

**SOMERS LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
P.O. Box 443, Somers, NY 10589**

MEETING MINUTES

August 12, 2009

President Stockwell called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

The members present were: Claire Damon, Jim Hasl, William Kehoe, Marie Grace Mutino, Jean Reidy and Barbara Stockwell.

Fausta McDermott, Laura Parisi and Christine Williamson-Canavan were absent.

The Library Director Patricia Miller and Town Councilman Richard Clinchy were also in attendance.

Announcements and Correspondence

Staff member Vicki Di Santo sent a thank you card for the condolences sent for her mother, who recently passed away.

Past Trustee Faye Bishop sent a postcard with greetings from Michigan.

An acknowledgement was received from Phelps Hospice-Patient Care Fund for donations made in memory of past Trustee Cheryl Jagow's husband.

Mrs. Stockwell received a reminder notice from the WLS about their 50th Anniversary celebration on November 12 at the Woman's Club of White Plains.

The WLS is sponsoring a Trustee Institute on August 26. Mrs. Parisi will be attending and perhaps Mrs. Reidy as well. Dr. Mutino will be in attendance as a WLS Board member.

Mr. Kehoe and his wife Eve, the Treasurer for the Friends of the Somers Library attended the unofficial opening of the new \$9.7 million Mt. Kisco Library recently. Unfortunately of the \$1,000,000 to be provided by their Library Foundation only \$300,000 has been raised so far, so the Library didn't have a lot of the extras, such as decorative items, i.e. pictures, plants, etc. that it would have liked to have purchased. The literature distributed at the event was given to Mrs. Miller.

Approval of Minutes

Dr. Mutino made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of July 8, 2009. All were in favor.

Treasurer's Report

Mrs. Miller presented the Treasurer's Report in Mrs. Williamson-Canavan's

absence. Copies of the Abstract of Audited Vouchers #8; Analysis of Gift Fund Accounts and Somers Library Vouchers were distributed. Mrs. Damon made a motion to approve the Abstract of Audited Vouchers #8, dated August 12, 2009 in the amount of \$63,587.09, which included voucher numbers 62628 to 62652. All were in favor.

Some notations were made about the vouchers. There is about a \$1,000 left in the Reader's Digest Gift Fund, which will be used to purchase reference materials. The payment to WESTLYNX was for the two new computers. Technology grant money from Senator Leibell was used for these purchases. Gaming equipment will be purchased with the remaining technology grant money. A voucher was submitted from the North County News, which covered the cost to announce the public bid for the boiler project. The payment to the Somers High School was for a copy of the 2009 school yearbook. Mrs. Miller purchased some used DVD's from a local Hollywood Video store. The lease on the GE Capital copier is up at the end of the year. Mrs. Miller is doing some comparison shopping. She has to give them 60 to 120 days notice if she intends to not renew the lease. A payment was made to Somers Electric to repair a timer problem.

A discussion took place at a recent Public Relations Committee meeting regarding the creation of a new logo for the Library. Mrs. Miller spoke with Debra Begley, a graphic artist with the Mid-Hudson Library System about the project. Ms. Begley is interested in this project. However, as she is retiring from the Mid-Hudson Library System at the end of this year, she is very busy at this time. Mrs. Miller thought perhaps the unspent balance in the Friends Gift Fund account could be used to pay for this project. It will be discussed at the next Friend's meeting.

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 July 29, 2009.

Carpet - The new carpet tiles in the bathroom hallway and in front of the circulation desk have been installed. Mrs. Miller and the Trustees are most grateful to the Friends for their donation. The carpet behind the circulation desk and in the children's area is becoming a hazard. Mrs. Miller will speak to the Friends again, to see if they are willing to pay for the carpet replacement in these areas.

Constant Contact - It was explained that Constant Contact is an online software company that specializes in electronic newsletters. Councilman Clinchy reported that the Town Board just signed a contract with Virtual Town Hall to create a new website for the Town. Perhaps they may provide some of the same type of services as Constant Contact.

Handheld Librarian - Staff member Val Herman attended a teleconference on July 30 entitled "Handheld Librarian". She found the Kindle session most interesting and advised that there are some policy and loan issues that need to be researched before implementing Kindle circulation. Notes from that session were distributed to the Trustees.

Volunteers - Mrs. Stockwell asked if volunteers are covered by insurance when representing the Library off site, and they are.

Staff Recognition - Mrs. Damon would like Dr. Mutino, the Corresponding Secretary to send a thank you to the staff from the Trustees, thanking them for being such a generous and dedicated staff. Between the tough economic times, demanding staff reductions in the 2009 budget and the hiring freeze, loss of some Library volunteers and covering staff vacations, the staff has been under quite a bit of pressure lately.

Volunteer Recognition - In the past, the volunteers were recognized with a tea from time to time. Perhaps this is something the Friends would be interested in sponsoring. A suggestion was also made to be sure to send a thank you when a volunteer leaves.

Mrs. Stockwell asked all Trustees to think about some forthcoming ideas for staff and volunteer recognition.

Somers Day Camp - This summer, for the first time in quite a few years, the campers of the Somers Day Camp were brought to the Library for story time. The program worked out well. On rainy days, if the program room was not in use, the campers used it as a backup. Unfortunately it was not always left in the condition it was found in. Mrs. Miller will speak to Andrew Johnson at the Parks and Recreation Department about this situation.

Monthly Statistics - The monthly Circulation Statistics and People Counter Numbers were distributed to the Trustees. Mr. Hasl suggested that the People Counter Numbers be compared to those of 2008. These numbers could be very useful in the 2010 budget preparation process.

REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

Budget and Finance - Earlier this year, the Finance Department had advised the Trustees that it was anticipated that the Town auditors would recommend in their post-audit Management Letter that the Library should close their Unemployment Insurance Reserve Money Market and combine it as a joint account with the Town's comparable money market. The Trustees assumed that this was based on discussions with the audit staff. As a result of this, the Library Board of Trustees approved a motion at their May 13, 2009 monthly meeting to do so on receipt of the auditor's Letter. However, when the Management Letter

was received the auditors instead suggested that the Unemployment Insurance Reserve Money Market be combined with the Library's General Fund bank account.

A motion was made by Mr. Kehoe to rescind the May 13, 2009 motion and follow the auditor's suggestion in their Management Letter. The Trustees agree with the auditors, that it is preferable to retain these funds in a Library General Fund bank account notwithstanding that the Library General fund will subsequently be combined with a comparable Town account. All were in favor.

Building - Mr. Kehoe commended Mrs. Miller and Mrs. Stockwell for the time they have spent on these projects. An updated summary of each follows.

Boilers

Mrs. Miller has secured a New York State grant to cover the cost of labor and materials for the replacement of the two oil-fired hot water boilers, plus required piping and wiring, based on cost information obtained for the proposal for the renovation/expansion. This award totaled \$145,000, of which \$72,500 will come from the NY State grant and \$72,500 from the required match by the Town. The Town's portion will not be received until 2010.

Based on data subsequently received, the Town Board, at the Library's request on August 6 authorized creation of a capital projects budget for the labor and materials cost in the amount of \$45,000 and accepted a bid in the amount of \$23,500 for the performance of a building heat loss calculation to properly size new boilers and install them.

It is anticipated that permission can be obtained from the State to use the excess of the grant money for other building repairs such as roof and gutters.

Lighting

Another New York State grant was secured by Mrs. Miller to cover labor and materials to remove and replace 107 ceiling lights with high-efficiency and brighter fixtures. This award totaled \$34,950. Due to the lack of sufficient funding, the grant was only for 21% of the cost or \$7,215, rather than 50%. The Town should provide the remaining \$27,735. However, also in this case, the Town's portion will not be received until 2010.

Based on data subsequently received, the Town Board at our request on July 9 authorized creation of a capital projects budget for the labor and materials to replace 116 lighting fixtures in the amount of \$40,000. In addition, they authorized the purchase and installation of 6 fixtures to assess their applicability before purchasing the remaining 110 fixtures. These 6 fixtures have been installed, and more will be in 2009, up to the \$7,215 available.

Roof

The Library is engaged in continuing discussions with the roofing contractor about replacing all the shingle roofing, all or sections of the membrane roof, and the gutters, and leaders. The funding for this project may come from the available excess from the boiler grant.

Septic

A design meeting on the new septic system was held and attended by the Town Engineer Guy Gagne, Parks and Recreation Superintendent Steve Ralston, Insite Engineering and Library representatives last month. The anticipated cost is \$106,250, which will be paid for from East of Hudson funds, that the Town has already received.

The current Parks and Recreation Department's septic will also be abandoned and included in the new Library system. The area to be used for the new septic system is on the hill going to upper Reis. All agreed that it would be prudent to provide for possible future expansion to the greatest possible extent, within the land area available. It was still not known whether or not the Town would be able to secure a State grant to pave the parking lot in lower Reis. Mr. Ralston should know by September 1.

Mold

A remediation discussion for this problem will continue with the Town Engineer.

Bylaws and Policy - Dr. Mutino had nothing to report this month. Mr. Kehoe commented that the policy for purchasing certificate of deposits has to be updated.

Long Range Planning - A question came up as to whether or not the Long Range Planning Committee should be working on the five year plan required as part of the budget process by the Town since it is really a list of capital projects that the Town has no funding for. Perhaps it should be included as part of the budget preparation, which the Budget Committee handles. Both Mrs. Parisi and Mr. Kehoe had suggestions to make to this plan. All other Trustees were encouraged to email Mrs. Miller any suggestions they might have as well.

Mr. Hasl felt as though the community needs and visions for the Library were not reflected in this document. Mrs. Miller indicated that she needs to do a survey of the patrons. Mrs. Damon indicated that staff input would be helpful as well. Perhaps moving forward, the Long Range Planning Committee should be focusing on these issues, and let the Budget Committee determine a list of needed capital projects, as requested as part of the Town budget process.

Personnel - Arrangements will be made to sponsor a ½ day professional day seminar for the staff to share their ideas and give their input. Terry Kirschner, WLS Executive Director can assist in this effort by securing a speaker.

Public Relations - A recent meeting was held and many ideas were shared:

Mrs. Miller will write an article about the budgeting process to be included in the Friends fall newsletter. The Library's fall programs will be included as well.

To create a bookmark of essential library information, and a brochure describing the Library services.

Mrs. Miller recommended breaking up the annual highlights report into two separate brochures, one to include the basic information, statistics and accomplishments and the other describing the Library services.

Reach out to the segments of the community who are not currently using the Library services. The WLS has a \$300 grant available for a program entitled "Things They Carried". Mrs. Miller will reach out to the Jewish War Veterans, VFW and Historical Society for input.

Information about the Library should be given to the realtors for distribution to new residents. A brochure of special events should be issued as well.

The Friends of the Somers Library are discussing a second membership drive for the fall. This would be a solicitation to be given to patrons as they check out items at the library.

Conduct a community survey. Options are a Monkey Survey on-line or a paper survey that can be handed out to the patrons and non library users. It must be simple and easy to complete. Check off opportunities are always well received. The 2004 survey will be used as a reference in creating the new survey.

Create a form letter or petition to line up support for the budget. Include three talking points. Put them on a bookmark and print that the bookmarks were paid for by the Friends. Suggestions for talking points are: losing staff to Libraries that pay more; cutting Library hours; eliminating staff and hiring freezes. Somers happens to be one of the lowest on the list in terms of per capita funding in Westchester, yet it happens to be one of the busiest Libraries in the County. Councilman Clinchy suggested that those figures be quantified.

Continue to participate in the Holiday Happiness event at Primrose School.

Submit award nominations for the WLS 50th Anniversary and the Westchester County 27th Hall of Fame events.

Sponsor a ½ day professional day seminar for the staff.

Create a new logo for the Library.

Mrs. Parisi will provide the Library with an updated school PTA contact list.

Technology - Mrs. Miller will research the Kindle further.

Friends of the Somers Library

Mrs. Damon reported that the Friends had no meeting in August.

Westchester Library System

Dr. Mutino reported that the WLS Board did not meet in August.

NEW BUSINESS

Carbon Footprint - Mrs. Miller attended a meeting earlier in the day at the Town House regarding reducing the carbon footprint of Somers. It was recommended that a NYSERDA grant be applied for. It is a complete grant and there is \$74 million available. Mrs. Miller said the grant application was quite intimidating and consists of 40 pages. Councilman Clinchy suggested that resident Jeff Tuson, newly appointed member of the Energy Advisory Panel, might be available to assist. He is a contractor who NYSERDA hires to perform their energy audits.

Patron Profile – Mrs. Miller indicated that at a meeting with the WLS Executive Director Terry Kirschner there was a discussion about developing a profile of the patrons who use the Somers Library.

Also present at the meeting were Trustees: Mr. Hasl, Dr. Mutino, Mrs. Reidy and Mrs. Stockwell. Mr. Hasl reported that other topics discussed included: developing technology and policies, marketing to non library users, budgeting, newsletter creation, professional resources for staff and procuring grants.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 p.m., and the next meeting will take place on Wednesday, September 9, 2009 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