

**SOMERS LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**PO Box 443, Somers, NY 10589**

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**October 13, 2010**

President Stockwell called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

The members present were: Claire Damon, Jim Hasl, William Kehoe, Liz Mignardi, Laura Parisi, Jean Reidy, Barbara Stockwell and Christine Williamson-Canavan.

Fausta Mc Dermott was absent.

The Library Director Patricia Miller, Councilman Clinchy and Terry Kirchner, Executive Director of the Westchester Library System were also in attendance.

**Announcements and Correspondence**

Reservations have to be made for the workshop that Libby Post will be presenting. It is entitled ***Positioning Your Library as an Essential Service*** and will be held on Wednesday, October 20 at 6:00 p.m., and again on Thursday, October 21 at 1:00 p.m. at WLS.

The 51<sup>st</sup> Annual WLS meeting will be held on November 9 at 6:30 p.m. in the Mt. Kisco Library. Maureen O'Connor will present ***Public Libraries in the Future***.

Mrs. Miller received a thank you note from David Gagliardi for allowing him to join the Trustees at their September meeting, and also a letter from Rosemary Van Wart, President of the Alpha Pi Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma for speaking to their group on September 22.

A thank you letter was sent to the League of Women Voters member and Somers Democratic Committee head, Christine Robbins for securing a CD player and two new Story Time carpets for the Children's Room and for fundraising \$1,145 from the community for the Friends of the Somers Library. These funds have been earmarked for Story Time benches.

Milton Pelavin and his wife were also thanked for a program they sponsored at the Library about being visually impaired, and John Scarcella for the donation of a SONY projector.

The Library's Twitter account comments were shared, as well as a copy of Story Time photos that appeared in the October 3 edition of Journal News.

Mrs. Reidy sent thank you notes to staff members Betsy Bishop and Vicki Di Santo complimenting them for a job well done on the Summer Reading Program.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Hasl made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of September 8, 2010 as submitted. All were in favor.

### **Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer's Report was presented. Copies of the Abstract of Audited Vouchers #10; Analysis of Gift Fund Accounts and Somers Library Vouchers were distributed. Mrs. Williamson-Canavan made a motion to approve the Abstract of Audited Vouchers #10, dated October 13, 2010 in the amount of \$67,987.15, which included voucher numbers 66651 to 66682. All were in favor.

It was noted that there were two payments made to NYSE&G to cover August and September.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT AND STAFF MEETING MINUTES**

All Trustees received a copy of Mrs. Miller's Monthly Report and the minutes of the Somers Library Staff Meeting held on October 5, 2010.

**Personnel** - Mrs. Williamson-Canavan made a motion to hire Susan Haas as a substitute part-time Library Clerk (L14362) at a salary of \$13.24/hour (\$20.66/hour on Sundays), with a start date of October 12, 2010. As required by Westchester County Civil Service Rules, it is necessary for Ms. Haas to serve a probationary period of a minimum of twelve (12) weeks to a maximum of fifty-two (52) weeks. The probationary period may be terminated for unsatisfactory performance at any time after the completion of the minimum period service and on or before the maximum period of service. All were in favor.

**Museum Passes** - The Bronxville, Eastchester and North Salem Libraries offer museum passes to their patrons. Each has a different policy regarding distribution. Mrs. Miller would like to institute a similar program at the Somers Library. A request was made of each to share their policies regarding museum passes. Some free passes for the Neuberger Museum were received from WLS.

**Director's Station** - Mrs. Damon asked what a Director's Station was. It was explained that it is software that enables the Library to run their own reports instead of obtaining them from WLS.

**Staff Recognition Dinner** - A Staff Recognition Dinner will be held on October 28, after 6:00 p.m. at Sunshine Restaurant. There is money left from Mrs. Reidy's Velma K. Moore award. A discussion ensued as to whether or not the Trustees should attend. Mrs. Miller will see how her staff feels about it.

**Statistics** - All Trustees were given a copy of the Monthly Circulation statistics. Mrs. Williamson-Canavan noted that June, July and August continue to be the busiest months in terms of usage and it is a shame that the Trustees were forced

to reduce hours during those months due to budgetary constraints.

## **REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES**

**Budget and Finance** - The proposed 2011 Budget was submitted to the Town Supervisor. It is a fiscally responsible budget and represents an increase primarily to cover the cost of substitutes needed to cover the loss of one and one half employees and substantial new WLS chargeback fees. The Library is a service industry faced with tough economic times. Unfortunately the staff has not received a raise in three years and are over worked. It is also quite possible that if the Library runs out of money this year, due to 2009 and 2010 budget cuts, the Library will have to further reduce hours open and programs in December.

The Supervisor's budget amounts probably will not be available to the Library until the beginning of November and the budget hearings are on November 8, 9 and 10. There is a concern that the Budget and Finance Committee will not have adequate time during this short period, which includes the Election Day holiday, to properly prepare their presentation to the Town Board depending on what is being proposed for the Library. Mr. Clinchy was interested in this problem from a Town Board perspective.

Another concern is that the Somers Library has fallen below the State minimum standards for the last two years because of forced reduced hours due to budget cuts. There is a ratio that has to be maintained that based on the population being served. It was explained by Mr. Kirchner that if the Library falls below the minimum standards again in 2011, we will have to get a variance from the State in 2012. The WLS would assist with this process, as well as suggestions in remedying the problem.

The current condition of the Library building is a concern as well and new problems are constantly arising, which in turn results in funding problems. Mr. Kirchner noted that the State will continue to offer construction matching grants for at least another year. Both Mrs. Miller and Mr. Kehoe indicated that funding for matching the grants has been a problem which some times has delayed the construction. Mrs. Reidy reminded all that the Town needs a Capital Reserve Fund for long term capital improvements.

**Building** - Mrs. Miller, Mr. Tooma and Mr. Kehoe met with Supervisor Murphy to again discuss the many problems with the Library roof. It was determined that due to the Town's current financial problems, only the section around the chimney could be replaced at this time. Mr. Tooma is preparing the bid specs for this area, which has been repaired many times, and recently had a severe leak due to a storm. A plastic tarp has been placed over the antique bookcase containing historical items that is housed in the area where the roof is leaking again.

The ejector pump in the downstairs bathroom has been repaired, and new flushometers have been installed in the public and staff bathrooms. The rusted-out water fountain will be replaced soon.

Replacement of the septic system is planned to take place between now and the end of the year. The Town is waiting on the required permits, thus delaying this project.

**Bylaws and Policy** - Recently a comment was made in an email regarding the need to make changes to allow the Board to meet, vote, communicate and accomplish anything else necessary electronically, in an effort to move forward with current projects. It was noted that Robert J. Freeman, Executive Director of the New York State Committee on Open Government, has stated that a meeting of a public body involves the physical coming together of at least the majority of the total membership of such a body or under certain conditions through videoconferencing. Any other means of conducting a meeting or voting, i.e., by telephone, mail or email would be inconsistent with the State's Open Meeting Law.

The Charter will be reviewed at the November meeting. Work continues on updates to the Emergency Procedure Policy, Computer Use Policy and Investment Policy.

**Long Range Planning** - The web based survey that was sent to the community regarding the Library and its services will close out in terms of data collection and analysis on Friday. Mr. Hasl is pleased with the results to date. The data is predictive and those surveyed took their time completing it. The survey was sent to 1,544 residents, and about 2/3 of those were not on any lists that the Library maintains. A goal of 200 completed surveys was designated and as of this evening, 396 surveys were returned. Some additional statistics noted were as follows: 116 surveyed requested that they receive the Library e-newsletter; there were a healthy number of open comments made; most of the responders were 40 years of age and older, and have resided in Town for at least 10 years; and 80% use the Library for an hour or less when they visit, but they are frequent visitors. All final results will be sent to the members of the Committee for review, comment and analysis. At some point, the needs of the users have to be prioritized. Mr. Hasl was thanked for his hard work and effort. The results will be a wonderful tool for future Library planning.

**Personnel** - Mrs. Damon made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss Personnel issues at the conclusion of the meeting.

**Public Relations** - The Public Relations Committee is organizing a non-confrontational sensible campaign to get public support for the 2011 Library budget.

**Technology** - In November, a demonstration will be given on Hatch computers, children's advanced literacy workstations. New laptops were purchased for staff members Val Herman and Jamie Kay to permit access to the WLS computer system to replace outdated, nonfunctional equipment.

**Friends of the Somers Library**

Mrs. Damon reported that current Friends of the Somers Library President Muriel Lyon will be resigning at the end of the year to spend more time with her out of state family.

The Trustees went into Executive Session, not to return to the public meeting, to discuss Personnel issues. The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 p.m.

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, November 10, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. in the Library.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Schirmer, Secretary  
Somers Library Board of Trustees

cc: Library Board of Trustees  
Library Director  
Town Board  
Town Clerk  
Director of Finance  
Friends of the Somers Library