

**Westbrook Public Library**  
**Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting Minutes**  
**March 7, 2023**

**Mission:** *“The Westbrook Public Library is dedicated to supporting our community’s intellectual, cultural, and social needs. We offer a balanced collection of materials, information services, and programs for lifelong learners.” (rvsd & aprvd 2/19)*

Call to order at 7:02 pm by Katie Richard, Vice Chairperson

**In Attendance:** Kathie Cietanno, Amy Heilmann, Jodie Oshana, Katie Richard, Megan Ruppenicker, Nilani Shankar, Lynda Tragakes, and Michelle Centore, Library Director

**Absent:** MaryJo Noonan and Melinda Xenelis

**Secretary’s Report:**

- Motion made by Heilmann to accept the February 7, 2023 Monthly Meeting Minutes as presented. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Oshana; all in favor.

**Financial Report:**

- Centore presented Financial Report for February and provided a brief recap:
  - There were no big or unexpected expenses in February.
  - LGF allotment for this year is approximately 75% spent; Vanguard appropriation for FY 2023-24 to be discussed under New Business.
  - Continue to deal with lag time with book orders due to market conditions – working on alternatives.
  - Community Foundation of Middlesex County provided another grant to LGF – will use for a Family Game Night in the near future.
- Motion made by Cietanno to accept the Financial Report as presented. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ruppenicker; all in favor.

**Library Director’s Report:**

- Collections and Services:
  - 1217 patrons used the Library in February. Circulation and patron usage continue to show growth.
  - Weeding and shifting project is now complete which has created space to allow for better organization of the various collections. Staff continues to work on organizing sections to best showcase the Library’s materials.
- Building and Grounds:
  - Library was closed on 2/28/23 due to inclement weather.
  - Heating system malfunctioned but was able to get repaired same day (3/1/23).
  - Carpet was selected for Community Room (Suit from J&Js Jack line).
- Staffing and Planning:
  - At 7:20 pm, the Board voted unanimously to move into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter. Following, it moved back to its Regular Meeting at 7:32 pm. A motion was made to do further investigation and research into the matter by Ruppenicker. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Cietanno; all in favor.
  - Active threat training for staff will take place on 4/14/23 at 8 am before the Library opens.

- Community Engagement:
  - A grant for upcoming summer is in process of being written to offer programs to reach Westbrook’s population of English Language Learners – planning to partner with Westbrook Youth and Family Services as well as Social Services.
  - New Library Events calendar is being well utilized by staff and patrons.
  - Engagement levels of email newsletter and social media platforms are strongest ever.
- Programming:
  - Tricia Carlin had a very successful program for “Take Your Child to the Library Day” with 45 in attendance.
  - AARP Tax-aide program in February took 56 appointments in 18 hours at the Library. Popular and needed program.
  - Ariel Wander is starting a monthly book club for young adults (age 18 and older) – currently have 4-5 participants but anticipate continued growth.

**Committee Reports: None**

**Correspondence: None**

**Old Business:**

- Traveling Toy Library is very successful and operating as planned – no further action needed to do additional publicity.

**New Business:**

- Proposed Library budget passed with Board of Selectmen. Presentation to Board of Finance was made on 3/1/2023. Centore has one clarification to make to budget proposal for final consideration.
- Centore presented draft of letter to request FY 2023-2024 Vanguard appropriation. A motion was made to submit to Board of Selectman and Board of Finance a request for *approval of expenditures not to exceed \$19,000 from the Library Gift and Special Funds for the anticipated purchase of library materials, equipment, supplies, furnishings, and furniture; memberships, continuing education, stipends to graduating high school pages and library employees, and other expenditures approved by Library board of Trustees from July 1, 2023 through June 20, 2024* by Oshana. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ruppenicker; all in favor.
- Centore, Richard, and Tragakes attended the Freedom of Information Act workshop on 3/2/2023 which was very informative. Encourage all Trustees to watch recorded version when available through the Town Clerk’s Office. (<https://www.westbrookct.us/1584/FOIA-Information>)
- Richard indicated that there is a need in the community for self-care/hygiene products. It was suggested to promote the availability of the Library’s self-care products with social worker at the schools.
- Cietanno suggested that there be an effort to utilize the offerings of the LDTC through applying for grants to have paid individuals teach related programs in the space. There was a discussion regarding programs that could be offered in the LDTC to allow for expanded use of the equipment and space. Our Board and Library Staff will work together to explore potential partnerships and options, and to explore the possibility of paid instructors and/or seeking of grants..

As there was no further business, motion made by Oshana to adjourn. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Shankar; all in favor.  
Adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted by L. Tragakes