

SIMSBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY – BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Town of Simsbury, Connecticut
Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, December 18, 2023, at 7:00 P.M.
Simsbury Public Library – Weatogue Room and Zoom

Present: Lisa Miceli, Director of Simsbury Library; Polly Rice, Acting Chair of the Library Board of Trustees; Holly McGrath, Secretary of the Library Board of Trustees; Greg Golinski, President of the Friends; Library Board of Trustees Members: Tolly Gibbs, Marianne O’Neil, Rebecca Schultz, Laurie Shinaman; and previous Library Board of Trustees Member, Colleen Yates.

Absent: Library Board of Trustees Member, Mary Glassman.

CALL TO ORDER – Ms. Rice called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 20, 2023

MOTION: Ms. O’Neil made a motion, seconded by Ms. McGrath, to accept the Minutes of the November 20, 2023, Regular Meeting, as written. Ms. Rice abstained. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

Marc Fogel, Davina Fogel, Loel Goldblatt, President, Farmington Valley Jewish Congregation - Emek Shalom, and Norm Sondheimer, Chair of the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) Israel/Anti-Semitism Task Force were in attendance to support the Library’s quick, professional handling of the recent inappropriate display signage.

Mr. Fogel complimented the swift, professional, and compassionate way Ms. Miceli and Ms. Kennard responded to his concern about a divisive and harmful display to patrons. He was grateful for the removal of the display and the public apology Ms. Miceli posted to the Library website, as well as the procedure she put in place going forward that all displays and signage must be approved by a supervisor before going up in the building.

COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Miceli passed around an email from a patron applauding the Library staff for their efficient way in handling the Internet and power needs of the residents during the day of the meeting as the Town faced a severe rain and windstorm knocking out power and internet for many residents for the entire day.

Ms. O’Neil stated that another patron shared with her a positive experience at the Library from today.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

MOTION: Ms. Rice nominated Ms. McGrath as Chair. Ms. O’Neil seconded the nomination. The nomination carried unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. O’Neil nominated Ms. Rice as Vice Chair. Ms. McGrath seconded the nomination. The nomination carried unanimously.

The nomination of Board Secretary was tabled to the January meeting.

PROPOSED 2024 MEETING DATES

MOTION: Ms. Rice made a motion, seconded by Ms. O’Neil, to accept the proposed 2024 meeting dates as written. The motion carried unanimously.

LIBRARY DISPLAY

Ms. Miceli stated that in her decades long career as a Library Director she has never experienced a staff member posting a display that was insensitive and polarizing. has now instituted a procedure requiring staff to get a supervisor’s approval before posting displays and signage.

Mr. Goldblatt of the Farmington Valley Jewish Congregation thanked Ms. Miceli for her swift action.

Ms. McGrath stated that Connecticut State Representative, Melissa Osborne, was made aware of the situation and could respond to constituents how the Library Director was handling the matter. Ms. Miceli noted she emailed Ms. McGrath, spoke with the First Selectwoman, spoke with the Town Manager, and emailed the Library Board to keep them all abreast of the situation and how she was managing the situation and mitigating the damage.

Ms. Miceli shared that she received an email from the Jewish Federation of Great Hartford saying they wanted to have a meeting to explain why the display was harmful, but after she explained how she handled it, they did not feel a meeting was necessary.

FRIENDS’ REPORT

Mr. Golinski reported:

The Friends’ Holiday party for Library Employees was a good time and thanked everyone for their attendance.

With the passing of Dave Blume, he will now be taking over the daytime Great Decisions Sessions. He got the books today and will be giving them to the Reference desk tomorrow. There is a

Ms. Rice stated that the Board should send something to Mrs. Blume. Mr. Golinski added that the Friends' sent her something. Ms. McGrath will send a card on behalf of the Library Board.

CHAIR'S REPORT

No Chair's Report.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Miceli reported:

Work on the elevator is still scheduled for the first week of January.

There was an HVAC issue in the Admin office that was addressed.

The part time Adult Services Librarian job description went before Personnel Sub Committee this morning and passed, and just passed through the Board of Selectmen meeting just before the Library Board meeting. The job will be posted in January.

The part time Library Services Assistant position in the Circulation Department closes tomorrow, with interviews taking place in January.

Mary has been collaborating with the Children's Department on Tween programming for fifth and sixth graders who usually fall through the Library programming gap.

The BCC Coordinator, Cyn, has created an online appointment request form and had five requests the first week. She also created office hours so that people will know when she is available.

BUDGET 2023 – 2024

Ms. Miceli stated that under "Library Administration" the Equipment Maintenance line is over budget by \$253, but she found that many things were improperly allocated in error to that line. Jamie and she are working on correcting those misallocated funds.

BUDGET 2024 – 2025

Ms. Miceli stated:

The budget request change is 5.9% over this year's change. It is the largest percent change in the last ten years that she has been there.

The biggest budget driver is Building Maintenance and Utilities. Personnel is also always a budget driver.

The budget workshop will be taking place the second weekend of March.

On January 11th Ms. Miceli will be meeting with the Town Manager, the Finance Director, and the Budget Director to review the proposed budget.

MOTION: Ms. Gibbs made a motion, seconded by Ms. Rice, to accept the 2024-2025 Budget as written. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Miceli stated that the Capital Improvement Plan is twelve years out. The Library projects in the Capital Plan were reviewed.

The Library projects in the Capital Non-Recurring Plan was reviewed.

MOTION: Ms. McGrath made a motion, seconded by Ms. O'Neil, to go into Executive Session. The motion carried unanimously.

The Board went into Executive Session at 7:51 P.M.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board adjourned Executive Session at 7:53 P.M.

ADJOURNEMNT

MOTION: Ms. O'Neil made a motion, seconded by Ms. Gibbs to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:54 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amanda Blaze
Commission Clerk