


AMENDED MEETING MINUTES
Cromwell Library Commission
Regular Meeting
Monday, March 14, 2022
At 6:30 PM
The Belden Room

Present: Chairman Margaret Colella, Martha Rennie, Kathy Newton, Marie Roberto, Megan Blanchette, Barbara Grotheer

Also Present: Library Director Kara Canney, Paula Luna, Gerald Seagrave

Absent: Karen Spotts

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
May 11, 2022 09:32A
JoAnn Doyle
TOWN CLERK
CROMWELL, CT 

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Margaret Colella at 6:31 PM.

2. Approve/Amend Agenda:

A motion was made by Maria Roberto to approve the agenda for Monday, March 14, 2022, seconded by Barbara Grotheer. *All were in favor; motion passed.*

3. Approval of Minutes of February 14, 2022:

A motion was made by Maria Roberto to approve the minutes of February 14, 2022, seconded by Barbara Grotheer. *All were in favor; motion passed.* There were a few corrections which were reviewed and will be updated. Amended minutes will be filed.

4. Town Council Liaison Comments:

Town Councilor Paula Luna discussed that the Town Council met last Wednesday, March 9th. The Farmer's Market will now be run as a town event, seeing as the Polkes are giving it up and the Council approved the creation of a Special Farmer's Market Revenue Fund. Stuart Popper, the Town Economic Development Coordinator is the market manager; and there will be two co-managers, John Whitney, owner of Phoenix Farm on Nooks Hill Road, and Scott Kieras, our Recreation Director. Mr. Whitney will be hired for \$500 a week for 18 weeks to run the market with the Recreation Director. He will also receive 40% of the income received over \$20,000 as an incentive to increase vendors and sponsors.

Another item on the Town Council agenda last week was the topic of a Community/Senior Center. There were eighteen or twenty people who got up and spoke eloquently about our need for a Community/Senior Center. The room was packed, actually. Five thousand dollars was appropriated from the Capital Non-Recurring Fund for the conceptual architectural design work for the Community/Senior Center. There was discussion as to where we might put it, and do we need to buy land to build. Originally, years ago when they did a study on just a Senior Center, Watrous Park was a possibility. But now, it is going to be a community senior center, so they don't know where they can put it – if there's any land.

Marie Roberto asked the question of why is the town doing a conceptual design without knowing what the land is going to look like first. Chairman Colella asked Ms. Luna to bring that question back to the Town Council.

Bill Russo, the Director of Public Works, requested and received an hourly increase for seasonal town workers from \$13.95 to \$18.78 an hour, because the current rate is too low to attract qualified applicants, as per the parks supervisor.

The Cromwell Police Department is sponsoring an Easter Bunny meet and greet on April 9th, rain or shine, 11-2 at Pierson Park Pavilion. You can register at cromwellpdeaster2022@gmail.com and the cost is \$5.00 per bag of treats.

LED lighting will be installed at Henderson Field, per the request of the Cromwell Little League. The Cromwell Little League is seeking financing through Key Bank. The tennis courts at Watrous Park are going in as soon as they can get them in.

5. Citizens' Comments:

Gerald Seagrave stated that the CLA conference is coming up in May and the schedule is on the CLA website. It will be held at the Hartford Convention Center.

6. Reports:

Chairman's Report -

Chairman Colella spoke about the Community Foundation of Middlesex County and an article in one of the town papers about the Foundation's 25th anniversary. That was a big deal for the Belden Library Association to set up that fund, The Cromwell Belden Public Library Fund, with the Community Foundation of Middlesex County. Director Canney said that she had received a check for \$12,467 this year; in addition to the Peach Pit Foundation gift of \$3,500. This led Chairman Colella and Director Canney into a discussion about perhaps some publicity for estate planning; if people would like to

contribute to that fund as part of their estate planning. Director Canney agreed to contact the Community Foundation of Middlesex County to discuss this.

Martha Rennie went on to suggest that people can contribute two ways; they can contribute a donation at any time, or they can include the library's fund at the Foundation in their will, as part of their estate planning. People have options and it's nice if we're going to do some publicity to make that point because somebody might say "I didn't know that there was a library fund at the Community Foundation, and what a great way to support the library."

Chairman Colella stated that because we are all aware of this, we need to stay on top of it so that it continues.

Director Canney spoke about the Community Foundation of Middlesex County to her staff and they talked about ways they can include it. They were thinking of putting a QR code on the Community Foundation of Middlesex County label and the Peach Pit labels that say "Want to support more programs like this?" so that the QR code will lead to whatever we have set up for information about the Community Foundation of Middlesex County, and ways that people can contribute to the library. We are hoping to create a small part in our newsletter that will be dedicated to that. When Director Canney speaks with Cynthia Clegg, President and CEO of the Community Foundation of Middlesex County, they will discuss creating something – Facebook posts, etc. with their logo. The Foundation is very particular about the wording.

Martha Rennie stated that technically it is their (the Foundation's) money because it is their fund. The money from the fund benefits the library, and that money is never going to run out, because they'll only give about five percent of the assets each year. Director Canney said, that after talking with the Foundation, they will come up with some great literature and then present it to the Library Commission for review.

Chairman Colella spoke in regard to meeting about procedure and policy. Director Canney forwarded some information to Chairman Colella. Chairman Colella said that there is a lot of information out there and it's going to be a "sticky wicket". Director Canney referred to an article in the New York Times titled "A Librarian's Rebuttal", which touches on neutrality.

Marie Roberto stated that we are divorced from the education system; that it has nothing to do with us. This is a public library, it has different clientele, it has a different mission and it is covered under different kinds of laws. It is broader-based than the schools.

Martha Rennie said it was mentioned at the policy sub-committee meeting that the library already does have policies that refer to the Library Bill of Rights, that are part of

the American Library Association. It's not as though we have nothing at this point; we're just going to re-examine it.

Chairman Colella closed her report with talking about the fact that now we are moving forward - using the Belden Room and getting back into programming.

Library Director –

Staff -Second interviews were held on Friday, 3/11. Director Canney made an offer and hopes to have a full-time LTA starting very soon.

Budget -While Director Canney was not in attendance for the Town Council Budget Workshop, the library's budget has moved on without further cuts. The Board of Finance Meetings are in April.

Seed Library- The seed library was wildly popular. We did add a cap of 5 packets per patron in order to keep seeds available for other patrons. We did replenish with more seeds after nearly 250 packets were gone within a few days.

Belden Room- A company has been contacted, we are just making sure that the correct scope of work will be done before selecting a date for the air balancing. The Engineer from Silver Petrucelli has been working with us on this.

Study Rooms- Director Canney requested that the study rooms in the library get back to pre-Covid capacities. We have had many people asking to use the space for small group work and had been limiting to one person based on the Health Coordinator's recommendations. As of 3/9/2022 this has been approved.

Summer Reading- We are once again collaborating with the Recreation Department. This time for our Summer Reading Kick-Off and Summer Reading Wrap-up. We are planning to have a concert at each event. We are thinking of an 80's theme for the Summer Reading-Wrap-up concert.

Adventure Boxes- Most of the items have arrived. They are boxes with different themes: a metal detector kit, a pasta making kit, a bird watching kit, an outdoor movie night – all fun ones. We are beginning to catalog the items and hope to have them ready for circulation in early April. You will be able to check them out for two weeks.

Eggs-The eggs will be arriving on 3/22 and the chicks should hatch 21 days later. We have lots of corresponding programs for children and adults.

Policy Revision Update- The committee has already completed nine sections. Once complete, the committee will look at the policies as a whole and then present them to

the Library Commission. Once approved by the Commission, they will go to the Town Manager for approval before being brought to Town Council.

Marie Roberto asked about the study rooms. Director Canney said we are back up to full speed. There is a two-hour limit in the rooms.

Statistics were looked over and it was asked why there were so many reference requests by phone. Director Canney stated that it was because so many people were at home during the pandemic.

A motion was made by Kathy Newton to accept the Library Director's Report, seconded by Marie Roberto. *All were in favor; motion passed.*

Finance Report –

Director Canney said Emma and Emily have done a good job with spending down the account and there are some months that require more spending than others; but that is what it's there for.

Barbara Grotheer said that she used to go to the Rocky Hill Library a lot, but she doesn't feel the need to go there anymore because she finds what she needs here.

Director Canney thinks the Pandemic taught our patrons how to use our catalog. This helped with finding out what the patrons want and we are able to buy the appropriate number of copies so that when you do come in, you will find one on the shelf and we can fill the demand. The staff does a good job of making great selections and making sure the library is balanced.

Barbara Grotheer said that in addition to that the library did the "Blind Date with a Book" again and it was fun.

A motion was made by Barbara Grotheer to accept the Finance Report, seconded by Martha Rennie. *All were in favor; motion passed.*

7. Old Business:

Director Canney mentioned the air balancing report coming in later this week and find out if that what we need to remedy.

8. New Business:

Director Canney talked about the LTA possibly starting next week and hoping the budget passes through the Board of Finance.

9. Other:

None

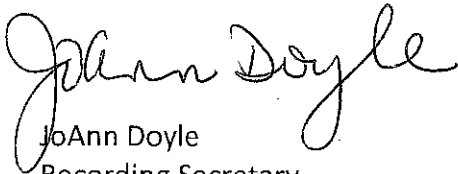
10. Next Meeting Date:

There was discussion to possibly cancel the April Library Commission meeting and meet again in May.

11. Adjournment:

A motion was made by Kathy Newton to adjourn at 7:28 PM, seconded by Chairman Colella. *All were in favor; motion passed.*

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "JoAnn Doyle". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

JoAnn Doyle
Recording Secretary