

Wethersfield Library Board Minutes of December 5, 2006

Members present: Paul Courchaine, Greg Curtin, Tracy Gionfriddo, Susan Grady, Howard Greenblatt, Brad Milvae, Pauline Moon, Karen Mortensen

Members excused: Greg Bedula

Staff present: Laurel Goodgion, Library Director

Also present: Luci Domick, President, Friends of the Wethersfield Library

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Greg Curtin called the meeting to order at 7:06.

PUBLIC COMMENT: NONE

RENOVATION

Greg Curtin and Laurel Goodgion attended the Building Committee meeting held on Monday, Nov. 27. The committee said specs for Phase 2 of the renovation will be out to bid by the end of the year. Then there will be a wait for the bids to come back. The hope is for construction to begin in the spring. There is consideration of using the main and second floors of the Library as swing space. There will be a series of meetings with department heads. The Library Director and Board are concerned as to how everything is going to play out. How will the issues of the timetable and swing space affect the Library?

Library service to the public is important because the public is paying for the renovation. There is concern that Library usage is withering while the Library is in such restricted space. Council chambers could not be used for a temporary library. The temporary Library, currently on the ground floor, is hard to get into. All residents are losing out, but the loss is especially acute for students, families with young children, the elderly, and lower and middle-income patrons. There is no computer access for the public. With presentation of the budget in the spring, what patrons will advocate for the Library budget if they can't use the Library?

Due to lack of funds the Library will have no drinking fountain on the main floor. . Some projects were moved from Phase 1 to Phase 2: demolition and construction of stairs; plumbing for the 2nd floor rest room. The south side windows are not scheduled to be replaced. The price of shelving has gone up 7 times in the last year.

Discussion of the above concerns followed. A suggestion was made to make a list of what the Library expected to get from the renovation and what it is actually going to get.

Greg Curtin will contact Building Committee Chairman Joe Coombs by the end of the week.

Polly Moon arrived at 7:36.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Luci Domick, President of the Friends of the Library, reported that all the books on antiques sold out before the end of the Antique Show. The Friends would like to have a sale of art books. Even though book sale revenues are only 10% of what they were in the past, the sales have generated a lot of good will. The "mechanics" of the Friends are still being put into place. The bylaws should be in place by the December meeting and papers filed with the Secretary of State by the January meeting.

The Friends are looking for some people with fundraising expertise. The Library's restricted operation during the renovation will impact their fundraising. They also need more publicity. They are working on an article with Doug Maine.

The Friends received some substantial donations with their membership drive.

COUNCIL LIAISON: NONE

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The [minutes of November 14, 2006](#) were approved as distributed.

QUESTIONS FOR THE DIRECTOR

Greg Curtin noted that statistics show library usage down. This fact reflects the impact of the renovation on people's ability to use the Library.

Laurel Goodgion reported on some priorities for the Library:

After the first of the year, have the Library open on Friday afternoons. This would add four more hours a week.

For the next budget year, propose increasing Sunday hours by opening Sundays in September and June. The Library would be closed Sundays only during July and August.

A future goal is to open Wednesday nights because there will be demand for meeting room usage. This will drive service.

It will be difficult going into budget season not knowing when the Library is going to re-open.

Laurel answered questions about the financial statements. She also answered questions about newspaper and magazine subscriptions. They are driven by what has popular appeal. Over the past few years one hundred titles have been added to the magazine selections. This was made possible by dropping expensive subscriptions which did not receive must use. The Library is always trying to re-tool its offerings.

The Board approved using money from the Action Fund for the staff holiday luncheon.

HENNEN REPORT REVIEW

Laurel distributed "Hennen's American Public Ratings 2006," which is based on 2004-5 statistics. The report compares Wethersfield Library with surrounding libraries. It contains objective data comparing like with like. Wethersfield Library has improved but is still behind other local libraries in many areas.

PROPOSED REVISION TO TRUST FUND POLICY

Laurel reported that the Finance Director said the auditors wanted some information on the Action Fund. As Laurel was preparing the information, she realized that some parts of the Trust Fund Policy did not accurately reflect current practice.

Tracy Gionfriddo moved to make the necessary changes in the Trust Fund Policy. Paul Courchaine seconded. The motion carried.

At 8:39 Tracy Gionfriddo moved to go into executive session to discuss union negotiations. Howard Greenblatt seconded. The motion carried.

At 8:50 Tracy Gionfriddo moved to come out of executive session. Paul Courchaine seconded. The motion carried.

At 8:51 Polly Moon moved to adjourn. Brad Milvae seconded. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Grady
Secretary