



**Board Meeting
Russell Library Hubbard Room
Tuesday, March 19, 2019**

Present: Trustees Becker, Berling, Duggan, Ford, Hadley, Murdock, Nelson (6:45), Norwood, Wisneski, and Zawisky; Library Director Burkey; staff member Ann Smith; Friends President Howard Rulnick; Sylvia Lecky

Excused: Trustees Russell, Fulton

1. **Call to Order:** Acting President Wisneski called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.
Mission Moment: Library Director Burkey spoke of the honor of representing Connecticut libraries and Russell Library in Washington DC where she met with aides of Connecticut Congress personnel. It was a reminder for advocates to stay in touch with legislators. Burkey mentioned also the happy experience of helping at the Friends' recent book sale.
2. **Public Session/Comment:** Howard Rulnick, President of the Friends of Russell Library, mentioned that the Friends' recent March book sale had been its most profitable ever, bringing in over \$2,000, and he thanked the Friends for their hard work.
3. **Approval of Minutes:** It was moved (Trustee Becker) and seconded (Trustee Duggan) to accept the minutes of the February 14, 2019 Special Board Meeting. The motion passed with Trustees Ford and Hadley abstaining.
**The February 14, 2019 minutes will be revoted on during the April 16 Board of Trustees meeting. This is due to the March 19, 2019 agenda not being properly posted in advance of the March meeting.*
4. **Administration Report** – Ramona Burkey, Library Director

Programs and Services

- We began our new schedule of hours on Saturday, March 9. We are now open Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., year-round.
- At least five patrons have reported to our Job and Career staff that they have accepted jobs in the past month. Kudos to staff members Christy Billings and Bob Carlson for the important work they are doing to help find meaningful employment for our residents!
- Our new website will debut in April. A link to the test site was sent out a few weeks ago to Board members over email. We welcome any and all feedback.

Personnel

- The Connecticut Library Association has awarded the Russell Library a statewide 2019 Publicity Award! Congratulations go especially to staff member Sue Honer, who created this beautiful artwork for the Immigrant Artist Series:

Original artwork by Susan Honer

- I had the honor of attending a 2-day Legislative Fly-In to Washington, D.C. in late February, sponsored by the American Library Association. The first day consisted of seminars on working with legislators and the media, fostering economic development, and much more. The second day was spent on Capitol Hill meeting with key aides for Representatives Rosa DeLauro and Jahana Hayes, and Senators Dick Blumenthal and Chris Murphy. We brought up key points about how federal library funding translates to local results, such as jobs, education, and quality of life.
- Manager of Borrowing and Discovery: Still in the interview process.
- PT Security Guard: Still in the interview process.
- Aurora Santostefano has retired from her position as Library Page. We will miss her, and we wish her a happy and healthy retirement.



Facilities

- LED lighting retrofit project should be complete by the end of March.
- Managed wireless project should be complete by the end of March as well.

Financial

- Board members Wendy Berlind and Eamonn Wisneski, along with myself and Brandie Doyle, attended a brief but positive budget meeting in the Mayor's office on Monday, March 11. The next step will be a presentation to the Common Council, after the Mayor makes his adjustments to departments' budget requests.

Policies and Planning

Community Engagements/Meetings

- Taped a segment for iCRV radio station's "Feel Good Fridays" program – aired on 3/8/19.
- Met with Director of Kidcity Children's Museum
- Chamber of Commerce Central Business Bureau monthly meeting
- Volunteered at the Friends of the Library book sale on Saturday 3/9 – great fun!
- Met with Director of Middlesex United Way

Friends of the Library

- The Friends of the Library March book sale brought in nearly \$2,200 – a 68% increase over the Marcy 2018 sale! If you are not yet a member, please join the Friends today.

5. **Old Business:**

A board retreat to determine a mission statement for use in strategic planning was set for Wednesday, April 10, at 6:00 p.m.

6. **New Business:**

- a. Discuss Election of Officers: Trustee Duggan welcomed new Trustee Ed Ford to the Board and explained that newly appointed Trustee Shanay Fulton was unable to attend due to the flu. Trustee Ford introduced himself with a brief description of his education in Middletown and

his service on the Board of Education. Trustee Duggan reported that the committee is looking for a Board member to assume the mantle of Vice President.

- b. Motion to elect Trustee Wisneski as President: It was moved (Trustee Nelson) and seconded (Trustee Norwood) that Eamonn Wisneski be elected president. The motion passed unanimously. It was noted that this election holds until the annual Russell Library Company meeting in June.

**The election of Trustee Wisneski as President will be revoted on during the April 10 Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees. This is due to the March 19, 2019 agenda not being properly posted in advance of the March meeting.*

- c. Discussion of date of April Board meeting: Trustee Wisneski will be out of town for the regularly scheduled April meeting. It was agreed that in the absence of a Vice President, Treasurer Becker could serve as presiding officer for the April 16 meeting.

7. Committee Reports and Recommendations:

- a. Finance & Audit Committee Report: Trustee Becker reported that both the Company budget and city budget are on track, consistent with the passage of 66% of the fiscal year. The endowment has recovered almost \$20,000 since the end of January but will decrease once the interfund transfer of approximately \$50,000 is made as budgeted. The Finance Committee met February 27th and heard the auditors' report; it was completely satisfactory, but will have to be officially approved by the committee for presentation to the Board at a subsequent meeting as the item was not on the agenda for the February 27 meeting.
- b. Policy Committee Report: Trustee Wisneski, Chair, Reported that the committee has not meet in the past month but will do so before the April Board meeting, The by-laws should better distinguish between rules governing the Company and rules governing the Board of Trustees.
- c. Facility Committee Report: Trustee Nelson, Chair, remarked that this committee should serve as an ad hoc committee when major building and renovation projects are underway. He offered to recount the history of the building and its many additions and renovations at a subsequent board meeting.
- d. Human Resources Committee Report: Trustee Zawisky, Chair, reported that the committee met on February 28 and worked on establishing goals for Library Director Burkey's evaluation. The document will be circulated to the Board and will be used for the year-end evaluation.
- e. Nominating Committee Report: The committee met on February 26 and has welcomed two city-appointed trustees, Shanay Fulton and Ed Ford, to the Board. Still needed is a trustee who is a member of a non-majority party and has financial expertise.
- f. Strategic Plan: Trustee Wisneski will set up a meeting of this committee before April 10. It is the aim of the committee to firm up the basic plan so that a grant can be applied for in Aril to pay a consultant to oversee focus groups and other important aspects of the planning process.

8. **Adjournment**: It was moved (Trustee Norwood) and seconded (Trustee Ford) to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Next special board meeting: Wednesday, April 10, 2019, at 6:00 p.m.

Next regular board meeting: Tuesday, April 16, 2019, 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Berlind

Wendy Berlind, Secretary