



TOWN OF LEDYARD

Library Commission

Meeting Minutes

Bill Library
718 Colonel Ledyard Highway
Ledyard, Connecticut 06339

Gales Ferry Library
18 Hurlbutt Road
Gales Ferry, Connecticut 06335

Chair
John Bolduc

Regular Meeting

Monday, March 18, 2024

7:00 PM

Bill Library

Bill Library

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bolduc called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. at the Bill Library.

II. ROLL CALL

Present Chair John Bolduc
Commissioner Barbara Candler
Commissioner Brian Cronin
Commissioner Ralph Hightower
Commissioner Rebecca Nash
Commissioner Carol Ganz
Commissioner Elizabeth Rumery

Excused Commissioner Ellin Grenger
Commissioner Rolf Racich

In addition, the following were present:
Jennifer Smith - Library Director
Carmen Garcia-Irizarry - Town Council Liaison
Naomi Rodriguez - Town Council Chair
Sarah Desormier - Friends of the Ledyard Library President
Jan Dawson - Gales Ferry resident

III. RESIDENTS & PROPERTY OWNERS COMMENTS

Chair Bolduc welcomed both Ms. Desormier and Ms. Dawson. Chair Bolduc decided that they will make their comments when the agenda items are discussed.

IV. PRESENTATIONS / INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Stacey Burt: Assistant Librarian I - Youth Services

Stacey Burt, known to our patrons as Mrs. Burt, made a presentation about Youth Services at the Ledyard Public Library. Mrs. Burt started off discussing how her goal is to get books into children's hands. She chooses developmentally appropriate items, making sure to represent a diverse and inclusive collection.

In addition to selecting all items to add to the Children's and Teen collections, Mrs. Burt is also responsible for all the programming for kids ages 0-18 years old and their families. She spends money from the Library Commission to help support her programming initiatives. This also includes purchasing the prizes for the Summer Adventure Program which include items such as magnetic blocks, bouncy balls, JBL speaker, Moon Pals that comes with a book, Amazon gift cards, amongst others. This upcoming summer, everyone who logs three adventures will receive a drawstring bag with a button that has the library logo on it.

Mrs. Burt works hard to stretch her programming funding as far as possible and is grateful for partnering with CT Humanities. CT Humanities often covers 75% of the program and the library pays the remaining 25%. Some of the new programs offered over the last year with this partnership include Draw a Cartoon (special guest speaker as part of the graphic novel book club), Pete the Cat with Al DeCant (popular children's book character made a visit to read, sing, and kick-off the 2023 Summer Adventure Program), and Cool-ology (STEAM series of workshops).

The proposed Summer Adventure Program: Read, Make, Explore program calendar was shared. Mrs. Burt has an action packed, exciting summer planned for our Ledyard community! The summer program starts on June 15 and runs through August 17, 2024. Stay tuned for further details by signing up for the library e-newsletter on the website, or by following our library Facebook and Instagram pages @LedyardPublicLibrary. Mrs. Burt finished her presentation by showering all Commission members and attendees with bubbles!

Ms. Smith read aloud a post made to the Ledyard Community Resource Facebook page about a resident who was recently inquiring about which libraries in the Southeastern/Rhode Island border area have great children's sections including "toys and activities type stuff." Another resident who is a frequent flyer at the Ledyard Library wrote back saying: "Westerly library is gorgeous! They have a bilingual storytime once a month that is a lot of fun too. However, Mrs. Burt at the Ledyard Libraries is phenomenal. She runs a few different types of storytimes and always has activities going on for the kiddos. She works at both Ledyard Library locations, the Bill and the one in Gales Ferry. She builds really meaningful relationships with the patrons, and knows many of the children by name." Ms. Smith said she is very proud of the library staff because they all go above and beyond to make the library a welcoming, accessible, and inclusive space where everyone is invited to learn, discover, create, and connect.

V. MEMBER COMMENTS

None.

VI. REPORTS

1. Treasurer's Report

Mr. Hightower presented both the January and February Treasurer's reports.

In January, the Commission received a total of \$350.00 in donations and spent a total of \$1,421.06. The February report stated \$25.00 in donations were received while \$10,638.86 was

spent.

Since our last meeting in January, the Investment Working Group met with the Bill Library Association President and Treasurer to review library accounts. Ms. Smith was concerned that the Bill Library Association was holding Library Commission money unbeknownst to the Commission. She called a meeting to simply discuss the funds and learn about the history of why the accounts were set up in that way. It was decided that the Library Commission funds would be transferred to the professionally managed "Either Library" investment account so they can begin to earn more rather than sitting in the Dime Bank account earning next to nothing. That transfer of funding in the amount of around \$16,000.00 is in progress.

2. Director's Report

Ms. Smith presented both the February and March Director's report.

February 26, 2024 (Meeting canceled)

Budget News:

- The Mayor's budget is due early March followed by the budget presentation to Town Council later in March.

Library News:

- We are back to being fully staffed! The Library Technician II - Youth Services position has been filled. Jadzia Childs started February 12, 2024 and is off to a great start.
- I have exciting news to share regarding a recent grant application and a recent donation received.
- Our "Love Your Library" campaign is going well. Although we haven't brought in many monetary donations, we are definitely feeling the love from our community by all the wonderful hearts we received over the last several weeks!
- Four library staff members attended CPR and AED training and were certified this month.

Building News:

- Our HDMI cable broke which impacts usage of the AV equipment and projector at Bill Library. Matt, Assistant Librarian II, came up with a better solution and Public Works ran a Cat 6 cable in place of the long HDMI cable. The Cat 6 cable allows for a stronger connection over a longer distance. HDMI cables are now short and attached at each end. We are just waiting on a final piece to arrive and we should be back up and running. This equipment is aging and I am going to keep an eye out for a way to upgrade the entire system.

Reminder - ACLB upcoming webinar on What is DEI and what does it mean for libraries?

Wednesday, February 28, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Register through the ACLB website - <https://aclb.wildapricot.org/>

March 18, 2024

Budget News:

- I attended the Library budget work session on Thursday, March 14, 2024. Thank you to

those who were there virtually for support.

Library News:

- The Ledyard Public Library is one of 50 recipients in Round 2 of the Libraries Transforming Communities grant in the amount of \$20,000. This grant was written to replace the Bill Library circulation desk with a brand new ADA accessible desk.
- I was recently notified by the Community Foundation of Eastern CT that the Ledyard Public Library is part of a large bequest left by Joan D. Hauptfeld. We received a check for \$2,366.56 that is a designated grant to provide programmatic support (it is not for administrative purposes). If all continues to go well, we should be receiving this grant each year moving forward.

Building News:

- I am working with the Public Works team to replace the columns/pillars at the entrance of Gales Ferry Library.

3. Friends of the Ledyard Library Report

Ms. Desormier, President of the Friends, presented the Friends report this month. General elections for the Friends are open including Secretary, Member-at-Large, and a Vice-President. The Friends will meet next month on April 11, 7:15 p.m. at the Ledyard Bill Library.

4. Investment Working Group

No report on the investments. Mr. Bolduc noted we will have a report for the April meeting.

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of the Library Commission meeting from January 22, 2024.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Rebecca Nash

SECONDER: Carol Ganz

AYE 7 Bolduc Candler Cronin Hightower Nash Ganz Rumery

EXCUSED 2 Grenger Racich

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

1. Consortium Update

Ms. Dawson began by saying she understands Ms. Smith's comment about being good stewards of taxpayers money and periodically reviewing whether the best consortium service is still being provided for the cost is important. However, Ms. Dawson has concerns and additional questions to bring to the Commission.

First, Ms. Dawson asked what would happen to the library website and email addresses? She stated new library cards had been purchased and wondered if those would need to be purchased again. If so, what are the costs? She mentioned LCI doesn't host websites. Can we keep our website name? What is the cost? She referred to the 2017 budget cuts mentioning specifically the cut to the book budget. How often do we take the cheap route only to discover we didn't get

the same bang for our buck. Ms. Dawson wants to know what is currently covered by LION, but not LCI. She is concerned that a switch to another consortium will cost the library more or that we would be paying the same as LION. Would the library have to hire for IT services? Right now Ledyard receives four LION deliveries per week and LCI would provide two. She noted our patrons rely on the deliveries when requesting items from other libraries and wondered if LCI would be more frustrating for patrons than LION. She concluded by asking Library Commission members to do their research and not just Director Smith.

Ms. Ganz thanked Ms. Dawson for all the work she put into this. Ms. Ganz suggested to have a committee to look at all the factors side by side comparing both consortiums and their costs.

Commissioners discussed LION's computer replacement program. There are many questions about it. It is unknown how many computers the library should receive and during which time frame. Ms. Smith has specifically reached out to LION on this very question multiple times and has received different answers which makes it frustrating for staff and also challenging for budgetary planning. Several of the library computers are running on Windows 10 or older versions. It was made known that Windows 10 will stop being supported by Microsoft on October 14, 2025. Ms. Smith is concerned that more than 12 of the current 28 library computers are running on Windows 10. As the library updates the technology, Ms. Smith believes that IT needs will decrease mentioning that several of the IT calls to LION over the past few years have been linked to old and outdated technology.

Councilor Rodriguez asked how many computers the library has that were provided by the town and how many by LION. Ms. Smith noted that the town just funded four new desktop computers this year, but would need to verify numbers beyond that.

Ms. Smith will seek out additional information to confirm what the town's IT personnel might be able to take on and help with the library's IT in the future.

Ms. Desormier mentioned that the town website is not very user friendly and when doing searches old information shows up.

LION provides support regarding overdue notices and hold notices. Would this be the case if we switched consortiums?

Ms. Dawson mentioned that LION has installed all the computers at the library.

Chair Bolduc also discussed how many books have been banned nationwide. It is good that the Collection Management Policy was revised within the past year.

Chair Bolduc entertained the following motion.

Motion to create a working group to evaluate the different consortiums composed of Commissioner Brian Cronin, Commissioner Carol Ganz, Jan Dawson, and Director Jen Smith as an ex-officio.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: John Bolduc

SECONDER: Brian Cronin

AYE 7 Bolduc Candler Cronin Hightower Nash Ganz Rumery

EXCUSED 2 Grenger Racich

XI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Motion to approve the draft changes to the Community Meeting Room Regulations/Policy.

Wording is being changed so the meeting room/basement at Gales Ferry can be used by groups for two additional sessions (totaling four series in a given year).

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Ralph Hightower

SECONDER: Rebecca Nash

AYE 7 Bolduc Candler Cronin Hightower Nash Ganz Rumery

EXCUSED 2 Grenger Racich

2. Motion to add an exception to item 1b from the Community Meeting Room Regulations of the Ledyard Public Library stating that exceptions, in consultation with the library director, can be made for fundraising events sponsored by the Friends of the Ledyard Library.

The Friends of the Library holds two major fundraiser events a year. They would like to book the room more than 90 days before an event. Ms. Desormier explained that the Friends of the Library needs to plan events in advance and planning becomes difficult when it is unknown if the rooms cannot be scheduled ahead of time.

Ms. Smith wants to work with and support the Friends as they work hard to fundraise on behalf of the library. Ms. Smith understands the need for the Friends to plan ahead so these major fundraising events can be properly advertised. However, Ms. Smith questioned the Commission as to what are we prioritizing, the mission of the library (programming, library display space, availability of community meeting space etc.), or fundraising? Ms. Smith is concerned that these Friends fundraisers, while successful and profitable, really impact library services. Do these fundraising events need to stretch as long as they have in the past or can the Friends continue be as successful over a shorter period of time? Thus, creating a win-win situation for the Friends (less days of scheduling volunteers to staff an event) and the library (freeing up our only community space at Bill Library for programming, and group meetings). Ms. Smith questioned Ms. Desormier about the busyness of each day of the annual book sale that last year took up 17 days including set up, clean up, and the actual sale. Although Ms. Desormier didn't have the actual statistics with her, she remembered for each day of the book sale (which was open this past year for 10 days), the Friends made at least \$100.00 per day. When the price dropped down to 25 cents per item, the profit was a bit more than \$100.00 per day.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Carol Ganz

SECONDER: Rebecca Nash

AYE 7 Bolduc Candler Cronin Hightower Nash Ganz Rumery

EXCUSED 2 Grenger Racich

Councilor Rodriguez thanked Mrs. Burt for her involvement in planning a Black History program at the library. She also thanked Mr. Hightower for his participation as a judge in the Black History poetry/essay contest for Ledyard students. Mr. Hightower dedicated over four hours of his time volunteering and never once complained.

Mr. Hightower commented the library did a nice job making frequent social media posts highlighting Black History month. He would love to see the same support and recognition to all groups in the future such as Women's History month.

Mr. Cronin apologized to Commission members for being absent last month.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Nash moved the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Mr. Hightower.

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

VOTE: 7-0 Approved and so declared

The next Library Commission meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 15, 2024 at the Bill Library.

Respectively Submitted,

John Bolduc
Library Commission Chair

DISCLAIMER: Although we try to be timely and accurate these are not official records of the Town.