

Lyme Public Library Board of Directors

Meeting Minutes
February 23, 2022

Present: Judith Ulrich, Chair; Diana Fiske, Vice-Chair; Mary Stone, Secretary *pro tem*; Diane Brown; Emily Hildner; Laura Mooney; Morgan Regan; Jack Sulger.

Ex officio: Melissa Fournier, Library Director; Steven Mattson, First Selectman.

Visitors: John Kiker and David Lahm, Lyme Selectmen; Deb Giaconia and Jo Ann Shettles, President and Vice-President of The Friends of the Library.

Absent: Lynn Richmond.

1. Meeting opening: Chair Judy Ulrich determined that a quorum of members were present and convened the meeting at 05:01PM.

2. Remarks by Visitors: None.

3. Approval of Minutes of prior meeting: Mary Stone noted that First Selectman Mattson should be listed as an *ex officio* member of the Board, not as a Guest. Emily Hildner made a motion to approve the minutes of January 26, 2022 as amended, and Diana Fiske seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

4. Library Director's Reports:

a. Library Usage, Programs, Facility: Library usage is down a bit from last year. A potential bullying incident was resolved satisfactorily: staff interaction with children and parents caused a change in behavior.

b. Update on children's programming: Melissa Fournier reported that sickness accounted for the low attendance at children's programs in January. Attendance at young adult programs is improving. However, Melissa believes that the Library's location inhibits participation as it is miles away from the Middle and High Schools.

Preschool story hour: Morgan Regan asked whether these could be advertised on flyers to distribute through the schools. She offered to do the flyers. Melissa is collaborating with the Lymes' Youth Service Bureau, and Morgan emphasized the need for more such collaboration.

Summer reading program: Melissa and the Children's Librarian have been developing a summer reading program at the request of Lyme Consolidated School. They especially want to collaborate with Lyme non-profits. They are sorting through many ideas for funding the program and its incentive gifts.

Morgan commended the breadth of the summer reading program. She suggested asking the businesses that donate prizes to also advertise the program. Morgan said The Friends should be cognizant of not overlapping solicitations to the same non-profit groups. Laura Mooney encouraged the effort, especially since it will be the first time in several years that the Lyme Library has had a summer reading program. A discussion ensued on funding the prizes. Melissa suggested asking local businesses to fund museum passes.

Steve Mattson explained that funds could be raised by the Library itself, but they must be so designated in the Town budget in order to be spent. This requires advance planning.

5. Report of The Friends of the Library:

Deb Giaconia, Chair, reported that The Friends are transitioning from arranging adult programs to doing more fundraising. They will concentrate on special projects, foster a closer relationship between the Library and the community, and buy equipment outside the Library's budget, as well as continuing to fund many of the adult programs.

The Friends program budget for the year is \$4,000, of which \$1,850 remains. All are welcome to attend their monthly meetings.

6. Old Business:

a. Anti-bullying policy: Melissa asked the Board to make a definitive statement against bullying. Emily agreed, saying that it would be good to have a written policy on record stating that such behavior would not be tolerated. Jack Sulger thought the times called for it. Judy thought that the anti-bullying policy could be incorporated into the existing Library behavior policy.

Mary asked about the difference between the Library behavior policy and the anti-bullying policy. Melissa explained that the anti-bullying policy is one component of the code of conduct for patrons and staff. The policy will be posted on the website, as are all Library policies.

Melissa asked Board members to email her with suggested changes, and she will revise the draft accordingly. The policy will be voted on at the March meeting.

b. Strategic Plan Discussion and Prioritization:

The document "Review of Progress on Strategic Plan as of 1/20/22" was distributed. At this meeting, the first two of the four goals were reviewed in order to prioritize where staff and Board should focus their efforts this year. Many of the action steps are already underway.

Goal 1 – "Evolve the Library as a Community Center for the Town of Lyme."
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Strategy 1: Collaborate with other community organizations.

Actions 1 & 2: Collaborating with other local community organizations and strengthening our relationship with Lyme Consolidated School are both well launched. They remain high priorities for most Board members.

Action 3: Steve thought that strengthening relationships with elected boards was not necessary, but that Board members ought to learn how Town government works.

Action 5: A "medium" priority.

- A "binder, or preferably an online list, could be compiled to list volunteer opportunities in and outside of town government. A directory of local businesses was also suggested. Laura asked about how to link newcomers with it.
- David Lahm emphasized that any list of businesses could not imply endorsement by the Library or the Town.

Strategy 2: Develop a welcome program for new residents.

The Board agreed to form a committee to plan a welcome reception for our new Library Director in warmer weather, and that plans for patron coffee get-togethers on the patio would be introduced as the weather improves and COVID restrictions are lifted. Judy requested Board members contact her about their interest in these activities.

Strategy 3: Develop publicity and marketing plans.

Action 1: A brochure outlining the wide array of Library services was discussed. Melissa suggested a welcome packet be handed out with new library cards.

Action 7: Melissa said it would be helpful if the staff were not tasked with doing a marketing plan.

Action 8: The staff is being cross-trained to update the website more frequently, in order to better promote Library services.

Goal 2 – "Increase Library use by Improving Programs and Services."
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Strategy 1: Develop new programs and services.

Action 1: A new Program Committee has been formed, consisting of Melissa, Holly Rubino (representing The Friends), and chaired by Diana Fiske. They will meet quarterly, and work collaboratively to oversee adult programming, with a mix of in-person and virtual presentations. They will seek to use the talents, knowledge, and experience of local people.

Discussion of Goals 3 and 4 was postponed until the March meeting.

7. Adjournment: Emily made a motion to adjourn, and Diane seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 06:33PM.

Respectfully submitted by
Mary Stone, Secretary *pro tem*

Next Meeting: March 30, 2022 at 5:00PM in the Community Room
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