

FINAL
Prosser Public Library
Library Board of Directors Meeting
February 9, 2016

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

Absent: Paula Walek

Quorum present? Yes, 5 of 6

Shirley Thompson called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

MOTION to accept the minutes of the January 16, 2016 meeting; seconded and approved.

Public Statements – There were no public statements.

Report from the Friends of the Library

Donation to Building Fund –As the board may have seen in Steve Goode’s article in the Hartford Courant, concerning the establishment of the Prosser building fund, the Friends matched the \$5000 gift from the Rotary Club. The Friends’ gift was given in memory of Fannie Gabriel. The board thanked the Friends for their generous gift.

Advocacy Group – The Friends’ advocacy committee has been discussing ways to display building committee information in the library. Towards that end, the Friends voted to order three free-standing bulletin boards with trays for fliers. Two of the bulletin boards will be placed at Prosser – one on each level – and one will reside at McMahon Wintonbury. The Friends advocacy committee will meet this Thursday to continue working on strategy and talking points.

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

Director’s Report

ACLB Membership Renewal – Membership for the Association of Connecticut Library Boards (ACLB) is up for renewal. The board usually pays the \$100 membership fee from Prosser Funds. H. Frydman asked R. LaMonaca for an explanation of what ACLB does. R. LaMonaca spoke about the trustee’s guide and other resources, as well as the annual conference, which Prosser library board members usually attend. **MOTION to use Prosser Funds to renew ACLB membership;** seconded and passed.

Building Work – Work was recently done on both library buildings. At Prosser, a broken piece of slate near the front entrance was replaced, as were the stair treads leading to the top floor. At McMahon Wintonbury, a convex mirror was installed to give staff a line of site into the study room areas. There have been reports of questionable behavior taking place in those areas.

New Children’s Librarian – With Heidi Sacchitella’s recent return, there is once again a full staff in the children’s department. The librarians are busy planning programs for March and April, as well as looking ahead to summer reading. Some of the new programs are focused on tweens and science-related themes.

Liu Lu Program and Facebook Marketing – The board was given a flier of the upcoming program with the acrobat Liu Lu. Duncaster provided the funding for the program, which will take place at First Congregational Church. For the first time, the library is using Facebook’s paid marketing feature, which

allows for targeted ads. The library has paid \$30 to promote the program over the course of a week. Event registration will be monitored to see what affect the Facebook marketing may have had.

Building Committee and Other Meetings – In addition to the building committee’s schedule, the building project has led to many other meetings, including regular meetings with the architects and the Friends’ advocacy committee. On Wednesday (2/10), R. LaMonaca will meet with the architect, Scott Sharlow (IT Director), and Chris Siloac to plan for technology needs in a new building. Mark Weisman would like to invite State Senator Beth Bye to a future meeting.

On Thursday (2/11), Roberta will meet the architect at 330 Park Avenue, in response to a suggestion by a couple of town council members that the Prosser and McMahon Wintonbury libraries be moved into that location. In 1993, a study was done to see if moving the library into that building was feasible. The study deemed the plan inadvisable, especially the idea of moving the library away from the center, and suggested that the building be let for commercial space. Roberta will give copies of the study to the architect, Mark Weisman, and Phil Schenck. H. Frydman pointed out the building’s current space and parking issues.

Public Information Session – After consulting the board via email, R. Lamonaca and the building committee set Tuesday, April 12th as the date for the public information session. The session will be held at 6:00 PM, directly after the library board meeting.

Old Business

Update on Building Fund – The building fund has been established with three different gifts of \$5000 each: from the Rotary Club, the Friends, and an anonymous donor. After researching rates of CDs at local banks, R. LaMonaca decided to open the account with Farmington bank. She invested \$14,800 of the fund into a CD, and used \$200 to open a savings account. Subsequent donations will be deposited into the savings account and later into a CD. The website now has an announcement with a link for donating electronically to the fund.

The building fund will likely make it necessary to consult with an accountant about setting up the library board’s fundraising apparatus as a 501c3. According to Bill Hogan, it becomes necessary to file a tax return once the annual interest from the funds is over \$600, which is now the case. R. LaMonaca will look for an accountant to consult about making this happen.

Partnership with Bloomfield Schools – After the success of the January meeting, library staff is set to meet with school administrators again in February. The library would like to schedule an inservice program for faculty, aimed at showing them the library’s educational databases, such as the Testing and Education Reference Center, which helps students prep for standardized tests.

Certification Programs at Library – Lois Hager, a member of the building committee, recently spoke to Naomi Cohen, from the state college system, about the idea of offering certification programs at the library. In response to that discussion, R. LaMonaca and Lois Hager will meet with Dr. Lopez from Capitol Community College to discuss the logistic and financial details of what such a program might look like. Roberta is interested in classes that would help people build job skills. Roberta recently encountered library patrons with serious transportation issues, which speaks to the need for having a wide-range of services provided at the library.

New Business

Discussion Regarding Libby Post & Library Advocacy– B. Merritt asked the board to discuss the idea of hiring Libby Post to help with advocacy for a new building, and handed out a flyer summarizing Ms. Post’s services and experience. J. Geetter recently asked Ms. Post what she would charge to advocate for a new library building and was given an estimate of \$3000 per month. B. Merritt and J. Geetter stressed

the importance of timing in regards to hiring Ms. Post. The board discussed the idea of hiring her after the building project secures a place on the ballot. The library board, Friends, and other library supporters can be a presence at building committee and council meetings right now, and help spread the word, but Ms. Post's services would be especially useful in reaching out to the wider community. B. Merritt asked that the board read over the document and come to a decision, so that they can be prepared to act.

J. Geetter stressed that the current process has two sequences, in terms of advocacy: the first involves town council, and the second concerns the public. The board discussed ideas for getting more people to attend building committee and town council meetings, such as targeted mailings, local newspaper articles and postings, web-based outreach, and in-library bulletin boards and book marks. B. Merritt asked if Steve Goode, from the Hartford Courant, could help publicize the meetings. R. LaMonaca said she'd speak with him.

J. Geetter asked if it was possible to email library patrons, culled from the system, to get the word out. R. LaMonaca said she'd have to check with Library Connection about the guidelines regarding that data. S. Thompson suggested advertising the meetings on BATV. H. Frydman would be happy to ask Howard to run the information, and asked for an example of the language the board wished to use. R. LaMonaca will ask Mark Weisman if it's okay to run the meeting announcements on BATV, and then email Harvey with the go ahead.

R. LaMonaca stated that Bill Hogan, who recently consulted with a bonding attorney, said that the law requires separate lines on the ballot for projects, meaning that the library, 330 Park, and the public works garage should be voted on separately.

P. Pearson said the Friends will work on the getting the word out to people about upcoming meetings, especially the town council meeting on 2/22.

MOTION to adjourn meeting at 5:59 PM; seconded and approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher Siloac,
Technology & Administrative Coordinator