

Ridgefield Library Board Meeting  
March 23, 2015

Present: Amanda Bergen; Matt Byrnes; Shane Casey; Marc Colamaria (Board Chair); Rob Ellis; Woody Harford; Liz Kelly; Dean Miller; George Nichols; Gary Rapp; Mary Mann Smith; Bob Whitton; David Yaun

Others present: Chris Nolan, Library Director; Laureen Bubniak, Director of Development; Mary Rindfleisch, Assistant Director; Laureen Bubniak, Director of Development

Excused: Philip Lodewick

### **Call to Order**

Board Chair Marc Colamaria called the Board meeting to order at 7:40 pm on March 23, 2015 in the Leir Children's Program Room.

### **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the February 23, 2014 Library Board meeting were approved as written.

### **Chairman's Announcements**

Board Chair Marc Colamaria mentioned the RVNA Spelling Bee Champ Dean Miller and his close rival Matt Byrnes. Marc praised the Development Committee for their work on the upcoming gala on April 25. He also mentioned the hard work of the Governance Committee as they work on recruitment. Marc also referenced the concerns over parking, noting that First Selectman Marconi is calling a meeting of stakeholders on this topic for March 25. The CHIRP concerts will create an added pressure on parking. Director Nolan will be participating.

### **Library Director's Report**

A written report was included in the board packet. The comments pertaining to the Library Director's report had to do with the issue of the State Budget proposed loss of nearly \$2M from state funds. No money is currently in this proposed budget for any library services. There is an advocacy webinar coming shortly that board members are encouraged to listen to. Also, there is a Meet Your Legislators program in the Library on March 31 where it would be wise to advocate for library funds. Director Nolan will draw up advocacy information that will be shared with the Board and the public on this issue.

### **Governance Committee**

Liz Kelly announced that Governance Committee has 10 potential candidates to be interviewed as Board members. Those interviews will take place in April. The Governance Committee will be presenting the slate of officers for next year at the April meeting. Board members who are interested in self-nominating for a position on the Executive Committee, or for nominating someone else from the Board are asked to contact Liz.

Liz recently attended an excellent program sponsored by the local United Way regarding best practices with non-profit boards. It was run by Michael Davidson and dealt with issues such as

what makes a board effective? Many of the items mentioned are things we already do. The assessment we recently completed is one item that was a highly recommended practice. Some of the most important traits for board members include:

- understand and believe in the mission
- understands their roles as advocates
- having their skills utilized

The organization must make clear expectations of new board members –the time required, the financial commitment expected, the support expected of development activities. For board members, the organization must be one of your most meaningful charities.

This discussion lead into the individual assessment completed in the fall. Major findings were shared. A robust discussion took place. Areas where we can improve:

- have a single sheet of expectations to be shared with candidates being considered for board positions
- during on-boarding, consider assigning a mentor for each new board member
- continue with the orientation, but offer a 2<sup>nd</sup> orientation about 6 months in to get a more solid understanding
- have Board Chair (and Library Director) meet with each board member to discuss committee assignments

The discussion of the assessment of the full board will take place at the April meeting.

### **Finance**

The Library's Proposed Budget at this point has been trimmed to a 2.5% increase from the prior year. There is a Town Meeting on the whole Town Budget and School budget on Monday March 30 at 7 pm at East Ridge Middle School. The public vote on the budget is in early May.

The Finance Committee took action to re-finance our line of credit a lower interest rate.

### **Paccadolmi Award**

Two names were brought forth for the Paccadolmi Award. In the leadership category, Carrol Brewster was nominated. In the volunteer category, Kimberly Sauter was nominated. These were unanimously approved. The date for awarding these hasn't been established. It may be incorporated in a "First Anniversary" Celebration.

### **Development Committee**

A general overview of the upcoming gala was shared. Sponsorships, tickets and ads are coming in nicely. The Committee has been doing a wonderful job.

A review of the dashboard took place.

**Library Merchandise Update**

Mary Smith shared information about possible library-related merchandise that could possibly be sold at the Circulation Desk. She asked for additional help from the Board in this. George Nichols offered to help. More information to come.

**Update on Grants Under Consideration**

Assistant Director Mary Rindfleisch reported on grants that we are applying for. One is an LSTA Federal Grant that is something of an extension of a successful aspect of the Big Read. It has to do with intergenerational book discussions led by students at the high school. Another is a proposal to Boehringer that has to do with STEM. We still have a proposal out to Leir that is requesting a three year project in one of 3 areas.

We will likely begin to hear back on these in May.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Christina Nolan  
Library Director