lisa Masten spoke about updating the Legacy Society webpage and providing a link for Network For Good online donations for patrons. Lisa has a goal to make the Legacy Society website more interesting because right now it is basically words and she would like to add some images. Anna sent an email to the Board regarding an update on the Dining Partner Program. Pauline commented that Wings Over Newington is leaving and moving to East Street in New Britain.

#### G. Nominations

Maureen stated she had no report.

#### H. Communications

##### 1. Update on Communication Plan

Lisa Jones reported that as discussed at last month's meeting, the baseline key message was developed to let the public and patrons aware of what they Library has been doing pre-Covid and how the Library will operate post-Covid. The Communications Committee has a great message and now needs to execute this out into the world by talking with different constituents who can be impacted by this. Lisa Jones will attend the next Newington Chamber of Commerce meeting about getting this message out to the business community. This message will be given to the Town Council, Friends, race participants, race sponsors, residents, NCTV, parents, area businesses, and seniors. The Communications Committee will now brainstorm as to what the next message will be, and continuing to follow up with the initial message. The Communications Committee is also tweaking the mission statement.

David Nagel reiterated his earlier comments that he spoke briefly with the Town Manager with regard to Chris Miner and himself giving a library report on a quarterly basis to the Town Council. Diane commented that she thought there were times during a Town Council meeting where the liaisons gave reports. She stated that they are not looking for anything too serious, but talking or key points that would be appropriate. Dave responded yes that specific things are mentioned and the Town Manager receives a written report from the librarian each month which is included in his report. Dave stated that if there is something that is lengthier and it needs to be placed on the Town Council's agenda, then that is a different process.

Neil asked for clarification on this discussion with regard to quarterly reports from the Library to the Town Council. Lisa Jones clarified that what is being discussed is the document that was sent out last month talking about what has happened this last year, how the Library has responded to it, how Lisa and staff are handling day-to-day operations, and what they are doing for the community. Everyone should be made aware of factual information and statistics to support the message that the Library is doing all that they can

during this pandemic. Christine is concerned that communications are overlapping a bit; Lisa Jones assigned Christine to contact the Senior and Disabled Center and when Christine spoke with Dianne Stone she stated she just got off the phone with Lisa Masten. Christine wants to make sure that no one is duplicating what someone else has already done. She went on to say that Lisa Masten should have some input in the Communications Committee going forward to make sure that she or her staff are not providing the same information to the same people. Diane indicated that the Town Councilors get a copy of the department heads monthly reports and that packet is daunting; we don't want to overload the Town Council, or the constituents. Things should be coordinated through Lisa Masten so as we go forward we can highlight communications that have already been discussed. Lisa Jones stated that she and Lisa Masten will be meeting this week about staying in sync. Diane commented that there is some work to be done by the Communications Committee to have a streamline message and coordinate with Lisa Masten so not to be repetitive or tiresome. She feels it is worth trying to get those quick hit statements, or Did You Know information that people can read. Diane asked Beth or Pauline if they had anything to add; Pauline commented that she is on the Democratic Town Committee and she will be attending their next meeting, so she will speak with Lisa Jones to see what she should talk about with them.

Chris Miner stated that it is a matter of wanting to make sure everyone is informed, and have relative information for the public. He and Dave do cover the Library in their liaison reports, and Diane responded that any message that the Library would like them to convey will try to be kept short and sweet.

Dave Nagel stated that he had to leave for another meeting; he left at 8:33 PM.

## **XII. OLD BUSINESS**

### 1. Newington Library 5K Challenge Road Race – Sunday, October 3, 2021

Diane reported that the 5K Race has officially been changed to Sunday, October 3, 2021, a date that the timer can accommodate and support. Anna sent an email asking the Board if they think this is the 24<sup>th</sup> or 25<sup>th</sup> year the race has taken place. The Board agreed that this is the 24<sup>th</sup> year, and hopefully next year for the 25<sup>th</sup> it can be done up right! If restrictions still apply in October, then there will be no same day registrations, no awards ceremony, and no refreshments. Keeney Manufacturing is no longer the main sponsor, so a new front of t-shirt sponsor is needed. Anna stated that H.O. Penn signed up to be a sponsor.

### 2. Open Board Positions

Diane reported that there is still an open Republican Town Committee position and a corporate position. If anyone knows of anybody interested in the corporate position, to please let Laurel know. There is now a lovely new document explaining the responsibilities of a Board member.

### 3. Town of Newington 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Lisa reiterated Karen's earlier comments on the story walk. Additionally the Friends are working on a Saturday in April to visit historical places in town, of which the Library is one of them. Christine suggested that there be multiple story walks, with some over at the playground so kids could see them.

## **XIII. NEW BUSINESS**

Anna stated that at the beginning of tonight's meeting it was discussed how great the staff is and how hard they have been working, and thinks they should be recognized. She said that Monday was Valentine's Day and next week is Random Acts of Kindness Week. She asked the Board about bringing in donuts Monday

and Tuesday for the two different shifts. Diane stated that 2021 would normally be the Staff Appreciation Dinner and truly every staff member deserves recognition and appreciation. There had been discussion about providing lunch for staff and asked Lisa Masten for guidance as to what the staff would be comfortable with. Anna suggested wrapped assorted sandwiches from Panera. Lisa Masten responded that for Lynn Caley's retirement Italian Gourmet provided bag lunches, so either Panera or Italian Gourmet would be great. She said that donuts would be nice, but mornings are hard, and lunches take place in a two-hour period. She said individually wrapped sandwiches would be perfect, and the Library is closed on Monday, so Tuesday and Wednesday would work for the two separate teams. **MOTION: LeeAnn Manke made a motion to provide staff with a packaged lunch and allocate \$200 for this, Anna Eddy seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion passed with a 10-0 vote.** Laurel commented to Anna that this was a wonderful idea. Lisa Masten thanked the Board.

#### **XIV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no Public Participation.

#### **XV. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION: Maureen O'Connor Lyons made a motion to adjourn, Christine Shooshan seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion passed unanimously with a 10-0 vote at 8:54 PM.**

The next Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 8, 2021 at 7:00 PM.