

FINAL  
Bloomfield Public Library  
Board of Trustees  
Conference Remote Meeting  
November 10, 2020

**Attendance:** Elizabeth Lane (*Library Director*), Ava Biffer (*Chairperson*), Leah Farrell (*Vice-Chairperson*), Todd Cooper, Ann Leavitt, Maxine Ursery, Christopher Siloac (*Library Staff*)

**Absent:** Beverlee Merritt

Quorum present? Yes, 5 of 6

A. Biffer called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

*Roll Call* – A. Biffer performed roll call and noted the absence of B. Merritt and T. Cooper. T. Cooper joined the meeting at 6:03 PM.

*Presentation: Library Board Basics from Dawn La Valle, Director, Division of Library Development, Connecticut State Library*

**Board Presentation** – Dawn La Valle introduced Gail Richmond, the chairperson of the Association of Connecticut Library Boards (ACLB). D. La Valle and G. Richmond delivered a presentation to the library board on board basics, including topics such as governance, advocacy, fundraising, planning, hiring, policies, budgeting, and responsibilities. One item of interest was the importance of a new member orientation for board members, which would include the ACLB trustee handbook, by-laws, and other essential documents. D. La Valle will send the board a copy of the presentation and other helpful links.

*Report from the Friends of the Bloomfield Public Libraries* - There was no report from the Friends

*Chairperson's Report*

**Annual Evaluation** – The annual evaluation of the library director has been completed and was accepted by Cindy Coville, the Director of Human Resources. A. Biffer suggested that the board evaluate and make changes to the evaluation form in the next few months.

**Reporting Motions and Votes in Minutes**– A. Biffer consulted Marguerite Phillips in the town clerk's office on recommendations for how the board should record motions and votes in the minutes. M. Phillips advised the board to record trustees making and seconding motions, as well as listing individual votes when a vote is not unanimous. C. Siloac will begin to record minutes as advised.

**Building Committee** - Greg Davis, chair of the building committee, will be inviting all board members to a joint meeting. A. Biffer will notify the board once Greg has set a date.

*Director's Report*

**Board Professional Development**– There are two upcoming professional development opportunities for the library board: the ACLB Virtual Leadership Conference, focused on advocacy and budgets in COVID-19, and the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities virtual convention, which includes a capital project session.

**Community College Partnership** – There is interest on the building committee for having the library partner with community colleges. Governor Lamont just announced a statewide strategic plan that focuses on workforce development and community colleges. The library will stay abreast of that plan.

**Windsor Federal Signers** – L. Farrell and B. Merritt are now authorized as signers with Windsor Federal.

**Kids Vote 2020** – Clifford the Big Red Dog won the library’s Kids Vote 2020 dog election. There were 77 total votes, including 48 virtual, with the remaining votes being cast in person on election day.

**Building Committee**– The upcoming special meeting of the Prosser Building Committee will deal with site location and includes six sites for review.

**Building Vision**– Library staff recently held an all staff meeting focused on creating a staff vision for the new building. E. Lane will share the staff vision in a one page document.

**Community Survey** – The building committee is working with consultants on developing a survey to share town-wide, using both digital and physical distribution methods. The library had planned a COVID-19 services survey, but will hold off now to allow for better reach of the building committee’s survey. It is possible some of the same items will be included in the community survey.

**Retirement Announcement** – After 35 years of dedicated service, Linda Gabianelli, Director of Children’s Services, will retire as of November 21.

**McMahon Wintonbury Service Expansion** – Starting next week, McMahon Wintonbury will begin allowing technology and browsing appointments, with a limited number of people at one time. Similar to other service expansions, this will have a soft opening to allow for procedural adjustments as needed.

**Children’s Book Week** – This week is children’s book week, so the library is giving away books from today until November 13. The books are from donation shelves, and range from board books to YA. The program is meant to promote literacy for children and teens.

**Art Policy**– At the recent department heads meetings, the town manager proposed an art policy for town buildings. E. Lane is concerned about the policy being overly detailed and restrictive. She will email a draft to the library board for feedback.

**Social Equity** – There is a directive from the town council concerning social equity. The library has been taking a lead on this by breaking down barriers to access, and focusing on serving everybody in the community. The library recently held an all staff training session with the National Conference on Community and Justice, focused on various “isms,” and the library is hosting a podcast chat about race-based issues, such as voter suppression. E. Lane will put together and share with the board a document summarizing the library’s work on these issues. She will also meet with the town manager to discuss the library’s initiatives and approach.

**Library Programs** – E. Lane described how the library is meeting its goals concerning diverse programming for all ages. Last month the library delivered 56 total programs, with an attendance of 908 people. E. Lane praised the many staff members involved with making these numbers possible.

**Board of Education** – The library will now be meeting with members of the board of education on a monthly basis. An example of the collaborative initiatives that these meetings will focus on is linking student IDs with library cards.

**Center for Latino Progress** – The library continues to partner with outside organizations, such as the Center for Latino Progress. An event stemming from this partnership is the upcoming Bike and Book event on Zoom, which will be held on November 16 at 7:00 PM.

**Surveys** - In a response to a question by T. Cooper about the two surveys, E. Lane and A. Biffer stressed that they hope the upcoming consultant survey coming out of the building committee can include some of

the service-oriented items that the library initially wanted in a survey. As members of the building committee, they will have some input on this process, and will make sure the board is kept informed as the survey develops.

**Expansion of Services** - In response to a question from A. Leavitt concerning the library opening more to the general public, E. Lane said that the library is focused on expanding services, such as appointments at McMahon Wintonbury, in accordance with public health directives. With the numbers of COVID cases currently rising, E. Lane does not anticipate opening the library further, but appointments and curbside service remain available.

#### *Old Business*

**2021 Meeting Schedule** – The board will look to approve the 2021 meeting schedule at the December meeting. With so much work to be done, the board will include July and August meeting dates on the schedule. E. Lane and C. Siloac will draft the schedule before the next meeting.

**New Trustee Orientation Materials** – A. Biffer would like the board to discuss orientation materials for new trustees at the January meeting. Based on tonight’s presentation and the ACLB handbook, the board should be thinking about which materials to include in such a kit.

**Conference Registration** - Board members interested in attending the upcoming ACLB or CCM conferences should contact E. Lane and she will register them.

#### *New Business*

**Building Vision** - E. Lane asked the board to begin thinking of a vision for the new building. The vision should result in a single-page document that can be shared with the building committee and the architects. A discussion of the building wishlist will be included as part of the next library board meeting. Board members can begin to email A. Biffer and L. Farrell with ideas for a wishlist.

*Public Comments* – There were no public comments.

**MOTION by A. Leavitt to accept the minutes of the October 13, 2020 meeting as written;** seconded by L. Farrell and approved unanimously.

**MOTION by A. Leavitt to adjourn meeting at 7:01 PM;** seconded by T. Cooper and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher Siloac,  
Technology & Administrative Coordinator