

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, April 2, 2025, 6:00 p.m.

Location: Library Auditorium, 758 Main Street

Trustees (Present): Liz Alcorn, Michelle Blank, Chad Edgar, Paul Gavejian (Zoom), Nancy Goldstein, Larry Greenberg, Mary-Rita Killelea, Janice Kochanowski, Andy Melnick, Jack Thompson, Sue Wharfe (Zoom), Lisa Zwack

Trustees (Absent): Cheryl Kaiden

Friends of the Library: Barbara Barrett

Staff: Katy McNicol, Library Director, Kathy Oxsalida, Business Manager, Rhea Williams, Director of Development

Yale SOM Fellow: Brianna Hoelting (Zoom), Megan Tao

President's Remarks – Janice Kochanowski called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm. She reminded the Trustees to sign up to volunteer at the upcoming mini-golf fundraising event on April 26-27. Janice reported that the annual budget was presented to the RTM Board of Finance on March 20 and notice was received on April 2 that the Board did not recommend any changes. The RTM Education Committee will review the annual budget on April 7 and Trustees are urged to attend.

Additions to the Agenda – none

Approval of Minutes— The minutes were corrected to expand and clarify several items in the Buildings and Grounds report and to correct the misspelling of a name. Nancy Goldstein moved to approve the minutes as corrected. Larry Greenberg seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Director's Report – Katy McNicol reported that the annual budget review before the RTM Board of Finance on March 20 went very well and she was able to provide an accurate and comprehensive response to a question on the current value of the sinking fund. She will present the annual budget to the RTM Education Committee on April 7. Katy attended several meetings held for social services agencies. One meeting, hosted by Jamie Cosgrove and the Branford Community Foundation, provided an opportunity for social service agencies to share the impact of recent federal funding cuts. The cuts are already affecting food, shelter and health services and the Town is looking for ways to help the agencies continue to deliver services. While the effect on the Blackstone is currently unclear, the staff at the federal Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) have been placed on administrative leave. This organization directly funds Connecticut state libraries which in turn provide free services to the Blackstone, including ebook downloads, staff development and workshop training and summer reading program support. The Blackstone may need to divert some funding in order to continue providing these services if IMLS funding goes away. The library has hired a new reference librarian, Ryan Keeler, who will start work on Monday. Ryan worked at the Hamden Public Library and is interested in supporting civic education. The library is hosting a toiletries drive for the Community Dining Room from April 12 through May 12.

Friends of the Library – Barbara Barrett reported that the Friends are working with the Town to finalize Foote Park as the location for the Fall Book Sale. The spring Warehouse Sale will be held on May 3. There will also be a special sale of history books at the warehouse in late June. Barbara continues to work on securing sponsorships for the Fall Book Sale to defer additional costs due to the change of venue.

Treasurer's Report – Larry Greenberg reported that total accounts declined about \$30k for the month, or 6%, to \$4.95m. Larry noted that all portfolios performed better than the benchmarks. Within the total the main account declined \$26k, or 6%, to \$4.4m. The Creative-in-Residence account declined \$6k, or 1%, to \$551k.

Kathy Oxsalida presented the February variance report and stated that two accounts are running over budget, utilities due to increased utilities rates and repairs and maintenance due to recent snow plowing bills.

Committee Reports—

Finance Committee— Larry reported that the committee did not meet in March because there was no pressing business.

Buildings and Grounds Committee – Michelle reminded Trustees that the Blackstone will support the use of library grounds by non -profit organizations this summer due to the unavailability of the Town Green. In this regard the committee has developed two documents to facilitate this undertaking, a Use of Library Grounds by Non-Profit Organizations policy statement and a Non-Profit Application for Use of Library Grounds application form. These documents were submitted to the B&G Committee for review, feedback and coordination with Town Green policy. Andy Melnick moved to approve the Use of Library Grounds by Non-Profit Organizations and the Non-Profit Application for Use of Library Grounds documents. Janice seconded the motion. The motion carried. Katy reported that the balcony enclosure RFQ/P text was finalized and approved by the Connecticut State Library. Legal notice will be published on April 10. It is registered with the state contracting portal and will go live on April 3. People in the library's classification list who have signed up to get alerts will receive notice of the posting and be invited to read the RFQ/P and follow the procedure if they are interested. Site visits have been set up for April 14 and April 15. Anyone wishing to submit a bid must attend at least one site visit and bids will be accepted until May 1. Michele announced that Steve Margolis has agreed to join the committee as an external member. Steve has over 25 years of property management experience, particularly with respect to evaluating a property to identify particular issues and establishing relationships with vendors. Steve will spearhead the facilities study.

Development Committee – Nancy reported that the committee met in March and discussed progress on the mini golf event. Some sponsorships are still available and items are being collected for prize drawings and raffles. The committee continues to work with Brianna Hoelting to finalize their committee charter document and to align some charter items with the Governance Committee. The sign- up sheet circulated at the meeting will also be available online. Tickets are selling well online and people are looking forward to coming back for spring mini golf at the Blackstone.

Governance Committee – Sue Wharfe reported that the committee will meet next week to finalize a by-laws amendment that provides a procedure for holding a meeting by email to vote on a single issue. The committee will also establish a Nominating Committee to set up a slate of officers for the 2025-2026

year. Sue asked any Trustee interested in being a member of the Nominating Committee to contact her. Janice moved to authorize the Governance Committee to establish a Nominating Committee to provide a slate of officers for the 2025-2026 year. Nancy Goldstein seconded the motion. The motion carried. The committee will also work to clarify the voting rights of external members of committees and provide consistency on this issue among committee charters.

Janice moved that the Board enter Executive Session. Nancy Goldstein seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The Board entered Executive Session at 6:56 pm. The Board exited Executive Session at 7:14 pm.

Adjournment – Janice made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Michelle seconded the motion. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm. pm.

Next regular meeting will be held on May 7, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary-Rita Killelea
Secretary

Note: minutes are provisional until approved by the Board of Trustees.