

Lyme Public Library Board of Directors  
Meeting Minutes July 26, 2023

**Present:** Judith Ulrich, chair; Laura Mooney, vice chair; Joan Motyka, secretary; John Kiker

**Absent:** Lynn Richmond, Diane Brown, Michael James

**Ex-Officio:** Melissa Fournier, Library Director

**Guests:** Jacqueline Jaffe, president of the Lyme Library Foundation; Deborah Giaconia, former president, Friends of the Lyme Public Library; Ralph Lewis, Mary Powell-St Louis, Dottie Wells and Judy Davies, Lyme residents; Mona Colwell, Old Lyme resident; Doug Lord, Connecticut Library Association

**NO QUORUM NO MOTIONS**

1. **Call to Order:** Chair Judith Ulrich called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. She introduced Ralph Lewis, a longtime Lyme resident and geologist who has been active in many local organizations, as a prospective board member. Awaiting a quorum, Judy opened the floor for guest comments.
2. **Guest comments:** Mona Colwell, an Old Lyme resident, discussed her opposition, and that of several Old Lyme residents, to books shelved in the “tween room” at the Phoebe Griffin Noyes library in Old Lyme, because of what she called their sexual content. She cited a letter written by Old Lyme library officials responding to concerns she raised and provided the board with that letter. She also cited statistics on child pornography drawn from a publication, *Recovering Hearts*, which she provided to the board; it identifies itself as serving “as a blueprint for churches and faith-based communities to encourage the sexual purity and wholeness of men, women and children.” John thanked her for attending this board meeting but said the board would not respond to her because she was from Old Lyme and not Lyme.
3. **Report of the Friends:** Former president Deb Giaconia said work was underway by the Friends for the annual book sale on Sept. 8 and 9 and encouraged board involvement.
4. **Report by Foundation president:** Jacqueline Jaffe said preparations were underway for the Foundation’s annual fundraiser, *Jersey Boys*, at the Ivoryton Playhouse on Aug. 31. She said 50 of the 100 available tickets have been sold and there are already seven paid sponsors for the event and others are expected. She said the Foundation’s finance committee will meet next week and she will attend and report to the library board.
5. **Director’s Report:** In June, year over year, total print and digital circulation increased, as did computer and meeting room use. The number of children’s programs increased to 9, from 2, while attendance rose sharply to 204 from 20. The number of adult programs for the month increased to 12, from 5, but attendance fell to 60, from 85 a year earlier. Attendance at the library was 1,223 for June, down from 1,661 a year earlier.

- a. Upcoming programs include a new book club exploring conservative and liberal political thought (via Zoom); a new monthly library puzzle club, starting Sept. 12, and a new library stitch craft club beginning Sept. 23.
  - b. Melissa, reporting on a June 30 visit by a Lyme resident to discuss the library's YA and children's collection, cited the library's collection development and unattended child policies, and said all library books are compliant with state and federal laws and are in line with the publishers' recommendations for age-appropriate materials for young adults.
  - c. Major damage in the Fireplace Room ceiling is being repaired and the library will be closed for repairs on Aug. 8 and 9.
  - d. The library has two new laptops, hard drives and monitors.
  - e. Preparations for the changeover to the LIONS network are underway.
  - f. In fiscal year 2023, the library spent 97% of its budget, returning \$6,476.24 to the town's general fund. In FY 2022 to FY2023, there were increases in total circulation (roughly 15%), meeting room use (78%), attendance (25%), computer use (110%), number of children's programs (40%), and attendance at children's programs (700%). There were declines in the number of YA programs (70%) and attendance at YA programs (77%). Overall attendance at programs was up 159% even as the number of overall programs was down 37%; adult program attendance was up 99% even as the number of adult programs was down 49%.
6. **Approval of Meeting Minutes, June 28:** No quorum, no vote
7. **Old Business:**
- a. **Election of Nominating Committee:** Judy is seeking board members for this committee.
  - b. **Strategic Planning Process:** An August meeting will be held to work on the strategic plan, with details to come.
8. **Adjournment: 6:30 pm**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Joan Motyka, Secretary of the Board of Lyme Public Library.