

**LUCY ROBBINS WELLES LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
APRIL 12, 2021**

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John O'Connell
Town Clerk

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE VIA ZOOM MEETING

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

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Judy Igielski

STAFF

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

STAFF ABSENT

Lisa Masten, Library Director

FRIENDS

Sheila Rowell

TOWN COUNCIL LIAISONS

David Nagel
Chris Miner jointed at 7:07 PM

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

David Nagel reported that the Town Council is finalizing their work on the budget. The budget was presented to the Town Council by the Town Manager, there have been public hearings, and the Town Council can make any changes to the budget up to finalizing it on April 20th. The mill rate is reduced by .18. Dave doesn't see any changes that would affect the Library or any of its projects.

IV. SECRETARY'S REPORT

Iris Larsson stated she had no report.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Maureen O'Connor Lyons made a motion to accept the minutes of March 8, 2021, Anna Eddy seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion to accept the minutes of March 8, 2021 was unanimously approved with a 10-0 vote.

VI. REVIEW OF ANNUAL ACTIVITIES CALENDAR AND COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Diane reviewed the calendar for the month of April which includes the 5K Race that will be discussed later, the volunteer appreciation breakfast; the Board is very appreciative of all the volunteers and discussion on this will be tabled at this time. National Library week was April 4th through 10th, and discussion on upcoming Friends Book Sales.

VII. TREASURER'S REPORT

LeeAnn Manke reported that there have been no changes to the accounts since she emailed the report to the Board. There were some small adult programming costs, along with receiving several donations in memory of Marie Dowling. Miscellaneous donations from Network For Good and Amazon Smile continue to be received; small amounts, but pretty regular donations. Dean Spada is still looking into what is happening with the Bonds Market, but the Money Market funds are unchanged other than interest because no restricted money has been spent. LeeAnn has heard that there will be a bequest to the Library from Dr. Polino, a benefactor from the past who recently passed away. She has no specific details, only a tentative outreach from the lawyers.

LRWL Treasurer Report March 31, 2021

ACCOUNT STATUS

Santander Checking (Unrestricted Funds)

Beginning Balance (2/28/2021)		\$ 18,303.93	
Income:			
Memorial Donations	\$ 725.00		
C. Deschler Donation	\$ 100.00		
Miscellaneous Donations	\$ 26.00		
		\$ 851.00	
		\$ 19,154.93	
Expenses:			
Adult Programming	(\$ 10.00)		
Gifts to the Library:			
Subscriptions	(\$ 137.94)		
		(\$ 147.94)	
Ending Balance (3/31/2021)			<u>\$ 19,006.99</u>

Money Market in Kingston Investment (Unrestricted Funds)

Opening/Beginning Balance (2/28/2021)	\$106,968.19	
Change in Value/Interest Earned	\$.90	
Ending Balance (3/31/2021)		<u>\$106,969.09</u>

Santander Money Market (Restricted Funds)

Beginning Balance (2/28/2021)	\$ 8,998.99	
Income:		
Interest Earned	\$.76	
Ending Balance (3/31/2021)		<u>\$ 8,999.75</u>

As of 4/7/2021:

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 March, 2021:

	<u>Restricted</u>	<u>Unrestricted</u>	
Kingston Investment Fund	\$488,091.34	\$266,506.19	\$754,597.53
Kingston Money Market	<u>0.00</u>	<u>\$106,969.09</u>	
Total Kingston Portfolio	\$488,091.34	\$373,475.28	\$861,566.62
Santander Money Market	\$ 8,999.01	0.00	
Santander Checking	<u>0.00</u>	<u>\$ 19,006.99</u>	
Totals	<u>\$497,090.35</u> (55.88%)	<u>\$392,482.27</u> (44.12%)	<u>\$889,572.62</u>

Respectfully Submitted,
LeeAnn W. Manke
LRWL Treasurer

VIII. LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Lisa Masten was not in attendance. Karen Benner reported that staff continues to work hard to offer the best possible service especially with the building still closed to the public. The LucyToGo turnaround time is usually a two hour time span and staff is now offering one hour or less on this service. Staff is bending over backwards to meet the needs of the community. Preparations are being finalized for the History of the Library storywalk to take place at Mill Pond Park for the Town's 150th Anniversary. On April 24th the Friends will be on the front steps of the Library to answer any questions about the Library's history, along with handing out snacks that were popular in 1939. Lisa had collaborated with the department heads from the Senior and Disabled Center and Human Services to create a newsletter that was sent out to over 6,500 Newington households. This newsletter was geared for older adults about keeping safe, healthy, active, and connected; the newsletter was called Living Strong. Lisa was a guest, along with other department heads, on the Talk To The Mayor show about keeping the public informed regarding what the Town is doing to offer services during the pandemic. The Library has been collaborating on a newsletter with other area libraries; March and April offered a program on genealogy, and the next program will be on gardening. Working with Berlin, Wethersfield, and Rocky Hill on these programs cuts down on costs, is a nice collaboration, and it beefs up attendance for these programs. All of the library directors would like to continue this type of collaborative effort even once things get back to normal. National Library Week was April 4th through 10th and the children's department offered two new services – Book Bundles which asked parents to complete an online form regarding special interests that their children would have; they were then allowed to check out up to 10 related items. The other new service was Pop Up Kicks; this had a selection of children's books and prizes that would just pop up on the Library's Facebook page and parents could call the Library to get the prizes. These new services will continue because it is a great way to get more books in the hands of children. In technology news, there is a new online database called NewsBank which has local and national newspapers such as The Herald, The Journal Inquirer, and the New Haven Register. Karen reported that Head of Reference Diane Durette will be retiring at the beginning of May after 40+ years of exemplary service as a reference librarian. Diane will stay on as a reference substitute. Jennifer Hebert will fill Diane's position as Head of Reference which is a great opportunity for Jen. Jen's Business Manager position will be posted next week internally to AFSCME employees first; if no one applies then it will be open to internal part-time people. Diane will work with Jen in training her for the position, and then Jen will work with

the evaluation. Maureen asked what the participation from the Board was, and Lisa Jones responded that it was 100% feedback from the Board, not only on the form itself, but on the evaluation. Lisa would like to have a Board discussion on what went well with the evaluation, what didn't go well, what was troublesome, and what was good. Laurel commented that Lisa Jones did a beautiful job in developing the form, and Diane agreed and thanked Lisa that it was an excellent job pulling that all together and the Board certainly appreciates all that she did.

Diane asked about the ACLB Manual and Laurel responded that the Board has reviewed the entire manual.

C. Investment Committee

Neil emailed the Board the March monthly report. As of March 31st the report is \$754,597.53 which is up a little over \$9,000. He added a couple of columns showing that 64.68% and a year-to-date \$12,183.03 are restricted funds. March was a good solid month and things are looking very good.

D. House Committee

Laurel reported that Jennifer emailed an updated walkthrough status report and that progress is being made every month, with some items tagged for the warmer weather.

E. Facility and Site

Maureen stated that she had no report, however Anna will discuss something during her Fund Development report. The final architect's paperwork is now on file with the Town Clerk's Office.

F. Fund Development/Legacy Society

Anna commented on Maureen's statement that she actually wasn't prepared to talk about that this evening and she will touch base with Maureen on that later. Anna continues to work with Lisa Masten on making the Library's web pages more relevant in terms of easy access for Library patrons to make a donation. A button was added on the home page for a link to Network For Good so that donations can be made directly to the Library. She stated that Lisa Masten is doing a nice job enhancing the graphics on the Legacy page. Anna is interested to hear about what LeeAnn mentioned about the upcoming bequest.

G. Nominations

Maureen stated she had no report.

H. Communications

1. Next Key Message

Lisa Jones reported that she is working on many things. A couple of meetings ago the discussion regarding the key message was what is taking and has taken place pre- and post-Covid. Lisa Jones has met with Lisa Masten about making the key message more relevant to what is going on now and enhancing that message about how staff is going over and above their efforts, for example the reference department never closed. Apparently some libraries have closed their reference department. Once this information is developed, methods of distribution will be discussed such as going out to publications, information on the website, getting the word out to people who are not library users and don't have

whoever gets the Business Manager position. The first of the five new hires began her training last week and she started flying solo this week. Each week as the new hires begin their positions, they will receive individual training. Four of these new hires are in the Circulation Department so the Circulation Supervisor has been very busy.

Diane commented that the LucyToGo service is great news beating the time to service patrons. She continues to be amazed about all that goes on at the Library and all the efforts that staff has done and does. She thanked Lisa, Karen, and staff. She also commented that the Board should recognize Diane Durette for her long time service. LeeAnn suggested the afghan and Karen thought that would be a wonderful idea. Anna commented that there are also gift cards available and Karen agreed that would also be great. **MOTION: LeeAnn Manke made a motion to gift Diane Durette an afghan and a WoodNTap gift card, Pauline Kruk seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion passed with a 10-0 vote.** LeeAnn stated that the gift cards are in the safe and the afghans are in a container; Karen responded that she knows where everything is and she thinks that Diane will be very pleased.

IX. ASSISTANT LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Karen included her report in the Library Director's Report above.

X. FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Sheila Rowell reported that the Friends are getting ready for their next book sale to take place on Saturday, April 17th from 1:30 to 4:30 PM. The books will be on the lawn so social distancing will take place. There is no space in the basement, so she hopes many books are sold; books include fiction, romance, mystery, lots of children's books, and lots of media. People will be charged \$10 per bag and they can fill the bag. The homebound service continues with people who are shut-in and are unable to get to the Library.

Neil asked when the Friends next meeting is and Sheila responded that there won't be a meeting this Wednesday, but the following Wednesday. Anna had emailed Board members who were interested in taking turns attending Friends meetings and Lisa Jones and Laurel Goodgion had both expressed an interest in doing so; Lisa Jones will attend the next Friends meeting.

XI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Budget

1. Budget Update

Maureen thanked Dave Nagel for giving the budget report earlier. She asked Dave if the April 20th Town Council meeting will be a public hearing and Dave responded that public hearings are done, but there will be public participation at the April 20th meeting which is the final date for budget approval.

B. PEP Committee

1. Library Director Evaluation

Laurel reported that Lisa Jones has been very busy with the Library Director's Evaluation which will be going to the Town Manager. Diane stated that she will meet with Lisa Masten next week to review the evaluation and then it will be sent onto the Town Manager. Laurel thanked everyone who participated in

access to the library, along with developing a digital bookmark for parents. A bookmark will be developed that will be distributed to the Senior and Disabled Center, Human Services, and things of that nature to try and get this information out to the public. The bookmark will have relevant information such as Library hours, “did you know,” online resources, Friends book sale, etc.; when the Communications Committee meets again this content information will be finalized. Curbside service will be used to distribute this bookmark. The next key message will be on space – how the current space is being used and how the expansion will be used. Laurel commented that she sent an article to the Board about what is relevant to a library at this time, how to better use the space, and a concierge type service similar to a hotel having someone up front answering questions. Lisa Jones stated that if any Board member has any thoughts or information for this next key message, to please reach out to her. Lisa Jones emailed the Board three charts and a spreadsheet that summarizes information about the increase in service over time, regardless if it was pre- or post-pandemic. She stated that the Library still provides a phenomenal amount of service to the community. Neil commented that the spreadsheets are very informative and has a lot of great data that puts things in black and white. LeeAnn agreed with Neil and said that as a numbers geek this information is great and should be put out to the public so they can see what we are doing even though the building is not open, but services are still available. Anna added on to Neil and LeeAnn’s statements and said that she liked the comparison and the benchmarks that showed the data and how it is presented will make a bigger impact. Lisa Jones agreed with all of the comments, and stated that it just can’t be data information, but a story to go along with that. She will continue to play around with all of this information and reiterated to the Board to reach out to her with any ideas or suggestions.

2. Mission Statement

Lisa Jones emailed the current Mission Statement and the proposed Mission Statement this evening to the Board. The proposed Mission Statement ties up all the things that the Board has been talking about. She thanked Pauline for her assistance. She is open for discussion on the proposed document, asked if more verbs should be added. Diane asked that suggestions be emailed to Lisa Jones and the Mission Statement will be on the May agenda for further discussion. Laurel wondered if in addition to the statement if a shorter, catchier slogan should be created. Diane agreed with something short and pithy that can be placed on items such as bookmarks. Lisa loved that idea. Diane thanked Lisa Jones for the great work she and the Communications Committee have been doing.

XII. OLD BUSINESS

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

Diane reported that fingers crossed the 5K Race can take place with no Covid restrictions. A meeting was held earlier in the week with a few Race Committee members and Kevin Mason. Anna stated that the online registration will open as the race is six months away and she is personally concerned that this information needs to get out there. The Library’s website and the online registration page have been updated, and Kevin has the text to go out to the previous runners from the last three years. There are plans to send out monthly reminders and each month will focus on a different highlight like why the need to register in advance, how the race will operate day of, and what restrictions will be needed. Anna suggested having the race participants pick up their packet and t-shirt on Friday evening which will reduce the number of people doing this the morning of the race. This is done with many races. Her other idea is that past awards ceremony last too long and to shorten it would not have the prize drawing in person, but hold it the next day and do it virtual like the ReadySetGo giveaway was done. Larger prize items would need to be picked up, but smaller items could be sent to the winners. These ideas can be discussed in August closer to race day when more should be known about any Covid restrictions. Dutch Point Credit Union will be a silver sponsor, and Anna will now focus on reaching out for more sponsors.

LeeAnn stated that CERT has worked the race with traffic and ham radio and if their assistance is needed again this year, then they should be contacted with the date. Diane stated that would be excellent to at least notify them and get on their schedule. LeeAnn will reach out to them. Maureen stated she liked the idea of picking up the packet and t-shirt the night before the race. Diane commented that she would need a commitment from the Board members to staff this the night before the race. Maureen, Anna, and Neil all volunteered. LeeAnn commented that doing the prizes like ReadySetGo virtually should not overwhelm the staff and hopefully Board members can also assist with this. Diane suggested maybe giving out the awards for first, second, and third place winners and then do the rest virtually. She hopes that Covid is under control and people can gather again, and maybe hold this ceremony in the parking lot weather permitting. LeeAnn stated that typically the Community Center has been booked by now and wondered if they have been made aware of the date. She went on to say that if things do need to be held outside the Masons have a large yellow and white striped tent that could be loaned to the Library to be used in the parking lot. Chris Miner stated that the Mayor's Ball will be held in October at the Community Center but he is not sure of the date. Dave Nagel commented no date has been set at the moment. Diane stated that 5K Race Committee meetings will begin in June, and possibly hold a couple of summertime meetings.

2. Open Board Positions

Diane reported that there is one Democratic and two Republican positions open, along with a corporate position. Pauline is still working on the Democratic open position and has a couple of feelers out. With regard to her own position, since Pam Raynock resigned from the Board Pauline is now in her slot for a longer term length, so Pauline's position is now the open position. The Town Council needed specific paperwork regarding this and Dave responded that she is all set with the Town Council.

3. Town of Newington 150th Anniversary

Karen stated that the signage for the storywalk at Mill Pond will go up this weekend. Two or three people from the Friends, along with Lisa and Karen, will be on the Library's step providing historical facts and snacks. Restroom facilities will be open as people go from site to site during the historical walk. The historical walk map can be found on the Library's website.

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, Anna Eddy seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion passed unanimously with an 10-0 vote at 8:12 PM.

The next Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 10, 2021 at 7:00 PM.