

WEST HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES
Monday, January 22, 2024 6:30 p.m.
VIRTUAL MEETING

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Eileen Daly called the Library Board to order at 6:35 p.m. Present, virtually, were Board members Kim Cohen, Eileen Daly, Gail Crockett, Natalia Menjivar, and EJ Greenspan, Library Director Laura Irmscher, and Heidi Reagan, recorder.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT - none

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

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

4. THE MEETING MINUTES of November 27, 2023 were approved as part of the consent agenda.

5. CHAIR'S REPORT

- a. Election of Officers – Eileen Daly
 - i. Gail Crockett – Chair
 - ii. EJ Greenspan – Vice Chair
 - iii. Kim Cohen – Secretary

MOTION: On a motion made by Natalia Menjivar and seconded by Kim Cohen, the Board unanimously approved the slate of officers.

6. OLD BUSINESS:

- a. Draft Strategic Plan – Laura Irmscher
 - i. The mission statement remained the same except for the addition of the word “resources”.
 - ii. Some ideas heard for the mission were incorporated into the Vision Statement
 - iii. Five Strategic Initiatives were developed to represent the core of what people told us they want for the library and what we’ve been striving to do over the last few years
 - iv. The plan reflects what was learned during the planning process as well as what the Board and the Town have shared with Laura since becoming Director
 - v. Once the plan is approved, Laura will work with staff to create an action plan to achieve the goals over the next four years
 - vi. Laura will provide regular updates to the Board of progress made

MOTION: On a motion made by Kim Cohen and seconded by Natalia Menjivar, the Board unanimously approved the final version of the Strategic Plan.

- b. New Community Center Update – Laura Irmischer
 - i. The selection process for an architect is nearing the final stages
 - ii. Pricing proposals from the top three are being considered
 - iii. Problems with the Faxon Library building continue
 - 1. The basement floods when it rains
 - 2. An issue with the heating lead to closing the library today
 - 3. These issues are a regular reminder of the importance of this project.

7. NEW BUSINESS

- a. FY 25 Budget – Laura Irmischer
 - i. The FY25 budget was submitted to the town on January 3
 - 1. Personnel costs have increased based on contractual obligations and increases in minimum wage levels
 - 2. Operating costs were kept level
 - 3. A \$40k increase was requested for the Collections budget to fund ematerials
 - a. This is reflective of the high cost and high demand for these materials
 - b. The Collections budget has remained flat for five years (it was higher in 2018) and the circulation of ematerials has increased 163% during that time period.
 - ii. Laura will meet with the Town Manager and Finance Director to review the submission and then it will go to Town Council for approval
- b. Annual Report – Laura Irmischer
 - i. This document is a reflection of the many things the library staff has achieved in the past year
 - ii. Thanks go to the library staff for their accomplishments and the P&P Dept. for designing the report
 - iii. The theme is “Welcome Back”
 - 1. By going fine free we are welcoming those who weren’t coming to the library due to outstanding fines
 - 2. Offered numerous big events that brought the community together and focused on an increased focus on in-person programming

8. DIRECTOR’S REPORTS

- a. November and December documents submitted
 - i. Library Administrative Reports
 - ii. Budget Report
 - iii. Quarterly Statistics
- b. Current Month Briefing.

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a. Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Section 1-200(6)(A) to discuss the annual performance and evaluation of the West Hartford Public Library Director, Laura Irmischer.

MOTION: On a motion made by Kim Cohen and seconded by Natalia Menjivar, the Board went into Executive Session at 7:02pm.

Board members Kim Cohen, Eileen Daly, Gail Crockett, Natalia Menjivar and EJ Greenspan as well as Library Director Laura Irmischer attended the executive session.

The board returned to the regular meeting at 7:36 pm.

10. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: The Library Board Meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:38 pm. The next scheduled Board Meeting is February 26, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Cohen
Board Secretary

"This meeting was held remotely and the public had the ability to view the meeting in real-time live on West Hartford Community Television at www.whctv.org and www.youtube.com/whctv5."