

Lyme Public Library Board of Directors

Meeting Minutes
JANUARY 25, 2023

Present: Judith Ulrich, Chair; Diane Brown; Emily Hildner, Laura Mooney; Joan Motyka; Lynn Richmond; Mary Stone; Jack Sulger.

Absent: Morgan Regan

Ex Officio: Melissa Fournier, Library Director

Guests: Deborah Giaconia, President, Friends of the Lyme Public Library; John Kiker, Selectman

1. Call to order: Chair Judith Ulrich called the meeting to order at 5:04 PM.
2. Remarks by Guests:
3. Approval of Meeting Minutes: Mary Stone made a motion to approve the minutes of the November meeting and it was seconded by Emily Hildner. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Friend's Report:

Deb provided an update on the various activities the Friends of Lyme Library have undertaken including the very successful Sweet Spot, which has been well- attended and the music at the last one was well-received. Deb opened with programming budget reviewed. She noted that Membership is up to 62 members. The Board discussed the importance of having parties to celebrate all the hard work done by library staff and contributions of Board members. She highlighted the importance of our collaborative approach to events and the sense of community we are building. She reported that Book sales for December yielded 45 dollars. The next Sweet Spot is February 7th and invited all to join.

5. Library Director's Report:

Program Update:

Melissa shared that the programs are doing very well. We have a wide range of programs - inside and outside of the library including:

- Afterschool programs
- Cookbook club
- Racial equity book club: The book for March will be "Chasing Me to My Grave: An Artist's Memoir of the Jim Crow South," a 2021 memoir by artist Winfred Rembert. The presenter will donate her honorarium to the artist's widow, Patsy Rembert.
- As the Page Turns, our joint program with the Lymes Senior Center is doing well.
- Yoga

- Sweet Spot created by the Friends and the Board has been very well received.
- Melissa reminded the Board about the opening to the Kathy Axilrod exhibit in the Community Room at 2pm this Saturday and the fact that she has lined up another artist for a subsequent exhibit. Jack inquired as to the proceeds of the exhibit and Melissa noted that 80 percent will go to the Ukrainian Red Cross and 20 percent will go to the library which should improve the income. She also informed them of the program scheduled, “Women and Wealth” on March 2nd.

Melissa updated the Board on key performance measures:

- We are tracking ahead of budget
- The digital collection is up to 400’s from the 300’s
- Attendance continues to increase, especially on Saturday

Finance and Budget

Melissa noted that she submitted a budget to the Board of Finance, and there was discussion about some concerns with the additional costs for LIONS. Many on the Board felt optimistic it would be approved, especially once Melissa explained the benefits to them. She updated the Board that we are under budget to date.

Recent achievements:

Children’s art bookmarks were printed and pictures of the of the bookmark winners will be going up on the website. The project has been a great success and we will likely do again.

Update on new programming

Melissa shared that a “Library without Walls” is the way we can bring the library to where people are. Projects underway include a collaboration with the Lymes’ Senior Center to develop a mobile book outreach program. Another thought is as the weather warms, have the Library “outdoors.”

Other Updates:

Melissa noted that we are looking to reduce our reference material as we have a large collection that may not be necessary and we will be streamlining our magazine section.

Children’s Library

Natalie has created a pipeline of children’s programming. One idea is to ~~starting with~~ a garden in the area on ~~porch~~ patio where the painted stones currently are. The Friends have generously agreed to purchase tables and chairs for the children programming.

The Board reflected on the positive collaboration that enabled last year’ successful party and how important many on the Board felt Parties were to celebrate the hard work of the library staff and contributions of Board members.

6. New Business:

1. Judy spoke to the need to have a Vice Chair and a Secretary. Several Board members expressed their interest in assisting the Board in the capacity of Vice Chair. A discussion ensued.
2. Strategic Plan Update
3. Discussion was initiated around planning for an updated Strategic Plan for Spring 2023 – 2025. A discussion ensued about best practices, the value for the community and the need for information the survey captures when applying for outside funding. A decision was made that it would not be a completely new plan but rather an update to the existing plan.
 1. Judy and Melissa initiated the conversation with the Board and the following suggestions emerged:
 - a. Hold a meeting of staff and Board for a half-day meeting for identifying potential goals.
 - b. Form a committee to draft goals based on outcomes of 1/2 day “retreat” as well as community, staff and board survey feedback. Follow-up questions include who should serve on the committee, the best process for finalizing goals and developing strategies to achieve.
 - c. Present the draft updated plan to the Board in February for feedback.
 - d. Necessary modifications may be made with the idea that the Board might adopt a plan as early as March.
 2. The Board discussed the best way to get structured input from the community, staff and Board members. Several board members volunteered to work with Melissa in drafting the survey questions. Melissa and the library staff will discuss. A draft survey will be sent to the Board for review, comment and approval. A discussion was held about the best way to do a survey: using the newsletter, survey monkey or mailings. Decision pending. Melissa delineated four key areas she felt should be addressed in the strategic plan update – the facility, collection development, staffing and community involvement.

7. Executive Session:

Mary Stone made a motion to move into executive session for personal and governance reasons. John Kiker was invited to participate. Lynn seconded the motion. The Board came out of Executive Session at 6:14PM.

8. Adjournment:

Mary Stone made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Emily Hildner seconded. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:15PM.

Next meeting: February 22, 2023

Respectfully submitted by
Lynn Richmond, secretary pro tem,
With help from Emily Hildner