

Ridgefield Library Board
February 23, 2009

Present: Melissa Buckwalter, Peter Coffin, (Chair); Lori Dowling; Thomas Hoban; Abigail Cahill Kagan; Mark Meachem, Brian Oren; Robert Payne; Cloris Pearson; Beverley Rogers; Bruce Ruehl

Others present: Director Christina Nolan (ex-officio); Mary Rindfleisch, Assistant Library Director; Robert Leavitt, President, Friends of Ridgefield Library; Leslie Vuilleumier, Executive Assistant

Excused: Peter Authier; Barbara Dobbin; Eileen Walker

Call to Order

Chairman Peter Coffin called the Board meeting to order on February 23, 2009 at 7:45 PM in the Dayton Program room of the Ridgefield Library.

Approval of Minutes

Two corrections were made to the January 26 minutes. The minutes were then approved.

Chairman's Announcements

Community feedback concerning the Webster Bank has been less than what was anticipated.

Consent Agenda

A written Director's Report will be sent to the board in a few days. The consent agenda was approved. It included the Activity Report, the Development Committee Report and the Building Improvement Committee Report.

Friends of the Library

The Building Permit was received for the storage container requested by the Friends of the Library for book storage. Bob Leavitt will contact the leasing company and schedule a drop off date. The Friends will need advance notice of the demolition date to pack up their internet books from the Webster Bank building. They are looking for approximately 800 sq. ft. of heated space to work in when they move out of the building.

Development Committee

A compilation of board connections was distributed to the Development Committee at their meeting last week.

Charter of Legacy Society – Beverley Rogers and Mark Meachem spoke on the creation of the Morris Legacy Society for those dedicated Ridgefield Library Supporters which include the Ridgefield Library in their estate planning documents. A motion for the creation and mission statement of this society was approved. The committee is looking at dates to schedule an event to honor those members on an annual basis.

Annual Appeal – The amount donated to date is approximately 1.4% less than last year but the actual donation amounts are larger. Mary Rindfleisch distributed donor reminder notes for the board to add personal messages to those patrons that typically donate in the spring.

Finance Committee

Committee Member Bruce Ruehl announced that the 990 Tax return had been reviewed and was approved.

The Operating 2009-2010 Budget was discussed at the Town meetings last week. Chris Nolan and Peter Authier attended. Chris reported at this time no adjustments were requested of the library.

Bruce reported that the library's investments are down, similar to the rest of the country but he feels that the library is currently in a good position. A motion to pay off the mortgage on the Webster Bank building was approved.

Building Improvement Committee

Three bids were submitted for the Webster Bank demolition. The committee recommends that the lowest bid of \$106,000 be accepted from Caldwell & Walsh. The bid includes removal of hazardous materials including a buried oil tank, removal of the blacktop for the building's drive-up lanes, filling the site with topsoil and planting grass. The existing steps and flagpole would remain and any plantings not directly against the building. The motion to contract Caldwell & Walsh for the job was approved.

Strategic Discussion on Webster Building

An application from the First Selectman, Rudy Marconi, and Phil Esser was submitted to the Connecticut State Register for Historic Places to request the Webster Bank building be put on the register. This means photos and a record of the building will be registered. March 4, 2009 is the meeting date for this application. It was suggested that a board member be in attendance. The outcome of this meeting has no bearing on the demolition plans. A letter giving a better understanding of the board's decision has been written to Rudy Marconi in advance of a meeting scheduled with him for Thursday, February 26. The Library has an unsolicited anonymous donor offer to pay for the demolition costs so that the Library will not incur additional expense. The board plans to begin the abatement process now and will request a time frame from Caldwell & Walsh on the project. A suggestion of additional landscaping was proposed as was leaving the flagpole in place. Chris Couri may be asked to see if any plantings touching the building could be pulled and saved.

As there was no further business to discuss, the Library Board adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Recorded and respectfully submitted,
Leslie Vuilleumier
Executive Assistant