



**Special Board Meeting  
Russell Library Hubbard Room  
Thursday, February 14, 2019**

**Present:** Trustees Becker, Berlind, Duggan, Nelson, Russell, Wisneski, and Zawisky; Library Director Burkey; Friends President Howard Rulnick

**Excused:** Trustees Hadley, Murdock, Norwood

1. **Call to Order:** Acting President Wisneski called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.  
**Mission Moment:** Board President Wisneski spoke of the joyful atmosphere at a recent song-dance-spoken word event featuring Nekita Waller, and Library Director Burkey mentioned recent jobs group successes reported by Jeff Thierfeld and Bob Carlson as example of Russell Library carrying out its mission.
2. **Public Session/Comment:** Howard Rulnick, President of the Friends of Russell Library, made a plea to Board members to support the Friends by joining. Trustee Russell immediately wrote a check for yearly dues and presented it to President Rulnick.
3. **Approval of Minutes:** It was moved (Trustee Becker) and seconded (Trustee Nelson) to accept the minutes of the January 15, 2019 Regular Board Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.
4. **Administration Report – Ramona Burkey, Library Director**  
**Programs and Services**
  - Our new online Events calendar is live. It has a cleaner, simpler, and more up-to-date look (and is mobile-friendly).
  - As previously reported, we will be restoring full Saturday hours as of March 4. We will be open from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays year-round (we are currently open from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. only). Our new schedule of hours, then, is as follows:
    - Mon – Thu 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
    - Fri 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
    - Sat 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
    - Sun (Oct-Mar) 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**Personnel**

- The deadline for applications for the Manager of Borrowing and Discovery position is Friday, February 8. We anticipate starting the interview process in late February or early March.
- The American Library Association has asked me to attend a Legislative Fly-In to Washington, D.C. from February 24-26, all expenses paid. I will be speaking to legislators on Capitol Hill about the local impact of federal library funding.
- We have advertised for a part-time security guard to help cover our additional operating hours and provide backup coverage. This does not affect our total staff count, however, since we did not replace a part-time position that became vacant last November.

## **Facilities**

- The LED lighting upgrade is nearly complete, although there were a couple of slight delays with materials orders. We anticipate completion in late February or early March. Please take a look at the lighting in the Lobby (where work is still ongoing) so you can compare the old-style lighting/bulbs with the new; it's a big (and brighter) change.
- Our managed wireless upgrade will be complete by mid-March. This will represent a huge improvement to the quality of wireless access available to our patrons and staff.
- We would like to consider temporarily closing off the single-stall restrooms in the Information department, for a variety of reasons. If it becomes problematic, we can consider reopening them.
- We had a burst pipe on Saturday 2/2 in the Hitchcock Room in the basement. The good news is that our phone panel was not damaged, but the bad news is that our Friends of the Library lost several carts of sorted books that had been intended for the book sale. The pipe has been repaired.
- Robb Prchal, our Manager of Property Maintenance and Security, will be joining the Mayor's Homelessness Task Force, since we serve many of our community's most vulnerable members daily.
- We will likely request Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to replace the extremely-worn carpeting in the Information department upstairs.

## **Financial**

- I will submit the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 operating budget request to the City by the February 15 deadline, pending Board approval. It was approved by the Finance Committee at their meeting on January 17.
- I discussed the Library's Five-Year Capital Non-Recurring (CNR) budget request with the Finance and Government Operations Committee of the Common Council on January 30; they seemed receptive to our requests, but the CNR budget has to be approved by the full Council.

## **Policies and Planning**

### **Community Engagements/Meetings**

- I attended the following (*does not include internal/staff meetings*):
  - Chamber of Commerce Legislative Breakfast
  - Meeting with Jennifer Keohane, director of CT Library Consortium
  - Women in Leadership networking breakfast
  - POCD Steering Committee meeting
  - Strategic Planning Committee meeting
  - Meeting with Columbus House staff
  - Policy Committee meeting
  - Finance and Government Operations Committee
  - Technology Assessment meeting with Apex Tech Group
  - Common Council – Questions for Directors
  - Chamber of Commerce Central Business Bureau monthly meeting
  - CLA Board meeting

## **Friends of the Library**

- The next Friends of the Library book sale will be held in the Activity Room from Friday, March 8 through Sunday, March 10.

**5. Old Business:**

There was no old business.

**6. New Business:**

- a. Budget Request FY 2019-2020: Library Director Burkey presented the budget that she will bring before the City on February 15, adhering to the mayor's request that (except for full time salaries) all lines show a 0% increase. A 233% increase in Office Equipment Maintenance will allow for the purchase of new computers. The Finance Committee reviewed the budget at its January 17, 2019 meeting and voted to accept and bring the budget to the Board. It was moved (Trustee Becker) and seconded (Trustee Nelson) to approve the budget. The motion passed unanimously.
- b. Discussion of the Russell Library Statement: It was noted that there are mission statements on the library's website and in the Russell Company by-laws. It was decided that a workshop/retreat will be scheduled soon to develop a new mission statement, one that can evolve as the Strategic Planning moves forward.
- c. Scheduling a Strategic Planning/Board workshop: Library Director Burkey will send out a Doodle Poll to schedule this event.
- d. Committee Meeting Draft Minutes: There was a discussion of the desirability of including committee meeting draft minutes in the packet that goes out before Board meetings; the consensus was that it is useful to have these in written form to supplement the oral reports given at the Board meetings.

**7. Committee Reports and Recommendations:**

- a. Finance & Audit Committee Report: Trustee Becker reported that the Finance Committee had approved the FY 2019-2020 budget for presentation to the Board and voted to change signatories on the Liberty Bank account. Essex Financial Services will be notified to expect a withdrawal from the endowment to cover the budgeted income amount in the Russell Company budget. On February 27 the Finance Committee will meet with the auditors and with Essex Financial Services. The endowment has recovered most of the loss that occurred at the end of 2018.
- b. Policy Committee Report: Trustee Wisneski, Chair, presented the Revised Food and Drink Policy that was approved by the committee to present to the Board. It was moved (Trustee Berlind) and seconded (Trustee Duggan) to approve the Revised Food and Drink Policy. Under the policy, covered and capped drinks and wrapped food items are allowed in the library; alcohol is not allowed during hours of operation but may be allowed for fund-raisers or social gatherings authorized by library staff and occurring outside of operating hours.
- c. Facility Committee Report: There was nothing new to report.
- d. Human Resources Committee Report: Trustee Zawisky, Chair, reported that the committee will meet on February 28 to work on establishing goals for Library Director Burkey's evaluation.
- e. Nominating Committee Report: The committee is working on getting clarity from the City about the need for minority party representation on the Board and is waiting for suitable nominations from the City.
- f. Strategic Plan: Trustees Wisneski and Duggan, referring to the prior discussion of a mission statement, expressed the need to schedule a strategic planning/board workshop to work on the mission statement.

8. **Adjournment:** It was moved (Trustee Nelson) and seconded (Trustee Russell) to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

**Next regular board meeting:** Tuesday, March 19, 2019 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Wendy Berlind*

Wendy Berlind, Secretary