

**CITY OF NORWALK / NORWALK PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR MEETING / JANUARY 14, 2010**

ATTENDANCE: Stan Siegel, President; Mary Mann, Charles McMullen, Mary Pugh, Mohan Tracy, Jannie Williams

STAFF: Frank Ferro, Library Director; Christine Bradley, Assistant Library Director

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Siegel called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA / ACTION ITEMS

There were no additions to the agenda/action items.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM DECEMBER 10, 2009 MEETING

- ** MS. TRACY MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE DECEMBER 10, 2009 MEETING AS SUBMITTED.**
- ** MR. MCMULLEN SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Siegel stated that he had received a call from Mr. Vetter saying her son had just come home unexpectedly and if she would not be at the meeting, but to call her if she was needed for a quorum. He added that since there was a quorum, he would not need to call her to attend.

Mr. Siegel reported that the Mayor had appointed Mr. Artie Kassimis to the Board and that he has a strong IT background, which would be useful for the Board. Mr. Kassimis was voted upon unanimously at this week's Common Council meeting, and had wanted to attend tonight's meeting, but it was too short of a notice. He stated that he will be here next month and is very much looking forward to serving on the Board. In addition, Mr. Siegel and Ms. Pugh were re-appointed for another three year term and there were very heartfelt comments by the Common Council members in show of recognition of both Ms. Pugh and him, and they are very appreciative of their support and re-appointment.

Mr. Siegel stated that April 13 is the Library Association Library Workers Day and he asked for volunteers to work on an idea to develop a staff and Friends of the Library Board appreciation program. Ms. Pugh suggested

a “Read” poster for employees, and Mr. Ferro responded that this had been done and did become repetitive and something new would be preferred. Mr. Siegel added that it is difficult to coordinate everyone at the same day and location because not all staff members work the same schedule, but he felt it was important to recognize the staff especially the multi-talents that they have to offer. He added that at the same time the Friends want to recognize the staff, he wants the Board to recognize the Friends. Ms. Pugh agreed to work on it with Mr. Siegel to bring to the Board a recommendation for next month’s meeting.

Mr. Siegel stated that he attended the December Association of Connecticut Library Boards (ACLB), of which he is president, workshop that was well attended and a very effective presentation. Ms. Tracy added that it was an interactive workshop and found it enlightening and wanted the members to know that the Norwalk Board is up to standard. Mr. Ferro was also in attendance

TREASURER’S REPORT

Mr. Siegel stated that despite Ms. Toranno’s new appointment to another City Board, she was still helping Ms. Williams with the Wachovia situation. He noted that the investment account is up slightly, and the fund is in good shape, and he added that the attorney had been advised by Wachovia on settling the banking matter and hopes to have a resolution soon. Ms. Williams stated that she should have a full report by next month’s meeting, Mr. Siegel added that a comprehensive report would be provided at the next meeting.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Mr. Ferro stated that relative to the Children’s Dept. proposal for shelving and displays at the reference desk, he believed this had been previously authorized in the Operating Budget and that those designated funds should carry-over to this year. He is waiting for final approval from the Finance Department would discuss completion of the furniture purchase at the next meeting.

Mr. Ferro provided his written report and stated that recent donations received include \$500 from Stolt-Nielsen and \$100 from Phillip Oppenheimer. He highlighted that the monthly statistics relative to circulation borrowing for the year to date compared to last year. He added that the number of active borrowers has decreased slightly, and he expects there to be more usage now that school visits have increased. He added that there have been positive responses to school visits that many are now scheduled, which will build on enhancement of the goal of educating children and students to the benefits of the library.

Mr. Ferro added that relative to building maintenance, Mr. Shatler is doing a great job and has taken ownership of the building and comes in on his day off and is really an asset to the Library. He added that a storage unit will be delivered soon to accommodate items that needed to be moved and stored in a more secure location, as some items are hazardous. He added that the Connecticut Library Association (CLA) Conference is April 19-20.

Mr. Ferro stated that the operating budget has been submitted to the Finance Department with the initial meetings and stated that he has requested authorization to re-open Sunday hours, and additional building security. He added that his emphasis is security for the South Norwalk Branch, with an overall goal of maintaining services, but it is yet to be determined how much of an impact the City’s budget constraints will have on the Library’s budget requests.

Ms. Bradley stated that additional security is needed, as there has been an increase in usage of the Library by shelter residents. She added that she is looking forward to increased police presence (walk-through) and is open to training as how to handle potential awkward or disruptive situations.

Ms. Bradley went on to discuss her plans for the staff and community vision planning process, and submitted an outline of an upcoming NPL Staff Planning Retreat scheduled for January 27, 2010. Mr. Ferro stated that this is a challenging time but also a time of opportunity to reassess how to make a difference, to think, learn, and re-evaluate how the Library can do things better for the community.

Ms. Bradley said she was looking forward to the positive involvement of the staff, and noted that they have been especially helpful and cooperative with administrative duties. She added that she hoped Mr. Siegel would be able to attend the staff retreat, as it was an opportunity to discuss involvement by stakeholders of the community to develop common values and direction. Mr. Siegel responded that he would be there and was also looking forward to spending time discussing and developing the future direction of the Library.

Ms. Bradley presented a NPS Proposed Community Planning Process for the Winter 2010, based upon her experiences with other Library Boards and training workshops. Ms. Pugh suggested a survey be developed to do a more thorough assessment of evaluating the Library services and direction. Mr. Siegel stated that the preliminary plans are very good and encouraging of the positive direction for the Library and suggested that Ms. Bradley come back with a proposal and recommended next steps at next month's meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no further old business reported.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Pugh mentioned that she likes the new Library recyclable bag, and Ms. Bradley responded that it is very nice and people seem to like it and that it is available for \$1.

Ms. Tracey mentioned the parking problem in the area of the Norwalk Libraries, and Ms. Pugh suggested that a flier or signs be used to direct people to use the Yankee Lot. Mr. Ferro stated that it was very timely as they recently experienced a situation where two group visits were schedule and the second group could not find parking, and the representative was very upset. He stated that as a result they developed a hand-out on parking areas and directions.

ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. MCMULLEN MOTIONED TO ADJOURN.**

**** MS. PUGH SECONDED.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Subject to Board Approval