

LUCY ROBBINS WELLES LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
MARCH 8, 2021

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
IN NEWINGTON, CT
2021 APR -6 PM 3:50

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE VIA ZOOM MEETING

Anna Eddy, Laurel Goodgion, Pauline Kruk, Iris Larsson, Maureen O'Connor Lyons, LeeAnn Mark, Diane Stamm, Ryan, Diane Stamm

LeeAnn Mark
LeeAnn Mark

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Judy Igielski, Lisa Jones, Beth Livingston, Pam Raynock, Christine Shooshan,

STAFF

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

FRIENDS

Sheila Rowell

TOWN COUNCIL LIAISONS

David Nagel
Chris Miner

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Diane Stamm at 7:01 PM.

I. ROLL CALL

II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no Public Participation.

III. TOWN COUNCIL LIAISON

Chris Miner reported that the budget will be presented to the Town Council tomorrow. The library's roof leaks have been repaired and he asked Lisa Masten if there were any additional leaks at this time. Lisa reported no leaks, but the hot water heater leaked into the community room and that is being worked on.

David Nagel stated that the leaks were supposedly totally repaired and they were under warranty. The Town Council will hold a special meeting regarding budget review on Saturday, March 20th beginning at 9:00 AM and the library is in the middle of that meeting. As Chris stated, the total budget will be presented tomorrow at the regularly scheduled Town Council meeting. Diane clarified that if the library wanted to hear about their budget they can go onto the Zoom meeting on March 20th, and the response was yes.

IV. SECRETARY'S REPORT

Iris Larsson stated she had no report.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Diane questioned the wording under the Library Director's reported regarding the 125 pickups; she wanted to know if that was per day. Lisa Masten explained that the average is 80-90 per day, however it has been up to 125 pickups which took place after the holiday and the Library was closed. The wording should be changed to up to 125 pickups per day. **MOTION: Anna Eddy made a motion to accept the minutes of February 8, 2021 as amended, Neil Ryan seconded the motion, and the minutes were accepted as amended with an 8-0 vote.**

VI. REVIEW OF ANNUAL ACTIVITIES CALENDAR AND COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Diane reviewed the Annual Activities Calendar for the month of March which includes the library director's evaluation being returned to the PEP Committee. The April calendar usually includes getting ready for the Book Sale and the 5K Race, but neither of those events are taking place at this time. She hopes that a full schedule of activities will return soon.

Anna questioned when the Board would continue holding 5K Race Committee meetings before the Board meeting. Diane stated that as the October race date gets closer than those meetings would begin. The Library Board does not meet in July or August, so possibly beginning these meetings in May or June. Maureen asked when race registrations will begin. Diane responded that rules will be completely different as more people get vaccinated, but as of now Covid rules say no same day registration. Anna stated that promotion of the race to the runners should begin as soon as possible. Diane stated that further discussion on the race will take place under that agenda item.

VII. TREASURER'S REPORT

LeeAnn stated that nothing has changed since she emailed the report below to the Board. Usually the report shows all sorts of programs, but there is not a lot of activity currently happening. No income has been received other than from Amazon Smile. There was a virtual adult program with Gil Giglotti. The Friends were reimbursed for a donation check in memory of Anita Wilson that was mistakenly placed in the Library account. Other basic expenses include administrative costs and subscription costs. Dean Spada is trying to come up with a better platform for investments. Iris commented that Marie Dowling's obituary suggests donations made to the Library, and LeeAnn responded that some have been received. LeeAnn also commented that normally this is the time of year when race money is received, but that is not happening now as the race is scheduled for October.

LRWL Treasurer Report February 28, 2021

ACCOUNT STATUS

Santander Checking (Unrestricted Funds)

Beginning Balance (1/31/2021)		\$ 18,806.80
Income:		
Amazon Smile	\$ 43.72	
		\$ 43.72
		\$ 18,850.52
Expenses:		
Adult Programming	(\$ 50.00)	
Friends – Reimbursement for Wilson Fund Contribution	(\$ 100.00)	
Administrative Expenses	(\$ 300.00)	
Gifts to the Library:		
Subscriptions	(\$ 96.59)	
		(\$ 546.59)

Ending Balance (2/28/2021) \$ 18,303.93

Money Market in Kingston Investment (Unrestricted Funds)

Opening/Beginning Balance (1/31/2021) \$106,967.37
 Change in Value/Interest Earned \$.82
 Ending Balance (2/28/2021) \$106,968.19

Santander Money Market (Restricted Funds)

Beginning Balance (1/31/2021) \$ 8,998.30
 Income:
 Interest Earned: \$.69
 Ending Balance (2/28/2021) \$ 8,998.99

As of 3/4/2021:

All reimbursements from restricted funds have been made to unrestricted accounts.

No change in checking account balance as of this date.

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 February 28, 2021:

	<u>Restricted</u>	<u>Unrestricted</u>	
Kingston Investment Fund	\$487,266.36	\$258,022.10	\$745,288.46
Kingston Money Market	<u>0.00</u>	<u>\$106,968.19</u>	
Total Kingston Portfolio	\$487,266.36	\$364,990.29	\$852,256.65
Santander Money Market	\$ 8,998.99	0.00	
Santander Checking	<u>0.00</u>	<u>\$ 18,303.93</u>	
Totals	<u>\$496,265.35</u> (56.42%)	<u>\$383,294.22</u> (43.58%)	<u>\$879,559.57</u>

Respectfully Submitted,
 LeeAnn W. Manke
 LRWL Treasurer

VIII. LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Lisa Masten reported that the Winter Reading Program for adults, teens, and children is wrapping up, and it has gone pretty well considering it has all been virtual. The book service delivery system has been expanded; book deliveries were typically offered to homebound people, but it is now being offered to people who aren't comfortable coming to the Library or even using the curbside pickup. The Greater Hartford Federation of Women is helping with deliveries, as are the Friends. The grab-n-go kits for all ages continues to be very popular. Bailey Francis made 46 nature kits to encourage kids to go outside with the family. Puzzles-to-go for adults began last Monday and the 10 that were made were gone the first day, so more copies of different types of puzzles with answer keys are being created. Jeannette Francini held a live Disney trivia virtual program with 42 people attending. The Children's staff prerecorded book talks for 3rd and 4th graders, and 5th and 6th graders; these book talks are books that staff has picked out for them.

Lisa has been working on the Library's website with almost every page being updated with more color, a cleaner look, and not all text. Anna and Lisa will meet tomorrow to tweak the Legacy Society page a little more, as now people can make donations online with a button to push. Federal tax forms are still being distributed, but the state is not sending out any tax forms. Diane Durette filled out a form online to obtain state tax forms, and five weeks later she received photocopies that were basically printed off from

the computer. Patrons are picking up the tax forms via curbside, and the Library will print out 10 pages for free. This system has been going well so far, but it may get a little busier closer to April.

Lisa continues to work with Dianne Stone of the Senior and Disabled Center, and Carol Labrecque from Human Services to create a newsletter for all of Newington's older adults. The information in this newsletter will be on how to stay safe, stay connected, and stay active. The newsletter should go to the printer next week and be mailed out to the public. Lisa appeared on the Talk to the Mayor show which was held as kind of a round table version with several of Newington's department heads, along with Central Connecticut Health District Director (CCHD) Charles Brown. Everyone spoke a bit about what their department is doing. Lisa thought it was a very good experience, and Iris commented that Lisa was a shining star. Maureen asked Lisa if now that the Governor has loosened some things, has there been any discussion about opening the Library. Lisa responded that the health director and Town Manager stated that Newington is still in the red zone, however when it goes into the orange zone there may be talk about reopening. The Library is practically ready to open, but still needs to do a little bit more reorganizing; all protection is in place and sanitizers are placed around the Library. The challenge is that not every library is the same in area space; people can come in, but they will still be encouraged to social distance, and there are some areas of the Library that it is not able to do that. Opening doors is a possibility, but no programming will take place. Maureen commented that the New Britain Library is open to the public and the City of New Britain has a pretty hefty rate of infection. Lisa responded that part of that is the health director in that area and how they are handling it. Laurel commented that she used to work at the New Britain Library and the square footage in the children's area is equal to the whole square footage of the Newington Library. Newington's Town Manager and the health director are very clear about how things will take place, and they are concerned that once people get vaccinated they will not wear masks. Iris asked if there is any plan for the Library staff to get vaccinated through the town. Lisa responded that those in the age group of 55 and older are able to get vaccinated. Chris Miner followed up on Lisa's comment about Newington still being in the red zone; Charles Brown, the health director, stated that as of two weeks ago the infection rate was 24 per 100,000 so that is still in the red zone; the orange zone is 14 per 100,000, and as of last Thursday Newington was 18 per 100,000. The next information on this will be this Thursday and hopefully the rate will continue to decrease and thoughts of starting to allow town services to reopen. Laurel asked if when the Library does open to the public, will curbside service still be available, and Lisa responded yes because a lot of people like that. LeeAnn stated that she has been volunteering at vaccine clinics with the CERT team and thinks that there is a misconception that these clinics are being run by the Town. CCHD has x-amount of doses for distribution. She commends the CCHD on targeting those folks who are unable to get onto the VAMS system.

IX. ASSISTANT LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Karen Benner gave a quick update in the hiring process; 14 interviews were held in the past two weeks for circulation, children's, and reference positions, and there are now three candidates that will be extended an offer. She hopes that these candidates can be hired and begin later this month. Karen is still focusing on training with the new full time staff members that were hired in the last couple of months; they are getting more and more comfortable in their positions. Promotional videos advertising programs and services have been created in the last two weeks; these will be posted on social media platforms and the Library's website. These videos have been made by staff who has volunteered to do them on areas that are near and dear to them. Karen is very happy with the virtual book talk that continues with a nice diverse group of people with age range and different backgrounds. She is looking to extend this virtual book talk to a daytime slot as not all people are available to attend at 7:00 PM. Author Stuart O'Nan was a guest speaker at last Thursday's book talk and he was incredible. He is a nationally known author and the subject matter was his book *Songs For The Missing*. Jeannette had him

at the Library about 20 years ago and on a whim she reached out to him to see if he would join in this book talk and he said yes. This was recorded and will be going on the website.

X. FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Sheila Rowell reported that the Friends continue to work in the basement sorting through and packaging up books that they are able to sell. Karma's Closet continues to hold book sales on her website and that is going very well. The Friends are looking to do some level of an outside book sale on April 17th weather permitting. Now that the weather is warmer, the Friends will go into the container to see what is in there. LeeAnn commented that there is so much interest in puzzles and the Friends could bag those up for people who would like puzzles and don't want to buy new ones. Lisa commented that when people call about donating books or puzzles, their names and number are taken down and given to Michelle Royer for any large donations. Diane suggested that puzzle pieces should be placed in a ziplock bag and then inside the box so pieces don't get lost.

XI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Budget

1. Budget Update

Maureen reported that the budget will be presented to the Town Council by the Town Manager tomorrow night. Lisa stated that she hasn't heard anything about the Library's budget, other than it was submitted. The proposed budget has a 3.3% increase, and there is talk about looking to collaborating and sharing services with other Towns at some point. There has been discussion over the years with Berlin, Wethersfield, and Rocky Hill, but also talk about New Britain which is interesting. Diane reminded the Board that the Town Council will discuss the Library's budget on Saturday, March 20th after 9:00 AM.

B. PEP Committee

1. Library Director Evaluation

Laurel reported that Lisa Jones regrets that she was unable to attend the meeting this evening. Lisa Jones has received eight responses on the library director's evaluation which should be completed within the week. She will then set up a meeting with Diane to review the results, and she thanks everyone who has submitted the evaluation. Diane asked the Board if they haven't sent their evaluation form to Lisa Jones to please do so. Neil stated that at the last meeting there was talk about newer Board members submitting the form; Diane responded that yes the final consensus was that newer Board members should complete the form to the best of their ability and return it to Lisa Jones.

2. Discussion of ACLB Chapter 9: Fundraising

Laurel stated that when she read this chapter she was thinking that it was probably an outline of what Newington went through in the 1980's for the expansion of the Library. It is a good handbook to have on hand and Anna could probably comment on fund raising in general because she is always doing that. Anna responded that yes we could have written the chapter, and that she was impressed with the last page and all of the suggested links for grants which is certainly something to explore when we are able to move forward.

C. Investment Committee

Neil emailed the monthly report to the Board, and as of February 28, 2021 the investments are \$739,118.24 of which \$487,266.36 are restricted which is 65.3% of the portfolio. He also emailed an informational report on how investments have been doing since January 2019 (\$573,239.09) through January 2021 (\$745,288.26) which is a gain of almost \$200,000 and a 30% return. Neil stated that Dean is a wizard. Diane stated that it is nice to have a comparison like this and it is very easy to read.

D. House Committee

Laurel stated that she would rather have Lisa report what has been taking place in the building since it changes every day. Lisa reported that this morning there was a water leak in the community room, and the biggest bummer is that the rugs are new. There were bins of books sitting on top of the rug, but luckily they are plastic bins. This leak was due to the hot water heater and if it is still leaking tomorrow, then it will be replaced. Dave Brown, who works 15 hours per week, walks around the building every morning and found this leak which was a good thing because it could have gone on longer. The water has been extracted from the rug and it is fan drying now. The new mobile book shelves in the children's room are bowing possibly due to the overall weight of the books. We are working with the sales rep to correct the problem.

E. Facility and Site

Maureen continues to be concerned about the roof and putting bandaids on it. The rubber part of the roof is under warranty and Paul Boutot is addressing the leak issues with the skylight and tiles falling off; Maureen is happy that attention is being paid to these issues, but feels that we take one step forward and two steps back with these building issues.

LeeAnn commented that she is still looking for the fully executed contract amendment to put in the safety deposit box; she has the plans and they are at the Library, but not the agreement. Diane stated that there is a signed word document and we should be able to get a copy of that through the Town Clerk's office. James indicated he will check on that for LeeAnn. He also asked LeeAnn about using the vault for storage for some of the Library's documents. LeeAnn responded that she is busy with taxes at the moment, and she will go through the boxes to see what needs to be stored. Diane asked about getting access to these documents once they are stored in the vault, and James responded to just let him know when this is needed.

Dave Nagel stated that the Library's roof situation is on the Town Council's meeting agenda tomorrow night under Old Business. He said to Maureen that it may seem like a bandaid, but at least something is being done, and Maureen thanked Dave and said that it is good to know that the Town Council is fully aware of these issues.

F. Fund Development/Legacy Society

Anna Eddy reported that in 2017, the Trustees attended a virtual webinar held by the American Library Association which focused on library branding, messaging, and building a community support base. The ALA workshop came into play around the same time we were discussing a logo for the Legacy Society. It was decided to put development of the Legacy Society logo on hold until we know what we are going to do with the Library's logo. Are we using the image of the building, the entrance window or something entirely new? Recently Lisa Jones and I attended an online workshop on Logo Branding sponsored by Network for Good. The latest workshop reinforces what we already knew – we should have a visually seamless logo brand between the Library and Legacy Society. In other words, the Legacy

Society logo should be immediately recognizable as being connected to the library and not as something separate from the library. Anna stated that she and Lisa Masten continue to collaborate on changes for the Legacy Society's webpages to incorporate the online giving link. Diane commented that it is great to see the different committees working together on information.

G. Nominations

Maureen stated she had no report.

H. Communications

1. Update on Communication Plan

Lisa Jones was not in attendance this evening. Diane asked Pauline if she had anything that she wanted to share. Pauline reported that the Communications Committee will be meeting this Monday at 6:30 PM. She indicated that one of her tasks on the Committee was to make a presentation to Newington's Democratic Town Committee which she did. She received pushback from one member who felt that the Library was sort of stepping on Parks and Recreation and that the Library is for reading books. Pauline said that this was stressful as this was not expected from this person. She feels we do have a public relations problem as to what the library has to offer. She is worried that people who do vote wonder where their tax dollars are going if there are overlapping services. She explained to this person that the Library offers a one-time program that basically whets your appetite and then a person can go to Parks and Recreation for a more instructive program. Maureen stated that she loves Pauline's response that the Library whets your appetite. Maureen asked Lisa about a discussion she had with Mr. DeMaio of Parks and Recreation. Lisa responded that she did and said that the Library has changed and become more of a community center with the big difference is that people are not charged for programs. An example is a Tai Chi program being held as a one-time program at the Library, and a six week Tai Chi program at Parks and Recreation is that the Library will tell people of the benefits of this and then give them resources such as taking the class at Parks and Recreation. Parks and Recreation are also doing storytime which is something that the Library does, and there is some overlap, but the Library is not trying to compete with Parks and Recreation. The Library gives people chances to try things culturally, to enrich them, and to encourage them and offer them ways to do this. The Library offers free meeting space because a lot of nonprofits can't afford to pay. Lisa reiterated that the Library is not trying to compete with Parks and Recreation and finds ways to coexist. The Library receives a lot of calls about Parks and Recreation programs and we give them the information on how to register. Lisa stated that she is discouraged to hear about Pauline's encounter and she hopes that everybody knows what changes are needed and what the needs of the community are, and what the Library does on a daily basis. Laurel mentioned a quote from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation that was in the ACLB Public Library Trustee Handbook Chapter 9 about Fundraising - "Voters who see the library as a "transformational" force as opposed to an informational source are more likely to approve an increase in taxes for its support." Neil asked Lisa if her discussion with Mr. DeMaio was cordial, and Lisa responded yes. Neil said it is the right thing to do to work together with other Town departments to each do the best job that they can do. Chris Miner thinks that Pauline brings perspective to an inherent problem that he has seen in the six years he has been involved in the Town and that is the silo syndrome where each entity is concerned about their own group. Whetting the appetite and trying something once before investing time and money offers a specific purpose, and moving forward as a whole is important and the town needs to do a better job to be inclusive versus propriety and exclusive. He went on to say that the Library is much different than it was 15 or 20 years ago, and he said we shouldn't be discouraged and to try to push for more inclusions. Lisa stated that the Library and Parks and Recreation do work together and the Library supported them in the summer doing programming for their six week campers program and put aside time and staff for this. We do have different purposes and are respectful of what they are

doing. We are trying to coordinate bigger events and coexist in the way it should be and Mr. DeMaio is open to doing this. He has offered some of his staff to work on prerecorded programs and knows that it is a good thing to get everyone involved, and that the community should see this as well. Chris Miner commented that it is not just these two entities with this issue, he sees it in general and is not sure why it is. He appreciates all the effort and continued collaboration is not something that should be taken for granted. David Nagel also stated that it is not in just the six years that Chris has been involved with the Town, but for the 12 to 15 years that he has been involved. There are always people who are anti-something, and people don't understand the worthwhile purpose of a particular department. He is pleased to see that Lisa pointed out that the Library and Parks and Recreation are sharing and collaborating as much as possible, and the shared services she is doing with the elderly newsletter.

Diane stated that the Communications Committee has to figure out how to reach out to others, not only to people who use the Library on a regular basis, but to those who don't. People need to know that the Library is very different then it was 20 years ago, even five years ago, and we need to educate the public as to what the Library can bring to you, along with working with other departments. She thanked Pauline for reaching out to the Newington Democratic Town Committee and was happy to hear that Pauline handled this person so well. It is important to get the word out to the folks who haven't been to the Library lately or are not aware of what is going on with puzzles, coloring pages, grab-n-go, and curbside service. According to the Town Charter, we are a free library and the cornerstone is what we do for free. We don't run programs with a six week fee, but we do life learning and try to get the word out about resources. Diane stated that the Communications Committee has been working pretty hard the last few weeks to get communications out there, talking about renovations and expansions, what library services are available today and what we need for the future, how more room is needed, along with constraints due to Covid and the layout of the library. People need to know we have done a lot with what we have and what kind of services can be done. Iris wondered if it might be beneficial and advantageous to work with NCTV to have some sort of tour of the Library and information about the services that the Library offers. She said a lot of people do watch NCTV and an informational show like this might let a lot of people know more about the Library, especially those who don't come into the Library. Diane said that is a good suggestion and it should be brought up to the Communications Committee.

XII. OLD BUSINESS

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

Diane spoke to Anna's point earlier, and Neil's suggestion, as to when to start 5K Race meetings, and when to get Kevin Mason involved again. Additionally, the race needs to be advertised, registration should be set up, and people should be made aware of the current rules with, at this time, no awards ceremonies and no refreshments. Anna stated it would be prudent to hold a preliminary meeting to sketch out some of these things, talk about logistics, but definitely to let the runners know that the race is scheduled for October 3rd which is the week before the Hartford Marathon; some people may use our course as a warmup. We know that we can't have refreshments, but maybe get to-go bags for refreshments to be handed out at the end of the finish line. We need to let people know that it is going to be a fluid race and what can be offered, and maybe once we get closer to the date see what else will be allowed. Neil suggested contacting Kevin very soon and schedule a meeting prior to the next Board meeting. Anna said we can meet with Kevin anytime and it doesn't have to be before the next Board meeting. Anna will call Kevin tomorrow and set up a meeting. The 5K Race meeting will be held before the May and June Board meetings at 6:30 PM and then again in September, and if needed in July or August. Diane will look for the email from the timer about the most recent Covid rules, and stated that we need to start advertising and getting the word out. Maureen agreed that it is key to get the word out that we are having the race. Anna stated a lot of races will take place in the fall. LeeAnn commented

that it is not just getting the word out for the runners, but also for the sponsors and donors as well, and that at this time we are going into this year without a major sponsor. Maureen asked if it was acceptable to write an article publicly thanking Keeney for their years of support. Anna responded that has been done already, and that Newington Life can be contacted to write an article about needing a major sponsor, and mentioning Keeney again. Newington Life goes to every household, whereas Newington Town Crier is now only available online.

2. Open Board Positions

Diane indicated that as of this evening, there is another position open on the Board. Pam Raynock has submitted her resignation and Diane read a letter from Pam who indicated that she will be getting her house ready to sell this spring. There is now three positions open: Republican, Democratic, and corporate.

3. Town of Newington 150th Anniversary

Lisa reported that Beth Mendelsohn is working with the 150th Anniversary Committee. Karen's presentation to the Historical Society is being modified and will be placed on signs for a storywalk through Mill Pond. The Friends are also holding a historical walk scheduled for April 24th.. David Nagel commented that his wife Jerilyn is on the committee and there is some confusion trying to clarify what everyone is doing so that people can know what is taking place for the anniversary. At the Town Council's meeting tomorrow night under New Business there will be a presentation on the 150th Anniversary.

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

There was no New Business.

XIV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no Public Participation.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Maureen O'Connor Lyons made a motion to adjourn, Laurel Goodgion seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion passed unanimously with an 8-0 vote at 8:41 PM.

The next Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 12, 2021 at 7:00 PM.