

**WEST HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD AGENDA
VIRTUAL MEETING**

Monday, March 28, 2022 - 6:30 p.m.

**This meeting can be viewed live on West Hartford Community Television at
www.whctv.org and www.youtube.com/whctv5**

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. PUBLIC COMMENT
3. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA (Items 4, & 8ai, 8aai)
4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES of the MEETING of February 28, 2022.
5. PRESIDENT'S REPORT
6. OLD BUSINESS
 - a. Staff Spotlight – Rebecca Nugent
 - b. FY2023 Budget Update
 - c. Staff Professional Development Update
 - d. Library Issues and Trends – Ebook bill update
7. NEW BUSINESS
8. DIRECTOR'S REPORTS
 - a. February submitted:
 - i. Library Administrative report
 - ii. Budget report
 - iii. Monthly statistics & trends
 - b. Current Monthly Briefing
9. ADJOURNMENT
 - a. Next Meeting is scheduled for April 25, 2022.

Individuals who wish to comment on an agenda item, may do so by sending an email to Board@westhartfordlibrary.org on or before March 25, 2022.

Any Individual With A Disability Who Needs Special Assistance To Participate In The Meeting Should Contact Suzanne Oslander, Department of Social Services 561-7580, Five Day Prior To The Meeting

WEST HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES
Monday, February, 2022 6:30 p.m.
VIRTUAL MEETING

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Jill Spear called the Library Board to order at 6:44 p.m. Present, via Town of West Hartford WebEx, were Board members Kim Cohen, Eileen Daly, Gail Crockett, Dr. Natalia Menjivar and Jill Spear, Library Director Laura Irmscher, and Janet Valencis, recorder.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT - none

3. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA (Items 4 & 8a i, 8a ii)

MOTION: On a motion made by Gail Crockett and seconded by Kim Cohen, the Board unanimously approved the Consent Agenda.

4. THE MEETING MINUTES of January 24, 2022 were approved as part of the consent agenda.

5. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

a. Election of Officers

MOTION: On a motion made by Gail Crockett and seconded by Natalia Menjivar, the board unanimously elected Eileen Daly as the Board Chair.

MOTION: On a motion made by Natalia Menjivar and seconded by Kim Cohen, the board unanimously elected Gail Crockett as the Board Vice Chair.

MOTION: On a motion made by Natalia Menjivar and seconded by Gail Crockett, the board unanimously elected Kim Cohen as the Board Secretary.

Chair: Eileen Daly
Vice Chair: Gail Crockett
Secretary: Kim Cohen

Jill Spear was thanked for her leadership as Chair in this very busy time for the Library Board.

6. OLD BUSINESS:

a. FY2023 Budget Update

Laura provided an update on the budget process. The town manager gave positive feedback on the submitted budget. The budgets will be presented to the Town Council on March 8th and there will be a public hearing on March 16th.

b. New Community Center and Library Branch

Laura updated the board on the progress of the new community center.

c. Community Outreach

A Juneteenth curated Art Show will be held. The Storytelling Committee is planning three events to honor Gertrude Blanks, a local storyteller.

d. Staff Professional Development Update

The staff professional development committee recently offered staff a webinar on customer service. They are looking into On-Demand training for staff and a staff day is planned for May.

7. NEW BUSINESS

a. Staff Spotlight

This is a new agenda item. Each month a staff member will be invited to attend the Board meeting and provide information to the board about what their department does. This will begin in March.

b. Library Issues and Trends

Laura updated the Board on a recently drafted bill that was introduced in the Connecticut General Assembly to address e-book and e-audiobook prices for libraries. The bill is named S.B. No. 131 – An Act Concerning Electronic Book Licensing. If passed into law, the bill would require publishers of electronic books to license such books to public libraries on reasonable terms. Libraries have faced challenges over the last several years with regard to digital content. Publishers have been changing the licensing terms, raising prices for libraries, and in some cases refusing to sell to libraries. Many in the library community have been advocating their state governments to take action, and the Connecticut bill comes as 7 other states are either voting on or considering bills of their own.

8. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

a. January Report, submitted:

- i. Library Administrative Report
- ii. Budget Report
- iii. Circulation Statistics (issued quarterly)

b. Current Month Briefing.

Laura thanked Carol Waxman for her efforts as interim director. Laura commended the staff on their welcoming attitude when she arrived and the high esteem that town employees and patrons have for them.

Laura has been meeting with staff and shadowing staff members to learn about the organization. She has placed her first order for the Collection and is looking forward to her first shift on the Reference Desk in the near future. Laura is becoming familiar with other library directors in the area, LCI, our library consortium and the CT Library Consortium.

Patron attendance in January has increased 11% from last January. As of February 28, 2022 masks will no longer be required except or in person children's programming for ages 5 and under. In person programming will resume but we will continue the use of virtual and hybrid programming.

9. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: The Library Board Meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:36 pm. The next scheduled Board Meeting is March 28, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Cohen
Board Secretary

"This meeting was held remotely in accordance with Governor Lamont's executive orders concerning the conduct of virtual meetings and proceedings and the public had the ability to view the meeting in real-time on West Hartford Community Interactive: Comcast Channel 96, Frontier TV Channel 6099, and streaming on the WHCI website."

Town of West Hartford
Library Expenditures
FY22 February 2022

	<u>GENERAL FUND</u>				
	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>ENCUMBERED</u>	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>BALANCE</u>	<u>% OF BUDGET SPENT</u>
<u>Expenditures</u>					
Library Personal Expenses	\$2,379,131.00		\$1,417,557.39	\$961,573.61	60%
Library Non Personal Expenses	\$652,637.00		\$421,408.39	\$231,228.61	65%
Social Security Expenses	\$ 179,342.00		\$ 95,478.90	\$83,863.10	53%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES FUND 1	\$3,211,110.00		\$1,934,444.68	\$1,276,665.32	60%

February 2022 Administrative Report

Library Statistics

- Total Circulation: 40,340
- Smart Locker: 118 locker retrievals; 93 unique users
- Curbside appointments: 136 (NWL)
- New Cards: 201 (NWL)
- Study Pod Reservations: 48
- Collection Items Added: 2,486 (includes 1,071 downloadable records)

Reopening

The Library has updated mask requirements to align with the public schools and other Town Departments. As of February 28, masks are no longer required in library buildings for fully vaccinated individuals. The Library will continue to require masks for attendees of children's programs geared toward children under 5.

Budget

The Town has been compiling budget submissions from all departments and will present the draft budget to the Town Council. The library submitted a budget that was similar to last year, but included annual payroll increases plus a vacant position that was unfunded this current year. Carol and Laura met with Town officials to review the Library's budget submission. Overall the Town gave positive feedback for the library's responsible budget. Acting Town Manager Rick Ledwith will present the Town's budget to Town Council on March 8. On March 16 there will be a Public Hearing on the budget.

Community Center/Library Project

The Town is moving forward on selecting an architect for the Functional Program Development and Facility Feasibility Study. The top 5 firms that responded to the Town's RFP were brought in for interviews over last 2 weeks. The firms were invited to make a formal presentation to introduce their project team, describe the approach they would take on this project, and highlight similar projects they have undertaken. The interview team included Laura Irmscher, Director of Library Services, Helen Rubino-Turco, Director of Leisure and Social Services, Robert Palmer, Director of Plant and Facilities Services, Peter Privitera, Director of Financial Services, and Rick Ledwith, Acting Town Manager. The interviews went very well. All 5 firms demonstrated a lot of interest in the project. The interview team is currently waiting on some follow up information from a few of the firms before making a final decision. Once the architect is selected, they will enter into a contract with the Town and work on building a timeline for the project. While this has been happening, the Town has also been contacting stakeholders to provide representatives for the Advisory Committee. The hope is to convene the committee in March.

Studio 20 South

In February, the library opened Studio 20 South - our highly-anticipated, technology studio. During this soft launch, staff prepared the equipment and became acclimated with the technology and studio procedures. [The Studio 20 South webpage](#) is now live on the site under Services and patrons can request to use the Studio by completing an online form. The Studio is open 18 hours a week and in the weeks ahead we'll be ramping up publicity.

Faxon Fun Returns

Faxon Fun 2022 will take place at the Faxon Branch Library for this summer. Children in grades 1-3 and grades 4-6 will meet separately in July with sessions of 2 weeks each. Twenty-five children will be registered for each session with staffing provided by 2 teen assistants, 2 interns and volunteers. Games, crafts and programs such as ukulele playing, zoo animals, art and science will be offered to each group. New paperback books will be distributed and snacks will be served. Registration will take place in-person at the Faxon Branch at 6:00 pm on May 18.

Community Outreach & Partnerships

Pramod attended meetings of the **Elmwood Business Association** and facilitated the **West Hartford Human Rights Commission virtual meeting**. Future meetings of this group may happen at Faxon Library if Town Hall meeting rooms are not available.

Golden Door, Center for Immigrants: Pramod continued meeting with Ellen Salzman-Fiske, founder president of GDCI, and Elizabeth Hanlon, who is teaching and leading the discussion for Building Connections: A Book Club for Immigrants. The third session of this series of classes will be held in person at Faxon Library, beginning Wednesday, April 14th, 2021 - 6:30 pm through 8 pm. This program is funded by Greater Hartford Community Fund. The Hartford Courant recently [published an article](#) about Building Connections Book Club.

Adult Services & Programs

Featured Programs (virtual)

- [Justice for Ethel Rosenberg](#)
 - Highest attended program, ever!
- Virtual Tour of Jane Austen's Home
 - Second highest attended program, ever!
- Modern and Contemporary Art Through the Metropolitan Museum of Art
- Films: Short Films About Black-Owned Businesses

Regular Programs (virtual)

- *The New Yorker* Magazine Group
- West Hartford Fiction Writers
- Connecticut Screenwriters
- Faxon Poets
- Fiber Arts Book Club

- *The Atlantic* Magazine Discussion
- Night Owls Book Group discussed *Sparks Like Stars* by Nadia Hashimi

Practice English in-person classes started in the Faxon Community Room Fridays from 10:00 – 11:30 am. There are eight students signed up for this program.

Lauren completed 19 notary signatures for 15 patrons (11 West Hartford patrons and 4 non-West Hartford patrons).

The Winter Reading Challenge concluded and raffle boxes were prepared. The majority of items in the boxes are from CT businesses. Three CT businesses donated items to the boxes: WeHa Candle Company, Wonderland, and Hilltop Apiaries.

In preparation for **West Hartford Reads!** programming, Lauren and Andrew met with the discussion leaders of the Gish Jen book groups to share resources and provide guidance on preparing for their book discussions. Lauren prepared background information on Gish Jen, with links to interesting articles, interviews, and book reviews.

Teen Services & Programs

Featured Programs (virtual)

- Teen Advisory Board
- Dungeons & Dragons
- Let's Talk College: The College Admissions Timeline
- Let's Talk College: SAT vs. ACT
- Mayor's Youth Council
- Make a BookMatch Contest

Kris Rimal from **Mayor's Youth Council** was selected to be a member of the new Elmwood Community Center Advisory Committee, which will likely start convening in March.

Teen Room assistants began working on projects including updating the Teen Book Lists page with spotlight books, creating a social media calendar for the teen Instagram account, and designing pronoun pins that teen staff and other library departments can wear.

Children's Services & Programs

Featured Programs

Baby Sign Language was offered to families virtually on January 24, 31 and February 7. Sign language instructor Colleen Brunetti shared basic ASL vocabulary through music and props. A supply list of simple household items was sent to recipients along with printable flashcards and song lyrics. Children ages infant through the age of 3 participated with their family.

Certified Yoga and Pilates Instructor Carrie Critton met children ages 3-5 online on four Wednesday mornings for yoga and stretching exercises.

Preschool children and their families met via Facebook for STEAM videos that included Snow Dough, Milk Magic, Valentine Fizzy Hearts, Salt Painting Process Art and Celebrate Dr. Seuss' Birthday with Oobleck.

Plans are underway for spring programming to transition to an in-person format offering Terrific Two's, STEAM Storytime, Crafts, Family Storytime, and Mother Goose on the Loose mid-March. Other programs scheduled are Lego Club, Marshmallow Madness and Food Explorers. Classes are limited to ten registrants who will continue to wear masks.

A 2022 Kids Fun Run sponsored by the West Hartford Public Library Foundation is in the planning stages. Bailey and Karen Polmatier are working with community partner Marianne Esposito and Library Foundation member Chuck Coursey to facilitate an event on the tracks of St. Joseph University. More information will be forthcoming as the planning progresses.

Summer Reading 2022 will feature the theme "Beyond the Beaten Path" with outdoor activities and challenges for students in Pre-K – Grade 5 in game board format. Children will keep track of books read on a reading path. Those who visit the West Hartford Libraries two weeks before school begins in September and turn in their game boards will receive a paperback book of their choice.

Carol was invited to visit the first grade classes at the Charter Oak International Academy on February 11 to discuss the role of a librarian in the community as part of their community workers unit.

Staff Development and Committees

The **Professional Development Committee** distributed WHPL mugs to all staff to raise awareness of the committee, communicate appreciation for all staff, and to serve as a reminder to focus on self-care and providing high quality customer service. The committee also highlighted a customer service webinar in late January, provided directions on using Museum Key, and spotlighted ArtistWorks, a new digital resource available to patrons. The Committee is currently working on spring offerings, including a staff day that is tentatively slated for May.

The **Art Committee** met to review information and discuss themes of upcoming art shows. Rebecca completed an inventory document of the art in the Noah Webster building and any information associated with each piece. The committee also discussed promoting the display case in the new book area to patrons to display their collections or art work. Sandy Hedderman from the CBT alumni association displayed memorabilia from the CBT bank. It will be on display throughout February.

Carol, Pramod, and Andrew met with West Hartford School Board member Jason Oliver Chang and Town Historian Tracey Wilson to plan for National Native American Heritage Month for November 2022.

Carol and Pramod met with WHPL Board member Gail Crockett and WHPL Foundation President Chuck Coursey to plan for Gertrude Blanks Recognition program MY STORY scheduled for June 16th, 2022.

Buildings

Faxon received an Arlo Go2 security camera for the parking lot. Pramod programmed the camera, and it needs to be mounted on the Faxon building wall facing the parking lot.