

**BOARD OF AGENTS –
SILAS BRONSON LIBRARY MINUTES –
Monday October 15, 2018**

PRESENT: President De Carlo, Vice President Wrenn, Agents: Ranando, Harrell, Ryan, Ogrodnik, Cummings, Beatty, Albini

ALSO: Director Raechel Guest, Heidi Barbieri, Lisa Bartkus

CALL TO ORDER: President De Carlo called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

AGENDA: MMSP (Ogrodnik, Harrell) to approve the agenda.

MINUTES: MMSP (Ryan, Ogrodnik) to approve the September 17th minutes

COMMUNICATIONS/PUBLIC COMMENT:

DIRECTOR’S REPORT—included with board packet:

Upcoming Programs – The CT Trust for Historic Preservation will be holding a public meeting about protecting historic buildings in the MRR on Wednesday October 17th at 6:30 pm. The Waterbury Hall of Fame induction ceremony begins at 2pm on Saturday October 20th. The ceremony is once again held at the Mattatuck Museum. Mardi Gross will be held rain or shine on Saturday October 27th 11am to 3 pm. We are still in need of volunteers to assist with various activities that day. We are also still seeking sponsorships/donations to the Friends of the Library to help pay for the event. Last year approximately 1,400 people attended. If the weather is good, we expect to see about 2,000 people attend. This is by far our biggest event of the year and a great opportunity to connect with families who have never been to the library before. Agent Ranando asked if Director Guest had someone coordinating the Mardi Gross event for her. Director Guest responded that she has been doing all the coordinating for Mardi Gross. Agent Ranando asked where the volunteers check in when they arrive. Director Guest stated that a table will be set-up for volunteers to check in and receive a badge and assignment.

Front Plaza – LaRosa has installed the chlorine filter for the fountain and leveled the fountain. Other repairs are still pending.

Donation – We received an unexpected donation of \$500 from a former Waterbury resident who now lives in Prospect but still visits us regularly because we have the books that she wants to borrow. She made the donation to honor the memory of the Paul sisters, and said that she would like to be able to support the library just as they did. Agent Cummings asked how the donor found out about making a donation in memory of the Paul sisters, and if we should think about publicizing these donations so that more people might do the same. President De Carlo would like to get something written up in the Republican American if she would be willing to come forward to show that the Paul Sisters donation is continuing to bring generosity to the Library.

Saturday Scheduling – Bunker Hill will be open on Saturdays beginning October 20th. This will leave our front desk short staffed on Mondays for about 3 weeks until our new Admin. I starts. Agent Ogrodnik asked what hour on Monday we would be short staffed at the front desk. Director Guest responded that it would be from 9am until 12:15 pm. Tanya our Circulation Manager feels comfortable covering during that time as long as she does not have to answer the phones. Agent Ranando asked if we replaced the Flag at Bunker Hill. Director Guest responded that we did replace the open Flag.

East Wing/Teen Zone Renovation – We are waiting for an estimate from American Millwork for the partial demolition of the floating wall, which will create a doorway for the new Teen Zone. We will be submitting our paperwork for the City’s bidding process for the new carpeting and glass walls this week. President De Carlo stated that American Mill Work was brought in to look at the work for the East Wing since the City is unable to do the work.

Main Reading Room Shelving – We are finalizing the plans for reorganizing the materials in the Main Reading Room. The librarians measurements of the collections and shelving confirm that we can remove the shelves along the

windows, which will open up new space for quiet reading/study areas and ensure that all our aisles are ADA compliant. It will take some work to relocate all of the books – this is a good project for volunteers to assist with. Agent Ryan asked when we would be needing assistance with the shifting of the books. Director Guest responded that we can contact him when the time comes.

Collection Agency – We are still waiting for Corporation Counsel to advise us on severing our contract with American Adjustment. In the meantime, we are no longer sending them new bills. As mentioned in my report last month, a current trend in public libraries is the elimination of all late fees and, in some cases, lost or damaged book fees. If fees are over \$5, our patrons can no longer borrow anything from the library. People living in poverty are disproportionately affected by this policy, as they are the ones least able to pay the fees. Children who are most in need of the library's resources often end up losing their library privileges because their families can't afford the fees. As of last month, there are 4,579 patrons (18% of our cardholders) whose borrowing privileges have been suspended due to fees. This does not include patrons who no longer have cards at all due to this issue: patrons are deleted from the system after 5 years of inactivity. Last year, we collected about \$16,000 in fines and just over \$2,000 for lost or damaged books. If we were to eliminate fines entirely, we would need to find an alternate source of revenue. Agent Ogrodinik asked if we can have patrons sign a poverty agreement. Director Guest stated that some patrons may not feel comfortable signing an agreement stating that they are unable to afford to pay their fines. Agent Cummings asked how many of the cards are children versus adults. Director Guest stated that we can look into that for the next meeting. President De Carlo stated that he would like to increase dollar amount from \$5.00 where a patron is shut off from taking an items out and possible eliminating the fees for children. We would need more data before the board makes a decision on this.

Whale update – The Stein family have donated a total of \$500 to the Friends of the Silas Bronson Library to help pay for the reinstallation of the Jerome Stein whale sculpture. They included notes letting us know that they leave the decision about where to put the sculpture up to us. The prosecutor handling the case involving the vandalism of the artwork called to find out the estimated value of the piece as an artwork, as opposed to the scrap value that the vandal was charged with by the police. It is my understanding that they will be prosecuting him for the full estimated value of the art, not the scrap value of the metal. Vice-President Wrenn asked how we get the estimate for the artwork. Director Guest stated that she went online to see what similar artwork cost and submitted a general grange for the cost of replacement to the prosecutor and that the theft went from a slap on the writ to several years.

New Library Cards – The new library cards have arrived and are now available. Agent Beatty asked if the Bunker Hill branch will also have the new library cards. Director Guest responded that yes they would, and that replacement cards would cost \$3.00 for adults and \$1.50 for children.

Staffing Additions & Vacancies – We have selected a new Admin. I to work at the Circulation Office and front desk. Lindsay LeVasseur will be starting at the library after November 8th. The Librarian II position continues to be on hold until March.

Finance & Funding:

We met with Tom from Wells Fargo and made a change in the wording under the Investment Manager section to semi-annual to preiodically and you will be getting a new copy. We will get the copy today and we can vote on it next month. If you have any questions please let Holly know. Once the policy is in place we will meet to make review where the investmetns are now and if they feel things need to be adjusted.

A motion to transfer \$500.00 from the Carol Martino donation to the Bronson Book Budget was made by Agent Ogrodinik, seconded by Agent Ryan and approved unanimously.

A motion to transfer \$3,000.00 from the Martland Fund to the Bronson Book Budget was made by Agent Ryan, seconded by Agent Cummings and approved unanimously.

Agent Harrell let the board know that the postage rates will increase from .50 to .55 in January.

Building & Projects:

Raechel has distributed a few packets of the items we could sell with our new logo for the board to review and consider for purchase.

Raechel has also gone over the East Wing Renovation and the re-organization of the MRR in her director's report.

Hall of Fame:

The Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony will be held on Saturday October 20th at 2 pm at the Mattatuck Museum. I ask that if any board member is available to please attend.

Friends of the Library:

The Friends are organizing for a spring book sale. They will also be catering the Hall of Fame with light refreshments. Some of the Friends plan on volunteering for Mardi Gross.

Waterbury Cable Council:

The next meeting for the Waterbury Cable Council is November 14th at 5 pm which I plan on attending.

Other:

OLD BUSINESS:

Treasurer Vacancy – Mike Leblanc from Finance is going to help with the recruitment.

Term Appointments – Since Joe Geary has retired, Mac Demac will be handling some of the things that Joe did previously, Raechel spoke with Mac to let him know that we still have vacancies on the board and also have some term appointments that need reappointment. Mac let Raechel know that he would be following up on that.

Berman Memorial – We are still working with Literacy Volunteers to schedule a meeting and hope to have more at our next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Holiday Hours for 12/24 and 12/31, our hours for Mondays is 9 am to 8pm and sometime the Mayor lets the staff leave early, however if the Mayor does not close us early we would need to board approval to close at 5 pm.

A motion to close the Library early on 12/24 and 12/31 at 5:01 pm was made by Vice President Wrenn, seconded by Agent Ranando and approved unanimously.

Agent Cummings spoke about her program in the Children's Room on October 1st with Miriam Azeez she was a student in Newtown that was bullied so badly she ended up being home schooled where she took her experience and wrote a book called Soulful Sydney. We had about 45 people who attended the reading.

Earlier today we received a call from his nurse that former Library Director Stan Washofsky is at Waterbury Hospital and I believe he is in his 90's. I would like to know if the board would like to send him some flowers. The board agreed to send flowers, we will contact the hospital to make sure he is able to receive flowers prior to sending them.

A motion to approve the IT Request for permission to purchase a PC and Monitor on behalf of Literacy Volunteers using Bronson Fund as a funding source. Literacy Volunteers will issue a check for the amount of the order to be deposited into the Bronson Fund prior to the order being placed. Expected order total is \$947.00 was made by Agent Ogrodnik, seconded by Agent Ranando and approved unanimously.

MMSP (Ryan, Cummings) to approve payment of Bronson bills of \$349.04

ADJOURNMENT: **MMSP** (Cummings, Ryan) to adjourn at 6:43 pm.

NEXT MEETING: Monday November 19, 2018 – 6 pm,

Respectfully submitted:

Lisa Bartkus for Tim De Carlo -- President