

**LUCY ROBBINS WELLES LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
JANUARY 11, 2021**

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE VIA ZOOM MEETING

Anna Eddy, Laurel Goodgion, Lisa Jones, Pauline Kruk, Iris Larsson, Maureen O'Connor Lyons, LeeAnn Manke, Pam Raynock, Neil Ryan, Christine Shooshan, Diane Stamm

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Judy Igielski, Beth Livingston

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

Adrian O'Connell
Town Clerk

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IN HEWINGTON, CT
2021 FEB - 2 PM 12: 16

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

Chris Miner reported that there will be a presentation at the Town Council meeting tomorrow night on the facilities study. He also commented that he is aware that the Library is doing the best service possible with the curbside pickup, and unfortunately nothing new on changing opening buildings at this time. Diane asked if the Town Council actually received copies of the 5,000 page report; he replied no and has not seen anything at this point. David Nagel commented that the Town Council has not met since December and will meet for the first time this year tomorrow night. As a side note, Dave stated that the 150th Anniversary Committee has met, Kathy Clark has contacted Lisa Masten about this, and Lisa will report on this later.

IV. SECRETARY'S REPORT

Iris stated that she had no report.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Maureen clarified that on page 4 under the Budget report, she was not part of the meeting with Lisa, Karen, and Jen regarding the budget. Laurel stated that on page 5 under Library Director Evaluation she thought it should be clarified Lisa Jones and not Lisa Masten. **MOTION: Maureen O'Connor Lyons made a motion**

to approve the December 14, 2020 meeting minutes as amended, Anna Eddy seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion passed unanimously with an 11-0 vote.

VI. REVIEW OF ANNUAL ACTIVITIES CALENDAR AND COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Diane reviewed the January calendar which covers planning the 5K Race, the Library budget and working with the director, investment committee report, and this is when the PEP Committee usually distributes the library director evaluation.

VII. TREASURER'S REPORT

LeeAnn reviewed the following:

LRWL Treasurer Report December 31, 2020

ACCOUNT STATUS

Santander Checking (Unrestricted Funds)

Beginning Balance (11/30/2020)		\$ 20,685.82
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Income:

Network for Good	\$ 24.01	
General Donations	\$ 300.00	
Children's Donations	\$ 50.00	
Memorial Donations	\$ 166.00	
2021 5K Race Sponsor	\$ 500.00	
		\$ 1,040.01
		\$ 21,725.83

Expenses:

General Expenses:

Accountant Fee	(\$ 2,000.00)	
Recording Clerk Fee	(\$ 300.00)	
	(\$ 2,300.00)	

Memorial Expenses:

Cochefski Shelving Unit	(\$ 500.00)	
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Gifts to the Library:

Subscriptions	(\$ 96.59)	
		(\$ 2,896.59)

Ending Balance (12/31/2020)		<u>\$ 18,829.24</u>
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Money Market in Kingston Investment (Unrestricted Funds)

Opening/Beginning Balance (11/30/2020)	\$106,965.57	
Change in Value/Interest Earned	\$.90	
Ending Balance (12/31/2020)		<u>\$106,966.47</u>

Santander Money Market (Restricted Funds)

Beginning Balance (11/30/2020)	\$ 7,996.91	
Income:		
Interest Earned:	\$.68	
Ending Balance (12/31/2020)		<u>\$ 7,997.59</u>

As of 1/7/2021:

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

IRS Annual Filing Update:

IRS Filing has been completed and the Accountant has been paid. I anticipate having the necessary subcontractor information submitted to accountant within the week for preparation, filing and issuance of 2020 1099s.

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 FYE December 31, 2020):

	<u>Restricted</u>	<u>Unrestricted</u>	
Kingston Investment Fund	\$487,403.62	\$255,010.88	\$742,414.50
Kingston Money Market	<u>0.00</u>	<u>\$106,966.47</u>	
Total Kingston Portfolio	\$487,403.62	\$361,977.35	\$849,380.97
Santander Money Market	\$ 7,997.59	0.00	
Santander Checking	<u>0.00</u>	<u>\$ 18,829.24</u>	
Totals	<u>\$495,401.21</u> (56.54%)	<u>\$380,806.59</u> (43.46%)	<u>\$876,207.80</u>

Respectfully Submitted,
LeeAnn W. Manke
LRWL Treasurer
REVISION 1-10-2021

VIII. LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Lisa Masten reported that she was contacted by the 150th Anniversary Committee about doing something with them in the spring. Obviously some of it will depend on Covid, but suggestions were live characters at different historical buildings using a specific script, a presentation about the history of the Library that Karen did last year, a story walk where people could walk around and read about how the Library came to be and different things that have taken place over the years. Lisa will assign a staff member to oversee this 150th Anniversary project.

She continued with her report by stating that the curbside service is very popular and staff is constantly answering phones, and pulling books for same day requests. Patrons are very grateful that they are able to get their items so quickly. Staff is also busy with phone calls regarding technical questions, and patrons are taking advantage of downloadable items like Hoopla. Karen and Jen Hebert are the experts with digital services and they are making patrons aware of getting virtual tech help by setting up an appointment with a staff member via Zoom. Since the Newington Town Crier is no longer in print as of March, Diane Durette has set up a page on the Library's website for all issues. Tax forms are coming in and the Library is working on a system to get these forms to people if they call and ask for them; this will be done with a curbside service. If there are not enough forms, the Library will print up to 10 pages for free; logistics are being worked out on that. Last year there were a lot of forms left over because taxes were deferred. A lot of older people don't have computers so the Library is happy to help them with this service.

There was a big leak in the building a couple of weeks ago from the roof into the attic hallway into the children's room. That whole area had a huge leak a few years ago. There is a rubber roof on that part of the building. There was also a leak on the first floor about a month ago. This happened Christmas weekend and the Facilities Department was able to get that fixed.

Due to Covid, staff has been working on split shifts, so staff is split in half; it is very challenging and it affects their ability to do what they can or want to do because the desk needs to be covered and certain things do need to get done every day. This past month has been challenging with positive Covid tests so staff members are taking on more and more. The Town Manager's office has been really good with protocols. The Town Manager had a meeting with the Town department heads and sent out a memo regarding what the expectations are as Town employees and what can be done for Newington residents, especially seniors, who are isolated and need socialization and nutrition. The Library, Human Services, and Senior and Disabled Center are discussing

how to reach seniors more with regard to these issues. The summer reading program has 800 people, but 150 of those don't have computers and are over 70. There is some great information on the website, but they can't see the website if they don't have computers, so these departments are looking at creative and enhanced ways to get them materials and information on programs: Bailey Francis, head of the Children's Department, is working with a 3rd Grade class who are writing a story to be displayed at the story walk around Mill Pond.

Diane asked if the insurance company has been involved with regard to the water damage, and also asked how the cleaning company is doing. Lisa responded that the cleaning company is marginal at best; they are not as good as they should be and Jen Hebert needs to be on top of them to empty the trash or vacuum. With regard to the insurance, Lisa hasn't done anything because the deductible is very high. She is waiting to see what will happen with either roof repair or replacement.

Neil asked for an update with regard to the issues the Library was having with the Newington Post Office. Lisa responded that a lot has been resolved, and ultimately what happened was the form letter for the address change was not completed. Postal worker Kevin Kuckel, who delivers to the Library, figured out what was going on and was able to help. There is some improvement, but it will take a bit of time to be totally resolved.

Chris Miner asked if a roofing contractor was contacted to look at the roof, and Lisa responded no. Chris asked if the Facilities Department is handling it, and Lisa responded yes and she is waiting for a report. Facilities came out right away and found the area that was problematic. She isn't sure if it was patched completely, but she knows it is being worked on.

Anna asked if the story walk will be created with teachers, and weren't we already doing a story walk at Mill Pond. Lisa stated that the Library has done three story walks that went late into the summer, but this would be an original story written by the 3rd Grade children.

LeeAnn commented that the story walks are wonderful and it might be a good idea to send out notices to seniors who might also want to walk around Mill Pond and see this, which would be another way to be interactive. She also suggested that there are Church care committees for older members who are also encountering the same problems by not being technologically connected, and maybe the churches could assist with getting the word out to seniors. Lisa said that is a great idea and one of the challenges is that this is winter and it is worrisome with everyone inside.

Laurel complimented Lisa and the Library staff on their efforts to provide the tax forms because this is one of the biggest customer service issues that libraries face every spring when people need these forms.

IX. ASSISTANT LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Karen reported that a number of good applicants for the open part time positions have been received; the deadline was December 28th and there were 40-50 applications. The next step in the process is to administer some testing; this used to be done on-site, so she is looking into doing this through a Survey Monkey format. Also in the process is ongoing training with two new full time employees and two Library pages. This is somewhat time consuming and will continue over the next few months. With the Town Manager's initiatives providing services to adults and seniors, the virtual book discussion format has really grown and she is thinking of ways to expand that to a day time book discussion and how to get people who don't have computers involved through maybe using a landline. Diane suggested getting the word out through old fashioned snail mail, and Karen agreed that would be a good idea.

X. FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Sheila reported that there isn't a lot going on with the Friends at this time. They are able to gain access to the sorting room in the Library so they can start to see what is in there. They are also sending out a questionnaire

asking what authors people are interested in and putting together a bag of books for patrons. There was a request to publicize what is available in large print. Friends continue working with Karma's Closet and the use of shelves there which is going very well, along with Facebook sales. Neil asked if there was a Friends meeting this Wednesday and stated that either he or Anna will attend.

XI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Budget

1. Budget 2021-2022 Update

Maureen reported that Lisa, Karen, and Jen have been working diligently on the budget. The proposed increases are in personnel. Lisa can address any questions that the Board has. There is an increase for Dave Brown who is the Library's maintenance technician from 10 to 15 hours per week. Dave does small building repairs because the three men who work in the Facilities Department, where there is no director, are stretched pretty thin; Dave's increase would benefit the Library greatly. The second big change is bringing Jennifer Bassett's and Julie Barsel into parody; they were hired within a short time of each other and are doing the same job. Jeannette Francini, who retired at circulation and collection, and came back to work in circulation, was hired at a lower rate as a library technician, and her salary should be brought up to a proper level of pay for what her responsibilities are. Lisa commented that one saving grace is that there is one less pay period next year so overall increases are less than what they could have been. As usual, budget increases are in personnel areas and some should be brought into parody or union requirements. Lisa added that with personnel changes, all offset step increases were taken away and then reinstated as a way to keep and reward part time employees. There will be a minimum wage increase in August and that has to be covered. The good news is that with a lot of these personnel changes people are starting at a lower rate which is a savings to offset some of the increases. There are two full time positions that will not be funded, but will not be eliminated; these two full time positions have not been filled since April. At the direction of the Town Manager, the budget has a -6.52% increase. There was a non-payroll \$2,500 savings with a conversion fee that all libraries benefitted from.

Chris Miner asked about the recently ratified AFSCME contract that parallels minimum wage to part time employees and asked if that parallels with the Library. David Nagel commented that he doesn't recollect that, but it may be true. Chris wondered if there should be a discussion with the Town Manager to make sure that part time wages reflect the minimum wage over the last two years; Lisa said that yes, usually the Town does do that, and it is her understanding too.

B. PEP Committee

1. Second Draft of Job Description for Library Board Trustee

Laurel reported that the impetus for creating this job description happened a year ago when Lisa Masten and Lynn Caley were reviewing Best Practices for Public Libraries. They realized there was not a job description for Board members. The PEP Committee used various ideas from the ACLB suggestions and best practices for library boards, roles and responsibilities for trustees, friends of libraries which is put together by the State library; all of these documents make it clear what the responsibilities should be for a Board member. There is a need for this document, especially at this time, as interviews for library board candidates take place. This job description will have a clear statement for a new Board member, and will be part of an information packet. Lisa Jones commented that she has not had an opportunity to review this second draft, but as a new Board member, she feels it is a very important document. Laurel asked that this item be put on the agenda for the February meeting so the Board members will have an opportunity to review it. Diane asked that Laurel send it out again to the Board. Anna suggested that on number 14 of the second draft, it is written that going to a conference for a library board member is compulsory; she feels this should be based on somebody's role on the board. Diane suggested using the verbiage when appropriate or encouraged. Anna also suggested that number

11 should say joining the friends with an appropriate donation because it could be a monetary issue. Laurel commented that there are several workshops available for free for library board members and she will alert the members when she comes across them.

2. Discussion of Chapter 7 of ACLB Manual

Laurel reported that Chapter 7 was mailed to everyone. She is very grateful for the monthly financial reports given by Neil and LeeAnn. She feels this helps achieve fiscal responsibilities.

Lisa Jones asked, as she read through this Chapter, is there a formal budget presentation made to the Board of Trustees. Diane responded that there has not normally been a formal presentation; however a copy of the budget is sent to the Board and highlights of the budget are spoken about during the Board meetings. Laurel commented that a proposed budget is usually presented to a library board to vote on. She thinks it would be important to show the Town Council that the library's proposed budget was approved by the Board. Maureen found that interesting and said that has not been done in Newington. The budget is discussed at the Board meetings and then members of the Library Board attend, and show their support, at the Town Council budget meetings at which time they have an opportunity to speak during public participation. There never has been a formal presentation to the board, nor asking for their approval or vote of confidence. LeeAnn stated that what is different this year, due to Covid, is that the director, assistant director, and business manager have met continuously on the budget, whereas in years past Board members participated in these meetings. Her main concern is the timing as Lisa Masten needs to submit the budget by January 8th. Lisa Masten stated that access was not available until the end of November so it would not have been feasible to present it to the Board by their next meeting. LeeAnn responded that logistically budget review by the Board wouldn't fit into the work schedule. Diane stated that typically the director, assistant director, and business manager work together with the tools that they have to develop the budget from the Town Manager's directives. Anything urgent is brought to the attention of the Board, but the normal process is the Board is made aware of the proposed budget, and Board members attend the Town Council hearings to support the Library in their budget presentation. Anna suggested that this discussion started off as the Board formally have a vote of support for the budget; she thought maybe it be best to have this discussion offline with the Budget Committee or with the Board officers. There have been times in the past when Board members were not happy with a proposed budget due to fund shortages or staff cutbacks, but the Board supported the Library at Town Council meetings. Diane suggested tabling this discussion at this point and that the director will continue to keep the Board informed as to when the meetings with the Town Council will take place.

C. Investment Committee

Neil emailed the final report for the 2020 calendar year to the Board. The \$742,414.50 represents an 11% increase for the year which is really impressive since February and March were not good months. This was a really good year for the portfolio and a lot of thanks go to Dean Spada.

D. House Committee

Laurel has not received a summary of November's walk-through; when she receives it she will share it with the Board. Lisa commented that it is very trying to create more space for staff to social distance. Lisa stated that one of the computers at the reference desk is completely on the other side of the tempered glass and far apart from co-workers; however that can't be done when the Library reopens.

E. Facility and Site

Maureen stated she had no formal report, but a general comment. There is always an issue with the leaking roof and she hopes that the facilities study addresses this. Additionally, whether during the time of Covid or pre-Covid, there are space needs in the Library.

Diane said that she has spoken with the Town Manager regarding filing the final report, but there were no updates. James Krupinski, Town Clerk, updated the Board that the issue was that the agreement was recorded but without mapping so it can always be rerecorded at another point. Gary received the design plans as a PDF and not an original, so he marked up the PDF. An original needs to be recorded with the additional changes to the site, and needs to be signed by the surveyor who drew the map, but obviously it cannot be signed off on plans that were drawn on. As soon as he gets more information he will also update the Board. Diane appreciates this and obviously this document needs to be legal and acceptable for a complete record. LeeAnn stated that as keeper of records and the safety deposit box, she will need something to incorporate into the physical records for the Board.

F. Fund Development/Legacy Society

Anna spoke about Network For Good that LeeAnn mentioned in her report. Network For Good has been around since 2001 and they assist non-profits with online donations. They are affiliated with GuideStar, a national network since 1994, who work with approximately 13,000 non-profits. Network For Good tapped into that database and has established portals for people to make donations to a nonprofit. LeeAnn received a check from them a couple of weeks ago so Anna started looking into them. She checked with their customer support people, and reviewed their online page. We don't have to do anything to be able to receive online donations; there is no cost except for a processing fee of about 5%. The goal is to update the Library's profile with the mission statement and vision statement. We cannot customize the donations, but memorial donations, honorary donations, and a blank field is available for use. LeeAnn stated we have received \$50 from Network For Good in the past two months. Amazon Smile generated \$130 last year. This may not be a huge money maker, but every little bit helps. **MOTION: Anna Eddy made a motion to move forward with the concept of an online donation tool through Network For Good for the patrons, Neil Ryan seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion passed with an 11-0 vote.**

Anna reported that the Legacy flyer went out with the Footnotes newsletter. She thanked Lisa Masten for help in coordinating that, along with developing a secondary distribution list to the people who supported ReadySetGo. These people received the newsletter and the flyer. Additionally, a special list of Legacy Society people received both the newsletter and flyer. Anna is now working on something to put online. She continues to work on the dining partners program with Michelle Royer which will launch with the winter reading program. Patrons have called the Library asking when they can get a new dining partner ticket. Anna is also following up on sponsors for the 5K Race.

G. Nominations

Maureen stated she had no report.

H. Communications

1. Update on Communication Plan

Lisa Jones reported on the document that she emailed to the Board. This document outlines key messages that took place/will take place in 2020/2021. These key messages will help a Board member in a discussion with someone about what has taken place at the Library throughout 2020, and what hopes to take place in 2021. Topics such as how to remedy some issues and concerns with regard to space expansion, and engaging and exciting the community in supporting an expansion. Getting these messages out to patrons, Town departments, schools, Friends, community, Chamber of Commerce, and the press could be challenging on a monthly basis, but possibly every six to eight weeks might be feasible. Planting a foundation for these messages to the audiences that are pertinent to the Library is important to building the blocks with these groups. Town Councilors Chris and Dave update the Town Council with information shared at the Board meetings, and hopefully will continue to provide these suggested key messages on a regular basis. The

approach that should be taken over the next few weeks is a year in review as one of the first messages conveyed out to everyone, with then quickly moving onto other topics such as the Library's mission to redraft and enhance its modifications based on Covid, new technology, and the value of library services. She thinks a link on the website that financially analyzes the services that the library provides would be very interesting.

Neil commented that this is a really good document, it has a lot of information, and is very easy to follow. He asked Lisa Jones if she obtained this information from Library staff, and Lisa responded yes from Lisa Masten.

XII. OLD BUSINESS

1. Library Road Race – Sunday, May 16, 2021

Diane stated that normally the 5K Race is held in May, and fortunately there is a vaccine out, but she does wonder where we will be in May. She thinks that the race should be postponed to September or October because if not enough people are able to get the vaccine, she doesn't want it to be a problem to have to postpone the race. Postponing to September or October may work out better. LeeAnn commented that she was looking at the calendar and she is not sure what the plans are for the Waterfall Festival, but that is usually the third Saturday of September which is the 18th. Rosh Hashanah is September 6th through 8th, and Yom Kippur is September 15th and 16th, so the race could either be piggybacked with the Waterfall Festival on the 18th or scheduled for Sunday, September 19th which doesn't interfere with any Jewish holidays. Diane stated that one of the first things that has to be done is making sure the timer is available. Other dates that can be looked at are September 26th or October 3rd, but first she was wondering about the overall thoughts of the Board on this possible postponement. Neil and Maureen stated that it is a good idea to postpone. Anna stated she will talk with Kevin Mason about this. Diane stated that the timer should be contacted to lock in a date in September or October, and then decide, as it gets closer, if the post-event can be held inside or outside. LeeAnn commented that the timer has already been paid \$700.

2. Open Board Positions

Diane reported that there are still two open positions – corporate and Republican Town. She strongly suggests that if anyone has a corporate candidate in mind, to please give Laurel that person's name.

3. Town of Newington 150th Anniversary

This was discussed earlier.

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

There was no New Business.

XIV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no Public Participation.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Neil Ryan made a motion to adjourn, Maureen O'Connor Lyons seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion passed unanimously with a 11-0 vote at 8:51 PM.

Diane thanked all the Committee members for meeting and taking care of business.

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