

STRATFORD LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
MARCH 17, 2016

The Stratford Library Association Board of Trustees meeting was called to order by Board President Judy Hampel at 7:05 p.m.

Members Present:

Meg Bachtel

Tory Florek

Judith Hampel

Joseph Janucik

Barb Poisson

Peg Sheahan

Maria Ferrera

Thomas Hall

Doreen Jaekle

Deb Perman

Robyn Proto

Robert Smith

Members Absent:

Constantine Chagares, exc.

Karla Glad, exc.

Edvena Jackson, exc.

Joel Pleban, exc.

Jim Connor, exc.

Shelley Hall, exc.

Kim Kadeem, exc.

Cynthia Smith, exc.

Also attending: Sheri Szymanski, Director, Heather Silverman, Administrative Assistant and Colin Townsend, Youth Liaison.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Mrs. Hampel reported that she would like to set up a committee to review the By-Laws. She would also like to update the Library Board Committee assignments to better utilize the skills and strengths of each Board Member. Mrs. Hampel reminded each committee chair to submit annual committee reports prior to July 1, 2016.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Ms. Sheahan motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Ms. Bachtel and Mr. Smith and approved unanimously.

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Ms. Bachtel read a thank you letter from Ms. Szymanski for the beautiful floral arrangement sent in honor of her promotion to the position of Library Director. She looks forward to many years of working together.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Ms. Ferrera reported that the Town Operating budget is 69% spent through February. Expenses have been in line with normal spending. The budget adjustment, approved by the Board at the February meeting is now reflected in the budget. Ms. Ferrera also reported that the Board accounts represent income from fundraising for the Associates and the Gala. After review of the February Town and Board reports, Mr. Hall motioned for approval, seconded by Mrs. Proto and approved unanimously.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Ms. Szymanski reported that Sunday Afternoon Talks has been very successful. The most recent talk, *Gustave Whitehead: First in Flight* packed the Lovell Room with 88 people. The author, Susan Brinchman appeared via Skype. 27 people attended the screening of *Love Between the Covers*, which

highlights the very popular paperback romance genre. The Library and South End Community Center *Black History Month Celebration* was attended by 150 students, families, educators and community leaders. 222 essays, 17 poems and 11 pieces of artwork were entered in this year's contest. The winning essays were displayed at the Birdseye Complex the week of February 29th, along with Jeffrey Fletcher's *African American Collection*. Ms. Szymanski thanked the Board for their support of the exhibit and indicated that there is interest in bringing the exhibit to the Library next year. 224 children attended *Take Your Child to the Library Day* on February 6th. The theme was Charlie Brown and Snoopy. A representative from *The Literacy Center of CT* holds office hours in the Lobby every Wednesday meeting with both perspective tutors and students. Mild winter weather made it easier for patrons to visit the Library in February. Fiction, Biographies, and the Parents' Collection were all in heavy use. Music CDs and Playaways were also popular. The library offered 23% more programs compared to one year ago. Reference activity was up 16% over February 2015. This is due in part to an uptick in complex traditional reference questions. On February 16th, the Library Board hosted an orientation session for the new members of the Town Council. Board members and Councilpersons gathered in the Lovell Room for a quick review before participating in a tour of the Library. Also on February 16th, the Children's Department hosted a book launch party for *A Portal of Stories*, the book produced by participants in the Illustrated Book program series.

On February 17th, a public reception celebrating the retirement of Library Director, Barbara Blossveren, was well attended, with Mayor Harkins and other community leaders honoring Barbara.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Included in the Director's Report.

YOUTH LIAISON REPORT:

Mr. Townsend reported that the Teen Department will host a career fair, *What Are You Doing After High School* on March 19. Trade professionals will attend to give students an idea of what it is like to be in their respective fields. There will also be several demonstrations of the 3-D printer in the Teen Department at various times so students can attend. The *Black History Month Celebration* packed the Lovell Room. A bigger space will be needed for next year. The first 6th Grade *Finish Line* program will be held on April 14th from 6-7:30. 6th graders are invited to play games and work on crafts to get to know other teens before middle school.

BOARD OF EDUCATION LIAISON REPORT:

Mrs. Florek reported that she heard rave reviews about the *Black History Month Celebration*.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE:

Ms. Bachtel reported that our first time participating in *Fairfield County Giving Day* on March 10th was a success. Creative stations were set up in the Library to highlight the uCreate Space programming and included cupcake decorating, coloring, 3D printer demo and LittleBits. A fun time was had by all. The next Development Committee meeting is on March 29th at 6:30pm.

GALA COMMITTEE:

Mrs. Jaekle reported that ads are due on March 25th. Mrs. Jaekle encouraged all Board members to attend the *Let the Good Times Roll* gala on Saturday, April 16th at Oronoque Country Club. She also asked that everyone take a lawn sign to display at their house. Mrs. Perman reported that they are collecting wine and liquor from Board members for a silent auction basket, and that more gift certificates are needed. Please let Mrs. Perman and Mrs. Poisson know what you have solicited. Also, if you prefer, you can make a monetary contribution toward the purchase gift certificates for the silent auction.

FINANCE COMMITTEE:

No report.

BOOK COMMITTEE:

Mr. Hall reported that donations continue to come in. The book collection bin will be in the Lobby until May 23rd. Sorting continues every Saturday beginning at 1:15 through May. The Book Sale will run June 2 ó 5.

BUILDING AND GROUNDS:

Mr. Smith reported that the Ceiling/Lighting/Duct Work/HVAC project is 99% complete. He also reported that he has some sad news to share. In spite of many years of care and maintenance, working with an Arborist to save it, the Copper Beech tree located in front of the Library needs to be removed in order to ensure safe access to the Library. The wood from the tree will be salvaged, milled and repurposed for the Library.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW:

Mrs. Proto reported that the committee met and are reviewing Ms. Szymanski's contract.

GRIEVANCE/NEGOTIATIONS:

No report.

TRUSTEE REPORT:

No report.

ENDOWMENT:

No report.

NEW MEMBER COMMITTEE:

Ms. Bachtel reported that there will be a New Member Orientation scheduled in May.

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE:

Ms. Bachtel reported that the applications are due on April 20th and she hopes to hold a meeting to review applications and choose recipients on April 27th.

OLD BUSINESS:

No old business.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ms. Szymanski is seeking Board approval to close the Library on Saturday July 2nd. Mrs. Jaekle motioned for acceptance, seconded by Ms. Ferrera and approved unanimously.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Mr. Janucik to adjourn at 7:50 p.m., seconded by Mr. Smith and Mr. Hall and approved unanimously. The Board will meet next on April 21, 2016, in the Lovell Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meg Bachtel
Vice President

ANY INDIVIDUAL WITH A DISABILITY WHO NEEDS SPECIAL ASSISTANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MEETING SHOULD CONTACT THE ADA COORDINATOR, SUSAN PAWLUK AT 385-4020 OR 385-4022 (TDD) 5 DAYS BEFORE THE MEETING, IF POSSIBLE.