

WEST HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD AGENDA

VIRTUAL MEETING

Monday, June 27, 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, 8aii)
4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES of the MEETING of May 23, 2022
5. CHAIR'S REPORT
6. OLD BUSINESS
 - a. Gertrude Blanks Storytelling Event
 - b. Library Issues and Trends – Digital Equity
7. NEW BUSINESS
 - a. Summer meeting calendar
8. DIRECTOR'S REPORTS
 - a. April documents submitted:
 - i. Library Administrative report
 - ii. Budget report
 - b. Current Monthly Briefing
9. ADJOURNMENT
 - a. Next Meeting is scheduled for (to be determined at meeting).

**Individuals who wish to comment on an agenda item, may do so by sending an email to
Board@westhartfordlibrary.org on or before June 24, 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 Days Prior To The Meeting**

WEST HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES
Monday, May 23, 2022 6:30 p.m.
VIRTUAL MEETING

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Eileen Daly called the Library Board to order at 6:39 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. Staff member Maura Beaudreault was also present.

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 Jill Spear, the Board unanimously approved the Consent Agenda.

4. THE MEETING MINUTES of April 25, 2022 were approved as part of the consent agenda.

5. PRESIDENT'S REPORT - none

6. OLD BUSINESS:

a. Staff Spotlight – Maura Beaudreault – Programs and Publicity

Maura discussed their Brand Guide, Mailchimp software they use for the library newsletter and their program planning worksheet.

b. FY2023 Budget Update

The budget was passed but the Town Council did not fund the vacant Librarian 2 position. The library board will be sending a letter to Town Council members, showing their support for the library and the need for the unfunded position.

MOTION: On a motion made by Gail Crockett and seconded by Natalia Menjivar the Board unanimously approved the letter to be sent to the Town Council.

c. Staff Professional Development Update

The library was closed on Thursday May 12, 2022 for a staff development day. The day included speakers, demonstrations and department gatherings. The day was a success and staff were glad to be back together in a group setting, something that hasn't happened since the pandemic started.

7. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- a. April Report, submitted:
 - i. Library Administrative Report
 - ii. Budget Report
 - iii. Circulation Statistics (issued quarterly)
- b. Current Month Briefing.
 - i. The Mayors Youth Council was successful in getting New Street renamed to Dinah Road to honor two enslaved women.
 - ii. The library continues to work with the Fern Street Church to expand the backpack program.
 - iii. The Storytelling event to honor Gertrude Blanks on Jun 16, 2022 is in the final planning stages.
 - iv. The children's department hosted three ballet programs from different ballet companies this spring.
 - v. Faxon Fun is back and will happen this summer
 - vi. The Museum pass programs is adding several new museums to our offering.

8. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: The Library Board Meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:17 pm. The next scheduled Board Meeting is June 27, 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 May 2022

<u>GENERAL FUND</u>				
	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>ENCUMBERED</u>	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>BALANCE</u>
<u>Expenditures</u>				<u>% OF BUDGET SPENT</u>
Library Personal Expenses	\$2,379,131.00		\$2,087,254.08	\$291,876.92 88%
Library Non Personal Expenses	\$652,637.00		\$540,142.34	\$112,494.66 83%
Social Security Expenses	\$ 179,342.00		\$ 135,935.32	\$43,406.68 76%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES FUND 1	\$3,211,110.00		\$2,763,331.74	\$447,778.26 86%

May 2022 Administrative Report

Library Statistics

- Total Circulation: 51,110 (28% increase from May 2021)
- Smart Locker: 122 locker retrievals; 121 unique users
- Curbside appointments: 87
- New Cards: 201
- Study Pod Reservations: 51
- Collection Items Added: 2,183
- ILL: 18 requests to borrow; 34 items supplied to other libraries

Gertrude Blanks Storytelling Event

Laura, Pramod, and Carol continued to work with Gail Crockett, Jill Spear, and Chuck Coursey on the Board/Foundation Community Engagement Committee to plan the Gertrude Blanks Storytelling Event. The speaker program was finalized and Laura worked with the Programs & Publicity Team to develop the registration page and promotional material. Chuck Coursey reached out to West Hartford community groups to promote the event. The Reference Department created a webpage and compiled resources on storytelling to promote on a bookmark. Everyone is very excited for this first of its kind event at WHPL.

Community Center/Library Project

After meeting with Karen, Pramod, and Ellen to discuss needs and wants for the new Faxon Library, Laura met with Tecton Architects at Faxon. They reviewed the library's operation and potential changes staff would like to see in the new facility. This information will help the architects understand how the library is used as they start their work on the feasibility study. Tecton will staff a booth at Celebrate! West Hartford to gather community feedback. The first meeting of the Elmwood Community Center & Library Advisory Committee has been scheduled for June 30th at the Elmwood Community Center.

Mayor's Youth Council

On May 10, Kari Karp and Carol Waxman represented Mayor's Youth Council at the Town Council meeting. They read testimonies from Sarah Granquist and Priya Sinha (who were absent but have been working with Dr. Tracey Wilson and the Witness Stones Project for several months) asking the council to vote to change the name of New Street to Dinah Road. The council voted unanimously in favor of the street renaming. The Hartford Courant covered the project: <https://www.courant.com/community/west-hartford/hc-news-west-hartford-street-name-20220519-guupquxkszhstcztn3g432gd3a-story.html>.

On Saturday, May 14 Mayor's Youth Council Diversity subcommittee hosted a celebrate Diversity concert in Blue Back Square for their impact project. The concert featuring the student bands Yardbird Jazz Trio and '06. There were ~100 people at the event.

On Tuesday, May 17 Mayor's Youth Council's Mental Health Action & Awareness Committee interviewed Julia Tannenbaum (mental health activist & author of the YA series Changing Ways) and Chris Dutton from the Bridge Family Center about teen mental health. The conversation was recorded in Studio 20 South and can be found here:

<https://www.westhartfordlibrary.org/teens/mayors-youth-council/>

Applications for the 2022-2023 Mayor's Youth Council were due on Tuesday, May 31. Interviews will be scheduled for mid-June to fill 6 open seats.

Recruitment

This month we welcomed three new circulation assistants (Hannah Hokanson, Xavier Morales, and Ethan Poetsch) and one reference librarian (Janelle Walsh). Welcome to the team! We also began recruiting a full time Library Assistant position and look forward to interviewing candidates in June

Noah Webster

The Harc Organization has displayed their beautiful handmade jewelry, coasters, socks and greeting cards in the display case for the month of June. The Juneteenth Art exhibit has been curated and hung in the gallery for the months of June and July.

As part of the continued effort to refresh the entrance, staff switched the Fiction and Nonfiction sections in the New Book Area and created display signs that match the look of the existing signs. The entrance on S. Main St. was de-cluttered and rearranged, and the copy center equipment was moved closer to the public computers. Stay tuned as staff continue to freshen up this area and help to create a more welcoming experience for patrons.

Bishops Corner

The roof at Bishops Corner continues to leak in the back office. Silktown Roofing, Inc. inspected the roof of May 6th, repaired several seams on the cap sheet and unfortunately, the roof leaked again a few days after this work was completed.

May 9th marked the last day for our two Strive Academy student volunteers at Bishops Corner. Karen met with Anna Elfenbaum from WHPS to discuss more volunteering opportunities for Strive students at the library beginning in the fall.

Faxon

Ellen continues to work with her intern from Futures Inc on Wednesday mornings in order to sort delivery and book drops and prepare the building for opening. Futures Inc advocates equality for people with disabilities by advancing personalized opportunities so each person can live a life within our community.

Faxon received six new computers for public use. These computers replaced six old computers. There are ten public computers for adult cardholders and five computers for teen cardholders at Faxon.

In-person Faxon Fun registration began on May 18. About half the slots were filled the first day and the program is nearly at capacity. The program begins on July 5th.

Community Outreach & Partnerships

Laura reached out to the West Hartford African American Social & Cultural Organization (WHAASCO), Concerned Parents of Color WH, and met with Roszena Haskins and Shaena Gray from the West Hartford Public Schools' Office of Equity Advancement to explore partnerships with these organizations.

Pramod and Kari met with Ellen Salzman-Fiske, founder president of GDCL, Karen Dworski, L.C.S.W., M.S.W, Jose Diaz, United Action Connecticut to discuss and plan for a mental health information session specially designed to meet the needs of immigrants and also families helping immigrants. This program will be held virtually on June 7th from 6:30 – 7:30 pm.

Building Connections: Book Club for Immigrants- continued to meet in the Community Room every Wednesday from 6:30 – 8:00 pm. They are reading *The Magic Fish* by Trung Le Nguyen. Students will be going to Playhouse at Park to see a play on June 1st.

Notes from the Desk

Here are some stories and interactions our staff recently had with patrons at the library:

- Lauren did some research in the Local History room on Sarah Whitman Hooker for a member of the West Hartford chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Here is the patron's response to the research:
"This is unbelievably pertinent. In particular, to have the inscription language on Sarah Whitman Hooker's gravestone (which was vandalized) is vital to our project. Thank you very much for your time spent in researching these volumes."
- Michele Motta, program manager at Brookdale assisted living, sent an email letting me know how much her residents enjoy our Homebound Service: "Thank you once again for all the joy you are bringing to our residents through reading." We have 6 new homebound patrons from Brookdale.
- A patron recently explained how grateful she was for our collection of ebooks and eaudiobooks during the pandemic. She said she didn't know what she would have done without the library making the collection accessible during this time.
- An 83 year-old patron came to the desk and expressed thanks and gratitude for having public computers available. She said she had a really important document to print and this was the only place she could find that had the technology she needed. She also asked about one-on-one tech assistance and we let her know we're working on starting that back up soon.
- I had a very happy grandmother this morning when I was able to squeeze her grandson into story time even though she hadn't signed up. It was his first one and they both loved it. She said it was really interactive and lively and she was very grateful!

Adult Services & Programs

Featured Programs

- White Memorial Through the Seasons (virtual)
- Market Corrections and How They Affect My Retirement (in-person)

- Planning for Children with Special Needs – Now and in the Future (in-person)

Lauren launched the take and make craft series by offering the spring craft - a wreath decorated with flowers, greenery, and ribbons. We announced the program in our newsletter and in less than four hours, all the kits were spoken for. There will be three more crafts available, one for each of the remaining seasons left in the year.

Regular Programs

- *The New Yorker* magazine discussion group (virtual)
- WH FICTION WRITERS (virtual)
- Connecticut Screenwriters (virtual)
- Faxon Poets (virtual)
- Shakespeare Book Club (virtual)
- Fiber Arts Book Club (hybrid)
- *The Atlantic* magazine discussion group (virtual)
- Night Owls Book Group (virtual)

Updates

The Passport program ended on April 30. NWL handed out 11 Adult passports and 2 children's passports, and stamped 120 adult passports and 49 children's passports. 7 participants turned in passports at the conclusion of the program for us to submit to the Woodbury Library for the final raffle.

Teen Services & Programs

Updates

- On May 4th, Teen Advisory Board celebrated its graduation ceremony. In 2021-2022, the 11 TAB members performed 116 hours of community service by attending meetings, facilitating YA programs, writing book reviews, and creating Instagram content.
- The Teen Department announced winners of the Teen Poetry Contest on Monday, May 23 <https://www.westhartfordlibrary.org/teens/writing-contest-winners/>

Children's Services & Programs

Featured Programs

Families attended a Meet a Ballerina event on May 23. The Hartt Dance Division of the University of Hartford presented a modified dance class and an opportunity to meet a professional ballerina for dancing and photo opportunities.

June programs will include a full schedule of “one offs” in all buildings that include Glow Bubbles, Stomp Rockets, Backyard Bingo, Lawn Games, Tween Tech, Painting Party, Sand Art, Safari Animal Story and Craft, July 4th Lanterns, Hovercrafts and a Teddy Bear Campout (overnight for the teddy bears). Programs include both registered and drop-ins.

Updates

A Children’s Art Banner contest is planned to decorate the light poles in West Hartford Center. This is a partnership project between the West Hartford Public Library and the West Hartford Parking Authority. Submissions from children ages 3 through middle school will take place June 27 – July 8 with contest winners announced July 18. Art will be displayed in August. Children are requested to draw a picture of “My Happy Place”.

A West Hartford Pride Children’s Celebration Exhibit will be on display at the Noah Webster Library from June 22 – July 2, 2022. Accepted media may include painting, poetry, drawing, photography, graphics, fiber and printmaking. The theme of the exhibit is “My Family”. Artists may submit up to 2 works.

The West Hartford Library Babies program has begun, after being developed in 2020 and stalled due to the pandemic. Parents may come to any West Hartford Library to receive a “Baby’s First Library Visit” certificate for infants – age 18 months, a booklet of information, a board book reading list and Baby Bingo game. The certificate and booklet will be translated into Spanish, Portuguese, and Arabic. Upon completion of the Bingo board, the babies will receive a tote bag. This program was funded by the West Hartford Library Foundation.

Staff Development

On Thursday, May 12, library staff gathered for Spring Staff Day at the Noah Webster Library. The keynote speaker, Brian Miller, gave a presentation on building helpful connections with patrons to improve customer service. The day also included department meetings, Studio 20 South Tours, customer service workshops from the Disney Institute, and a visit from Sam Cook, Assistant Director for Systems and User Services at LCI, who shared out about new technologies (specifically MeeScan, an app that will allow patrons to check out materials on their phone, and the new LCIMobile app which provides patrons with information about the library and their library account).

13 library staff members attended the 2022 CLA Annual Conference. The event theme was Back to the Future and staff members attended various workshops related to collection development, technology, informational resources, innovative programming and services, library management and policy, advocacy, marketing, cataloging, digital literacy, diversity, equity and inclusion, and more.