

BRIDGEPORT LIBRARY

925 Broad Street ♦ Bridgeport, CT 06604 ♦ (203) 576-7400

May 26, 2021 Minutes

ATTENDANCE: James O'Donnell, President; Thomas Errichetti, Secretary/Treasurer; Denise Clemons, Anne Cunningham; Donald Greenberg, Dr. Marcie Patton, Jeanette Munoz Allam

OTHERS: Elaine M. Braithwaite, City Librarian; John Soltis, Assistant City Librarian; Nykia Eaddy, Newfield Branch Manager; Sarah Santos, Administrative Assistant

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER & ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Director O'Donnell called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. He called the roll and announced there was a quorum.

Director O'Donnell said that he would like to amend the agenda to address the information regarding Westech Security along with a possible vote on the item.

**** DIRECTOR GREENBERG MOVED TO AMEND THE AGENDA TO INCLUDE INFORMATION REGARDING WESTECH SECURITY AND A POSSIBLE VOTE.**

**** DIRECTOR CLEMONS SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS.

APRIL 21, 2021

**** DIRECTOR ERRICHETTI MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 21, 2021 MEETING.**

**** DIRECTOR GREENBERG SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Ms. Braithwaite said that Summit Security was ratified for Security but was purchased by another company. Westech Security and Investigation, Inc was the alternate.

**** DIRECTOR CLEMONS MOVED TO APPROVE WESTECH SECURITY AND INVESTIGATION, INC.**

**** DIRECTOR PATTON SECONDED.**

Ms. Braithwaite was asked if this was a one year contract. She confirmed that it was.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE WESTECH SECURITY AND INVESTIGATION, INC. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**APPROVAL OF TREASURER REPORTS/ PAYMENT OF INVOICES/
APPROVAL OF LINE TRANSFERS**

• Status/Action to implement Library Re-Opening Plan

Ms. Braithwaite said that they would be restoring the regular hours as of June 1. The mask requirement is still in effect. They will be asking all patrons to sign in, provide contact information and confirm that they have not be in contact with anyone who had COVID within the past 14 days.

Discussion followed about how long the regular patrons can stay. Ms. Braithwaite said that she has instructed the staff not to time the patrons or harass them.

• Status/Action re Bookmobile and remote location services plan

Ms. Braithwaite said that she had emailed the party that was interested in purchasing the bookmobile but had not heard back yet.

• Status/Action of Task Force re Harriet Tubman Learning Center proposal

Director Clemons distributed a draft letter to Mr. Winston regarding the Harriet Tubman Learning Center. A discussion followed about the details of the program and how it would fit in with the Newfield Public Library programs. There were several suggestions made regarding the wording of the document.

• Budget Report

Director Errichetti stated that expenditures include iPads for use by Directors to access Board materials before and during Board Meetings.

**** DIRECTOR ERRICHETTI MOVED TO APPROVE THE EXPENDITURES OF \$67,496.80 AS ITEMIZED ON THE TENTATIVE BOARD VOUCHERS FOR MAY 26, 2021.**

**** DIRECTOR CLEMONS SECONDED**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Director Errichetti then reviewed the list of 2021-2022 vouchers on next three pages which would allow for Purchase Orders to be established as of the July 1, 2021. He noted that this was an amounts requested do not exceed the line items on the proposed 2021-2022 budget except for line 34, which exceeds the budgeted amount by \$2,500.00.

Director Errichetti was asked about the bus passes listed on line 40. Ms. Santos explained that they provide them for those who request them. The number of passes has been decreasing over the past few years.

**** DIRECTOR ERRICHETTI MOVED TO APPROVE THE BOARD VOUCHERS FY JULY 221-JUNE 2022 AS CORRECTED.**

**** DIRECTOR Greenberg SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Director Errichetti then reviewed the Endowment Report with the Board Members. He noted that \$40,000 had been paid to Ashlar Construction for work performed at Newfield expecting to be reimbursed from Ashlar Construction from a future construction requisition to the City. It appears the \$40,000 will not be repaid as anticipated

**** DIRECTOR ERRICHETTI MOVED TO REDUCE THE SEKERAK FUND BY \$40,000 USED TO PAY FOR NEWFIELD CONSTRUCTION.**

**** DIRECTOR CLEMONS SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** DIRECTOR ERRICHETTI MOVED TO CONSOLIDATE CERTAIN FUNDS INTO THE SEKERAK FUND WHICH ARE INTENDED TO BE USED AS SEED FUNDS FOR A POSSIBLE BRIDGEPORT LIBRARY FOUNDATION**

**** DIRECTOR CLEMONS SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Director Errichetti then reviewed the line item transfers.

**** DIRECTOR ERRICHETTI MOVED TO TRANSFER \$10,000 FROM MARKETING TO OTHER SERVICES TO COVER OTHER SERVICES THROUGH JUNE 30,2021.**

**** DIRECTOR PATTON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** DIRECTOR ERRICHETTI MOVED TO TRANSFER \$20,000 FROM MARKETING SERVICES TO BUILDING MAINTENANCE.**

**** DIRECTOR GREENBURG SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS, CONT'D.

- **Status/Action re applications to American Rescue Plan Programs and other grants.**

There was no new information to review.

CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS.

Acknowledgment of Children's Department gift in memory of Helen Liskov

Director O'Donnell said that they had received a donation for the Children's Department in honor of the former Bridgeport Library Board member Helen Liskov. This will be acknowledged.

There was a letter of commendation from Mr. Howard Seif who was always pleased with the level of service he experienced at the North Branch.

Ms. Braithwaite read the following into the record:

Dear Library Board Members:

As a lifelong Bridgeport resident, I have long enjoyed the services of the Bridgeport Public Library system. Unfortunately, I will be moving from Bridgeport and will no longer be a Bridgeport Library Card Holder. For these past 20 years or so, my library branch preference has been the North Branch because of the proximity my location and ease of off-street parking. What has made my use of the North Branch most enjoyable though is the staff. They have always been professional, courteous, warm and considerate. When I was recovering from surgery last year, they were very accommodating in helping to secure my reading requests. The Bridgeport Public Library system is well served by the dedicated staff at the North Branch. I will miss them.

Sincerely
Howard Seif

Director O'Donnell noted that often times, people do have similar feelings, but do not take the time to express it, so this note is much appreciated.

CITY LIBRARIAN REPORT.

• Presentation by staff

Ms. Braithwaite said that the only change other than the re-opening activities is that she and Ms. O'Connor have been recertified by the State Department for the passport acceptance program. There is another staff member who is currently undergoing the training. Once this is completed, the Library will be able to start up a passport acceptance program.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

• Personnel

• Status/Action re Job Descriptions/Table of organization

Director Greenberg said that there was not a quorum at the last meeting, but there was a discussion about the Table of Organization. The major focus was whether this organization was assigning positions by function or another method.

Ms. Braithwaite then gave a brief overview of how she was working on the potential staffing for Newfield.

Director O'Donnell said that they had discussed the issue of filling the positions at the last meeting because it was important to free up Ms. Braithwaite so she can turn her attention to her main job responsibilities.

• Status/Action re civil service action for IT and Marketing positions

Ms. Braithwaite said that she had contacted Mr. Amado regarding the two key positions of IT and Marketing. Director O'Donnell said that Ms. Braithwaite had included a template from the Darien Library for the Assistant Administrator position. She added that she was considering a position for planning system wide events.

Director Errichetti asked if the positions would require an MLS. Ms. Braithwaite said that the two positions would only require a Bachelor's degree.

• Buildings

• Status/Action re Newfield Certificate of Occupancy and opening

Director Errichetti reported the fire doors came in earlier in the day. The doors will be installed the following day. The fire inspection is scheduled for next week.

Director Clemons said that the President of the East End NRZ had been concerned because there were a number of rumors that the subcontractors had not been paid.

Director Errichetti replied that he had receipts for all the payments that have been made and there were no outstanding bills.

Director O'Donnell noted for the record that this discussion had been held previously and while they have been aware of the rumors regarding the lack of payments to various contractors, the source of these rumors appears to have originated with the contractor. He said that the record needed to be very clear regarding the fact the library was to be completed May of 2020. He said that the Board had been informed that an additional \$740,000 of COVID related increases for which there were no purchase orders, no change orders or other documentation, along with other materials ended up totaling \$1.4 million dollars. The Library Board, contrary to the written contract with Ashlar Construction Company for the guaranteed maximum price of \$6.2 million, ended up spending the additional \$1.4 million dollars and had no funds for the subcontractors that they contracted with. As a result, the Library paid the debts of the Ashlar Construction to satisfy the obligation to those contractors who had worked on the Newfield construction project. Not only has the Board not failed to pay, they have paid \$1.4 million dollars in excess of what the contract provided for and that the source of the loss of funds was with the Ashlar Construction.

Director O'Donnell instructed that the minutes should reflect that clearly so that anyone from the community who wonders why the certificate of occupancy, which is the obligation of the contractor who has been paid, and the subcontractors who have been paid, lies entirely with him and not with the Library.

A brief discussion followed.

• Status/Action re construction of Upper East Side

Director Errichetti said that the bid review was scheduled to start today. The scope and review will be reviewed in the coming days.

The property has been cleaned. There is one truck that parks there on Sundays but not at any other time. UI was putting up lighting in the parking lot as part of the Light the Night program to prevent dumping.

• Status/Action re solar projects for Burroughs/Saden and North

Director Errichetti said that an attorney was recommended by the City Attorney's Office and they have contacted the Green Bank about this. He said that they hoped to have a contract to review in the near future. The surplus will be sold. The North, the Park's Commission has given its blessing to have them installed at this library because they own the land. At Burroughs, the Library owns the land and building.

• Status/Action re Burroughs window replacement and first floor reconfiguration with Teen Marketplace and community room project

Director Errichetti is working with Ms. Braithwaite and Mr. Otero. He reviewed the reconfiguration plans with the Board Members. This project will be put out for an RFP.

The windows keep falling out of the panes. There will need to be a cost estimate for replacement. There is a company in Stratford that works with steel windows and may be able to address this issue. There may be decisions regarding whether they should be opening or permanently closed.

• Status/Action re Black Rock Main floor flooring replacement/lower level floor painting

Director Errichetti said that the carpeting needs to be replaced on the first floor. There are still flooding issues in the lower level, so they will simply paint the concrete floor.

Director Errichetti said he received a call from Council Member Rose Roman-Christy regarding the square footage of the floor at Reservoir. He reviewed the size of the various buildings with her. Council Member Rose Roman-Christy indicated that the Community thinks the proposed branch 9,000 square feet, 2,000 square feet more than the upper East Side location. He noted to her that part of the discussion was what the size of the parcel will allow.

Director O'Donnell noted that there were still discussing these issues with the gardening supporters and the political leaders in the district. He said that the Library is here to serve the needs of the community. They will do what needs to be done.

Director Errichetti reinforced that funding for the construction of this facility needs be funds other than Library funds.

• Finance

• Status/Action re 2021-2022 Budget

Director Errichetti then reviewed the details of the proposed 2021-2022 Budget. The Budget is based upon 1.3 mills of the net Grand List based upon a collection rate of 98% real and personal property and 84% vehicles. He then highlighted the costs that the Library is responsible for on the budget, including retiree medical, pension, medical, debt service, and the administrative fee that are allocations or calculations provided by OPM.

Director Errichetti explained he was suggesting \$950,000 as a reserve. This money can be used for unexpected expenditures or minor capital projects. He pointed out that there was an unrecorded liability for employee sick/vacation days, or the reserve could be used

to cover the liability if there was a fire at one of the libraries (for which there is a City deductible that the Library most likely would be responsible.)

A discussion followed regarding the maintenance budget.

**** DIRECTOR ERRICHETTI MOVED TO ADOPT THE BUDGET AS PRESENTED AND SUBMIT IT TO OPM FOR FY 2021/22.**

**** DIRECTOR CUNNINGHAM SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Director O'Donnell said that there could be an issue in that someone could point out that the Library had a surplus and attempt to reduce the mill rate allocation. The Library needs to be prepared to defend its current funding.

Director Errichetti reviewed the details regarding holding a referendum to change the Library's mill rate allocation.

- **Governance (Nominations)**
 - **Status/Action re recommended Policy revisions**

Director Cunningham said that Mr. Soltis had sent out a policy book. Mr. Soltis said that he had compiled a binder of existing policies. Those policies have been reviewed by the staff and approved by the Board. Director Cunningham asked if there were any additional policies that needed to be included. Director O'Donnell said that one of the issues might be naming rights.

- **Status/Action re Nominations for Directors and Officers at June Annual Meeting**

Director O'Donnell said that the June meeting is normally the Annual Meeting. Officers will be elected at the June meeting.

Director Cunningham said that she would not be serving another term. Director Errichetti said the new appointment must be registered either as an Independent or a Republican. Six current members are registered Democrats.

Director O'Donnell suggested that they have the nominating Committee review the other candidates that had applied for the previous vacancy.

- **Report Card on compliance with Strategic Plan**

Director O'Donnell said that he would work with Ms. Braithwaite to gauge activity in order to make the Strategic Plan more dynamic.

- **Marketing Committee**

- Status/Action re RPF/Q for retention of marketing firm/consultant

Director O'Donnell said this would depend on the Purchasing Department. Ms. Braithwaite agreed. A brief discussion followed about creating a Purchasing Committee.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY.

Director Errichetti reported that the garage is open, but did not know the hours.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to consider at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

Director O'Donnell adjourned the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services