

## **The Cyrenius H. Booth Library Minutes**

### **Board of Trustees Virtual Meeting**

**Tuesday, February 9, 2021 7:00 p.m.**

**Present:** Greg Branecky, Amy Dent, Beth Hamilton, Elizabeth Litt, Tom Long, Doug Lord, Anne Rothstein, Rose Marie Zaharek, Michelle Brown, Donna Rahtelli, Elaine Corbo, Laura Goldstein, David Schill, Dana Flynn

**Absent:**

**Guests:** Denise Kaiser, Amy Schumann, Kaki Taylor

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Amy Dent

#### **Consideration of Minutes:**

*Betsy made a motion to accept the minutes from the January 2021 meeting and Tom seconded the motion. All approved. Motion passed.*

**Public Participation:** None

**President's Announcements:** Amy announced that both Brynn Cullen and Daniel Patti have resigned from the Board, effective immediately. There are now three open positions on the Board, one of which is a Democratic appointee.

**Treasurer's Report:** Greg Branecky reviewed the monthly financial statement. There is a favorable balance for the month of January. The library is not fully staffed so personnel expenses are under budget, although maintenance expenses are over budget. Fundraising is at 109% of the budgeted amount. The paperwork has been filed for forgiveness of the PPP loan, but no decision has been announced.

**Library Director's Report:** Doug reported that an arborist has completed an assessment of the old sugar maple in the courtyard, and the tree is not healthy. Doug and staff are considering programming options around the life cycle of trees. Suggestions were made about a potential replacement for the tree and ideas to utilize the trunk when the tree is ultimately taken down. Doug also reported that snow removal has gone smoothly this year. An offer has been made to fill the position of Assistant Director although no signed contract is in hand. Doug thanked Kaki Taylor for her fundraising efforts this year and noted that the library's fundraising is becoming more focused and more layered.

Betsy asked about the reference to "open and remote lockers" in Doug's written report to the Board. In 2019, a company made a presentation to the Board about this opportunity for community outreach, and Doug will see if additional information can be made available to new Board members.

Amy asked if Amy Schumann had any insights for the Long-Range Planning committee after her attendance at a workshop titled, What Patrons Really Want: Assessing

Community Needs. Amy Schumann offered to share materials from the workshop with Michelle, Long-Range Planning Committee Chair.

### **Committee Reports:**

**Governance** – Laura announced that the Governance Committee interviewed three candidates for the Board, and these candidates would be discussed under New Business.

There was a joint meeting of the Governance Committee and the DEI Committee. The following statement was crafted at that meeting to be posted on the library website.

*The C.H. Booth Library strives to be an institution and building where Newtown residents, including every race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, tenure in town, education level, and socioeconomic class, feel seen, valued, safe, and well-served.*

*We commit to:*

- *Continuing to learn and grow through consistent and ongoing training in diversity, equity, and inclusion;*
- *Adopting inclusive language in all written, oral, and electronic communications;*
- *Expanding the diversity of the staff and board of trustees;*
- *Ensuring all organizational leadership, staff and volunteers embrace the values of mutual respect and dignity for all persons;*
- *Expanding the diversity of collections, programs, and exhibits;*
- *Convening and facilitating conversations and partnerships in service of diversity, equity, and inclusion; and*
- *Reviewing our progress periodically.*

There was a brief discussion about the statement and two amendments suggested:

1. In the first sentence, replace the word ‘residents’ with the word ‘patrons’
2. Replace the last bullet with, “Monitoring our progress”

**Development** – The Development Committee met with Grace Hamilton to discuss details for the scavenger hunt in the library planned for April 24<sup>th</sup> and May 1<sup>st</sup>. Reservations were raised about the timing of the event considering ongoing pandemic concerns and delays with vaccinations. A decision was made to table this particular fundraiser until there is more clarity about health and safety.

**Finance** – See the Treasurer's Report

**Long-Range Planning** –No Report

**Building and Grounds** – David reported that he is exploring options to replace the 89-year-old roof. He is getting samples of materials, including some synthetic tiles. Research continues on the issues with the HVAC system. The control system is failing, but the more critical issue appears to be aging pipes. More extensive work needs to be done to understand the scope of the infrastructure problems.

**Art and Historical** – Elaine announced that Amy Schumann continues to organize and catalog items in the attic. She is also uploading photographs to the CT digital archive. The library continues to struggle with donations which are not assets to the library and need to be declined graciously.

**Friends of the Library Liaison** – Anne reported that the Friends will be holding more pop-up book sales on the main floor of the library. They have been quite successful. The Friends thanked John Renjilian for assistance with rare book sales. Reed Intermediate School has been reserved for the summer book sale, July 10-July 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:** Dana reported that there has been positive input from the community. Doug has scheduled DEI training for staff, and staff are planning programming events with DEI components.

**Old Business:** None

**Unfinished Business:** None

**New Business:**

*Michelle made a motion to enter executive session to discuss the resumes of nominees to replace Tom D'Agostino and Dan Patti as members of the Board of Trustees and to invite Doug Lord to attend. Anne seconded the motion. All approved, motion passed.*

The meeting entered executive session at 8:09 pm and returned to open session at 8:22 pm with the following motion:

*Beth made a motion to extend an invitation to Nicole Mueller to finish Dan Patti's term on the Board and to extend an invitation to Katie Smith to fill the position held by Tom D'Agostino. Anne seconded the motion. All approved. Motion passed.*

*A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Michelle and seconded by Donna. All approved. Motion passed.*

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Hamilton, Secretary

C.H. Booth Library Board of Trustees

*THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE C. H. BOOTH LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES AT THE NEXT MEETING*