

FINAL  
Prosser Public Library  
Library Board of Directors Meeting  
January 12, 2016

**Attendance:** Roberta LaMonaca (*Library Director*), Shirley Thompson (*Chairperson*), Harvey Frydman (*Vice-Chairperson*), Beverlee Merritt (*Secretary/Treasurer*), Joan Geetter, Martha Brackeen-Harris

**Absent:** Paula Walek

Quorum present? Yes, 5 of 6

Shirley Thompson called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

**MOTION to accept the minutes of the December 8, 2015 meeting;** seconded and approved.

A change to the agenda was proposed. The Presentation by the Rotary Club was moved to after the Report from the Friends of the Library.

*Public Statements* – There were no public statements.

*Report from the Friends of the Library*

**Advocacy for Library** – Joan Geetter reported that the Friends' advocacy subcommittee held its first meeting in December. One of the committees' primary goals is to draft strategy and talking points for purposes of advocacy, as well as to make sure that patrons are made aware of what's going on in terms of the new building. For example, the Friends may use a bulletin board placed in a high traffic area to keep the community aware of public meetings related to the library building project.

**Presentation by the Rotary Club** – R. LaMonaca thanked the Rotary Club for coming, and the board members introduced themselves. The Rotary Club presented the check to the library board. Dennis Hubbs, from the Bloomfield Journal, took photographs of the presentation. The Rotarians in attendance – Don Harris, Norm Famely, Mark Weisman, and Jonathan Hochman – introduced themselves. Mark Weisman thanked Seabury for hosting the event that allowed the Rotary Club to raise money for the library.

*Chairperson's Report* – There was no chairperson's report this month.

*Director's Report*

**Building Committee Update** – R. LaMonaca asked Mark Weisman, who is the chair of the building committee, to help update the board on the committee's progress. The committee interviewed two firms on the evening of January 11. M. Weisman explained the interview process. Both candidates were excellent; the committee chose Tai Soo Kim Partners. The timeframe is short but doable. The firm is being asked to complete a plan by May 1, 2016. The deadline to get on the November 2016 ballot is September 1<sup>st</sup>. Between May and September is when the plan will be reviewed and considered by the town council and other subcommittees.

R. LaMonaca said that the application process for a state construction grant begins in June, with a Sept 1<sup>st</sup> deadline, and that grants are awarded in late November, meaning that the grant won't be secured until after the referendum.

J. Geetter has been collecting information about other library buildings and the space and service needs of a thriving modern library. She asked if it was possible to send this information to the building committee.

R. LaMonaca asked Joan to send the information to her and that she'd make it available to the committee. Roberta also stressed that upcoming building committee meetings will be open to the public. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 25<sup>th</sup>, at 5:00 PM, and will be held at town hall.

H. Frydman asked as to what type of building was being planned. M. Weisman explained that the firm is being tasked to update two plans from 2011, which included a renovation of the current building and a new building on the town hall site. The current contract allows for up to 4 different sites. Other sites have yet to be chosen, but all of them will likely be in town center. M. Weisman explained that it's important to thoroughly look at as many options as possible, because the questions and concerns that will emerge from that process will likely be asked later on by the council and members of the public.

B. Merritt stressed the need for a visual presentation of the planned buildings at the different sites. M. Weisman said that such a presentation is the goal. The board discussed the importance of communication and input across many constituencies, including the public. R. LaMonaca said that Tai Soo Kim will host a forum for the public. B. Merritt suggested surveys inside the library, such as the face-to-face approach used during Snapshot Day. R. LaMonaca and the board agreed that such surveys would be helpful for gauging the priorities of library patrons.

M. Weisman suggested some joint meetings of the library board and the building committee in the months ahead. The board discussed other area libraries with new buildings, and the importance of reaching out to local businesses for support and funding. The board thanked M. Weisman for his update.

**Town Council Meeting at Library** – S. Thompson mentioned that Mayor Joan Gamble will try to hold a council budget meeting at the library.

**New Children's Librarian** – The vacancy for a full-time librarian in the children's department has been filled by a former staff member, Heidi Sacchitella, who had previously worked as a part-time children's librarian. Heidi will start on January 25<sup>th</sup>, which will bring the library back to full staffing.

**Library Budget for FY 2016-17** – The board reviewed a spreadsheet comparing the proposed 2016-17 budget with the current year. R. LaMonaca explained that much of the 10% increase to the full-time staff line, and the 15.9% decrease to part-time staff, are offsetting, due to the town reinstating a full-time librarian position that had been split between two part-timers. The only other increases in the budget derive from contracted step and cost-of-living increases, and the reinstatement of cuts that the town had requested last year. R. LaMonaca will meet with Phil Schenck and Bill Hogan to review the proposed budget on January 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Statewide Delivery System** – The state-run delivery system for library materials, which recently changed its name from Connectcar to DeliverIt, has had problems with Avant, the company it subcontracts with for one of the delivery routes. That contract was set to come to an abrupt halt on 12/31/15. Library Connection, the consortium Prosser belongs to, voted to allocate slush funds to establish an independent delivery service to prevent any interruption in service for patrons. This decision has kept books moving while the state and Avant work on an agreement. Avant will continue delivering through March 2016, by which time the state will have hired its own drivers to handle the route. The Library Connection delivery system is an example of the benefits the library receives as part of a consortium.

**Partnering with Bloomfield Public Schools** – On Monday, January 11<sup>th</sup>, R. LaMonaca and the full-time librarians met with Anne Marie Cullinan and Stacey McCann from Bloomfield Schools, to discuss opportunities for partnerships. For example, librarians can hold information sessions for faculty that demonstrate the library's academically pertinent database services. Other topics of discussion included getting more students to sign up for library cards, summer reading collaboration, and having the library use the digital and phone-based outreach services that the schools currently employ. The school officials would like to see regular meetings between themselves and library staff.

*Old Business* - There was no old business to discuss.

*New Business*

**Library Building Fund** – At a previous board meeting, it was decided that the gift from the Rotary Club would be used to start a new building fund. With all our current funds being kept with Windsor Federal, R. LaMonaca proposed that the library reach out to other local banks, and suggested that the building fund be setup with Simsbury Bank. **MOTION to deposit the \$5000 from the Rotary Club in a new account at Simsbury Bank;** seconded and passed.

R. LaMonaca pointed out that the library received a handful of electronic donations – via PayPal on the library website – during the month of December. Going forward, the library would like to route those donations to the building fund. The library’s thank-you letter to donors would state that the gift was going to the building fund. **MOTION to have all electronic donations, unless given with a specified purpose, to go into the new building fund at Simsbury Bank;** seconded and passed.

**Library Statistics and Value Calculator** – R. LaMonaca handed around copies of the state library’s report “Statistical Trends for Connecticut Public Libraries,” which details trends across the years in many categories. To help with advocacy, the Prosser website now has a link to a value calculator on the homepage. Patrons can plug in the number of materials, programs, services, etc. that they have used over a period of time, and the calculator returns the total monetary value provided by the library. R. LaMonaca and Chris Siloac used the annual numbers reported to the state to calculate the amount of value the library provided last year. The total was just under 5 million dollars. J. Geetter, as part of the Friends’ advocacy committee, received a printout of the results of calculating the library’s annual value; she shared the document with the board. B. Merritt stressed that the Friends and the board needed to share information.

R. LaMonaca explained the amount of staff time that often goes into a single statistic. Only one computer user or reference question is often counted for a transaction that involved the assistance of numerous staff members. For example, library staff assists many people with resumes and online job applications, which can be quite involved. As an example of the level of service the library provides, J. Geetter mentioned that the Friends purchased a hand cart and gas card for Mara Whitman, the librarian in charge of homebound deliveries. Mara had previously been carrying the heavy book bags by hand and using her own gas.

**Advocacy Workshop** – The board discussed plans for attending the library advocacy workshop at the South Windsor Public Library on the afternoon of Wednesday, January 20<sup>th</sup>. Three board members are registered to attend.

**MOTION to adjourn meeting at 5:55 PM;** seconded and approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher Siloac,  
Technology & Administrative Coordinator