

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

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

**Absent:** No absences.

Quorum present? Yes, 6 of 6

Shirley Thompson called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

Shirley Thompson asked to make a change to the agenda, by moving the Chairperson's Report before the Report from the Friends of the Library. **MOTION to move the Chairperson's Report before the Report from the Friends of the Library;** seconded and passed. S. Thompson also requested that the board move to an executive session following the regular meeting. **MOTION to move into an executive session following the regular meeting;** seconded and passed.

**MOTION to accept the minutes of the February 9, 2016 meeting;** seconded and approved.

*Public Statements* – w/Mark Weisman from the Prosser building committee.

**Building Committee update from Mark Weisman** – R. LaMonaca introduced M. Weisman to the board. Mark brought the board up-to-date on the committee's progress. They're moving along and on target to present plans to the town council at the end of April. They recently met with state Senator Beth Bye, who is an advocate for libraries and making technology accessible. The committee has worked with the architects on an evaluation of space needs. The architects will be working on a floorplan that entails 33,000 square feet, as opposed to the current building's 20,000. Whether or not this is adequate will become clearer once detailed visual plans are drawn up.

To emphasize the need for space, Mark and Roberta pointed to recent discussions with Dr. Lopez, interim provost for the Board of Regents for the Connecticut State University System, about the possibility of offering one-course certification programs at the library. The relationship could be mutually beneficial by bringing non-traditional populations to each institution. Manchester Community College and Capitol Community College have reached out with interest; R. LaMonaca will meet with them when Lois Hager, who helped conceive this idea, returns from vacation. Holding classes in the present Prosser facility would be challenging. There is pressure from the town council to find as much existing space as possible in town for programs. For example, the training room at the police facility could potentially serve as a classroom.

M. Weisman reviewed the options score sheet document with the board, which contains a table with rating criteria for seven different building plans. Plans A, B, and C outline options for the current location/building, and include westward expansion, northwestward expansion, and three-story options. Flood mitigation is assumed as part of the design and cost analysis on these options. Options D and E are at the town hall site, and include a two-story and a three-story plan. The three-story plans create a smaller footprint, but they also need to be functional. Option F is for a shared building at 330 Park. The board discussed some of the possible pros and cons with the 330 Park location. Mark stressed that building a new library will be equally effective, cost-wise, at any location, so a building at 330 Park would not necessarily entail a cost-savings. Plan G is for a library at Wintonbury Mall.

M. Weisman stressed the importance of the board's input in this process, and asked that the board objectively review each scenario and score them, using a 1-5 scale, as has been done by the architects. Based on the work of the committee and the architects up to this point, it looks as though a new building will be a better fit than a renovation, and that the town hall site offers the best advantages. The board discussed pros and cons of the different town hall plans, as well as the other big projects the town is considering: a new public works garage and a renovation of 330 Park. A discussion ensued about the recently discovered legal requirement that projects need to be presented separately on the ballot. B. Merritt asked how the state's financial situation could impact the projects. Mark said that with the school bonding ending, the town should have access to bonding without having to raise taxes. R. LaMonaca said that there are people lobbying to retain the \$1,000,000 state construction grant, and that the library plans to apply if the funds are available.

M. Weisman reviewed the upcoming meeting schedule for the building committee. After the meeting on March 21<sup>st</sup>, where site plans will be more developed with dollar figures, the committee will make a presentation to the Land Use and Economic Development committee. The majority of emphasis will be on the town hall site, but other plans will be presented with a bit less detail. On April 12<sup>th</sup>, following the library board meeting, a public focus group will be hosted in the Prosser community room. B. Merritt recommended that board members attend building committee meetings, which she finds to be highly informative and interesting.

J. Geetter said that Ruth Marchetti, from the Friends, would like to explore the idea of recruiting high school students to attend a building committee meeting and advocate for what they would like to see in a new building. (P. Pearson had to leave the meeting and indicated that J. Geetter would give the Friends' report.) The board discussed the pros and cons of having students as part of the process. S. Thompson stressed the importance of making sure the students had the information and preparation they would need. M. Weisman suggested giving a presentation to a group of pre-selected students, as a way of including them in the process. Staff within the schools would be able to help with selecting students who would be a good fit. R. LaMonaca and the board thanked Mark Weisman for the update.

#### *Chairperson's Report*

**Friends Advocacy at Senior Center** – S. Thompson reported that a few staff members at the senior center had complained about rudeness from a group representing the library that was visiting the center for advocacy purposes. J. Geetter said the complaint might be in response to her visit to the senior center and reflected a possible misunderstanding as to motives. Joan said the Friends were seeking input from seniors as to what they'd like to see in a new library building, and ways in which the senior center and library could work together. S. Thompson and P. Walek were informed of the complaint at the Commission on Aging meeting. It's possible the staff at the senior center see their relationship with the library as adversarial, at least in terms of building project funding. Joan said that she had gone in assuming the projects would be voted on as one question, but the fact that it's three questions could create a sense of competition. R. Lamonaca will call Yvette tomorrow and discuss what occurred.

#### *Report from the Friends of the Library*

**Fact Sheets and Bookmarks** – J. Geetter handed out copies of the fact sheet that the Friends have created for advocacy purposes. The Friends also created bookmarks with the building committee's meeting schedule on the back. The flyers and bookmarks are displayed on the shelf attached to the new standing bulletin boards posted at both libraries.

#### *Director's Report*

**Cocktails for Book Lovers** – R. LaMonaca has spoken to Carbone's Kitchen about reviving last year's Cocktails for Book Lovers program during library week this April. The difference this year is that instead

of getting a discount on particular drinks when you show your library card, a \$1.00 per-drink donation will go to the Prosser building fund.

**Book About Libraries** – Roberta showed the board a book about libraries, *Heart of the Community: The Libraries We Love*, which she has found particularly inspirational, especially in regard to what can be done in a new building. Roberta offered to let board members borrow the book.

**Budget Hearing** – R. LaMonaca will present the library budget on Tuesday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 PM. The library was originally asked to cut \$12,000, but later a total cut of 1% (\$16,000) was requested. The hearing will be in conference room 5. Board members have usually attended the hearing in the past.

**Carpet at McMahon Wintonbury** – R. LaMonaca is working with Ben Whitaker on getting new carpet at McMahon Wintonbury. Roberta and the staff at McMahon Wintonbury have selected three pairs of carpet samples to compare.

**Disc Cleaning & Repair** – A number of the branch's DVDs have recently been returned damaged. The damage appears to be the work of a patron's faulty Xbox. The library is looking to order a disc cleaning and repair machine to remove scratches from discs.

**RFID Technology** – There has been a trend in the past decade towards libraries using radio-frequency identification (RFID) tags in materials. These tags can be read by simply placing the materials on a small platform, making them desirable for patron self-checkout. Chris Siloac recently attended an RFID workshop at Simsbury Library. R. LaMonaca has some reservations about RFID, but it can be useful technology, especially for self-check, security, and inventory control. To convert the collection to RFID is costly and time-consuming, but it might be a worthwhile project ahead of moving into a new building. The option will be discussed further in the months to come.

**Celebrate Bloomfield** – This year's Celebrate Bloomfield event will be held on June 5<sup>th</sup>. The library is not playing as big a role as last year, when we organized the Devon Harris program. The library will be involved in two events: a knitting in public event, which will occur outside; and a Bloomfield Poets reading event, which will take place from 12:00 to 4:00 PM in the Prosser community room. The poetry reading will be organized by Tom Nicotera, who, along with Marilyn Johnston, heads the Wintonbury Poetry Series.

**National Issues Forum** – The library is hosting a program by a man named Bernie Stein, a member of the National Issues Forums Institute, an offshoot of the Kettering Foundation. The institute promotes public deliberation and civil discussion. Mr. Stein will moderate a discussion about creating prosperity for all. The discussion is registration only and limited to 15 people. The participants must prepare by reading a 20 page document prior to the discussion.

**Director's Performance Review** – R. LaMonaca handed out a document outlining her accomplishments from the past year. This document is required by the board in order to assist with their upcoming performance review of the library director.

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

*New Business*

**Friends of the Library Advocacy Website** – J. Geetter and B. Merritt recently attended a building committee meeting, and discussed the need for more pointed advocacy if the building makes it to referendum. J. Geetter is proposing that the Friends have their own website for this purpose, because it isn't appropriate to post it on the Prosser website. R. LaMonaca interjected that the new Prosser website and logo will receive an award from the Connecticut Library Association. The awards will be handed out at the CLA conference in April.

The Friends will discuss this idea further at an upcoming meeting, but J. Geetter wanted to see what the board thought of the idea. She recently contacted a web designer who has experience with library-related websites, and he quoted her \$1000. It could possibly be less than that if the Friends write their own content.

Joan proposed that it would be best to start a web design project now, so that the site is ready when advocacy is most needed. Even if the building project doesn't move forward, the site can continue to be used as an advocacy tool. P. Walek was concerned about how many people would actually see it. R. LaMonaca said that it's easy to track visitors and mentioned the number of monthly website visits the library currently receives. J. Geetter thought the Friends would prefer to have the board's support for the idea. The board agreed it was a good idea and told Joan she could mention their support at the next Friends' meeting.

**MOTION to enter an executive session at 6:28 PM;** seconded and approved.

The board entered an executive session.

**MOTION to adjourn meeting at 6:35 PM;** seconded and approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher Siloac,  
Technology & Administrative Coordinator