

The Cyrenius H. Booth Library Minutes

Board of Trustees Virtual Meeting

Tuesday, December 8, 2020 7:00 p.m.

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

Absent: Daniel Patti

Guests: Denise Kaiser, Amy Schumann, Kaki Taylor, Ned Simpson, Ron Bassio

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Amy Dent

Consideration of Minutes:

Betsy made a motion to accept the minutes from the November 2020 meeting and Tom seconded the motion. All approved. Motion passed.

Public Participation: Ned Simpson and Ron Bassio raised concerns about the library accessibility and parking for handicapped persons. David, Chair of the Building and Grounds Committee, noted that the committee is reviewing designs and options for parking lot and driveway reconfigurations. Ned suggested that the Board approach the legislative Council to advocate for retention of the funding that was recently expanded for this project.

President's Announcements: Amy announced that the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees met last night with the Executive Board of the Friends of the C.H. Booth Library to discuss joint concerns. It was a productive meeting, and the two groups are committed to ongoing dialogue.

Treasurer's Report: Greg reviewed the monthly financial statement which indicates a favorable balance comparing budget to actual for the month of November. The forms to request forgiveness of the PPP loan are being reviewed by the auditor, and Greg is cautiously optimistic. The first installment of the annual grant from the Friends has been fully dispersed.

Greg made a motion to request the second installment of the annual grant from the Friends. Beth seconded the motion. All approved. Motion passed.

Library Director's Report: The library launched a new delivery service for patrons- Words on Wheels- that provides library materials to patrons who are unable to get to the library for any reason. At this time, library staff will be making the deliveries during their regular shifts. Doug thanked the Friends for their continued financial support which enhances the library acquisitions and programming. Doug was pleased to report on the usage statistics for the month of November. Although the Library facility is only open at 70% capacity, checkouts were at 81% of normal for the month of November.

Committee Reports:

Governance – Laura reported that there will be a joint meeting of the Governance and DEI Committees on Jan. 13, 2021 at 4pm to discuss library policies related to DEI issues.

Development - Donna reported that the Turkey Trot was a great success given the circumstances. Tom added that there were 307 runners and a good response from sponsors. The committee met to discuss potential spring fundraisers. A scavenger hunt in the library is tentatively planned for April 24th and May 1st. The committee is exploring plans for a Farm to Table event in late August at Castle Hill Farm. An author luncheon in late September is a possibility as is an indoor mini-golf event in late November. All plans are dependent on state health and safety recommendations.

Finance - Note the Treasurer's Report

Long-Range Planning – Michelle reported that the committee has fully reviewed the current Strategic Plan and will next meet in January.

Building and Grounds – David reported that he has CAD files for a potential parking lot reconfiguration and improvements to the accessibility of the building. The committee is also reviewing options for repairs and upgrades to the HVAC system. Chimney repairs are ongoing, and the inspection of the roof is still to be completed.

Art and Historical – No report

Friends of the Library Liaison - Anne reported that the Holiday Boutique is set up in the lobby near the circulation desk, and there is a no contact payment system. The Boutique will continue through December 31st. The Friends have approved the funding of one Vision Project and partially funded a second project. Volunteers are collecting and sorting donations with health and safety protocols in place. The Friends are considering an offer by the Newtown Community Center to host a table in the foyer to sell books and other items.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion - Dana reported that the committee has met twice. Members of the public shared thoughtful comments, experiences, and ideas. Betsy suggested that someone reach out to the Friends of Newtown Seniors to encourage representation from that group on the committee.

Old Business: None

Unfinished Business: Doug suggested the following statement for the Library's website:

The C.H. Booth Library affirms its stance as allied with the American Library Association (ALA) and libraries across our country in condemning violence and racism and supporting the statement of the Black Caucus of the ALA. [Please read these statements here.](#) As it has for many years, the C.H. Booth Library will continue to provide resources, programming, and space for all voices in our community to come together in open dialogue.

Tom expressed reservations about a statement that includes links to other organizations rather than clearly stating the Library's stance directly. Dana shared some of the research she has done and noted that many CT libraries reference the ALA. Michelle suggested the following language:

The CH Booth Library affirms its stance of condemning violence and discrimination of any kind. As it has for many years, the CH Booth Library will continue to provide resources, programming, and space for all voices in our community to come together in open dialogue.

There was clarification that the Governance Committee would be meeting in January to craft DEI policies for the Library. The language being discussed at this meeting is a statement for the Library website. Some members of the Board expressed a sense of urgency and their desire to have a statement for the Library as soon as possible.

Dana made a motion to accept the statement proposed by Michelle for the Library website. Anne seconded the motion

There was a lengthy discussion about referencing specific types of discrimination, specifically racism. Both Betsy and Brynn expressed their desire to explicitly mention racism in any statement on the Library website.

Betsy made a motion to amend the language to include the word racism. Anne seconded the motion.

There was discussion about the best placement of the word racism within the proposed statement.

Michelle made a motion to accept the amended statement as follows:

The CH Booth Library affirms its stance of condemning violence, racism, and all other forms of discrimination of any kind. As it has for many years, the CH Booth Library will continue to provide resources, programming, and space for all voices in our community to come together in open dialogue.

Laura seconded the motion. All approved. Motion passed.

New Business: Greg presented the budget for the 2021-22 fiscal year.

Greg made a motion to accept the budget for the 2021-22 fiscal year as presented. David seconded the motion. All approved. Motion passed.

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:38 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*