

Ridgefield Library Board
October 27, 2008

Present: Peter Authier, Peter Coffin, Chair; Barbara Dobbin; Lori Dowling; Tom Hoban; Abigail Cahill Kagan; Mark Meachem, Brian Oren; Bob Payne; Cloris Pearson; Beverley Rogers; Bruce Ruehl; Eileen Walker

Excused: Melissa Buckwalter

Others present: Christina Nolan (ex-officio), Library Director; Mary Rindfleisch, Assistant Library Director; Bob Leavitt, President, Friends of RL; Rebecca Bryan, Consultant, r Bryan Associates; Dee Pantano, Executive Assistant

The meeting of the Ridgefield Library Board was called to order at 7:45 p.m. in the Ridgefield Library by Board Chair Peter Coffin. Mary Rindfleisch introduced two guests who are active teen members of the Library's Teen Advisory Group (TAG). Andrew McKee and Caitlin Tobin informed the Board of the teen's volunteer activities to support the library and to solicit support for their upcoming Read-a-thon project. The fundraiser is scheduled for November 15th from 11 am to 5 pm. The TAG has set a goal of raising \$500 to help offset reductions in teen programs.

The Board met in Executive session for 10 minutes, and reconvened at 8:00 p.m.

Minutes of the Meeting of September 22, 2008 were approved. Motion carried.

As of October 28th an online donation option will be available on the Library website.

Chairman's Announcements

Chair Coffin shared good news and highlighted several positive events. The library received a \$5K bequest from the estate of Margaret Malvall. We will receive an American Library Association Grant, linked to the International Year of Astronomy, which is awarded to only 40 libraries. It is a modest grant, however, the prestige is having been selected to display a traveling exhibit. There were 56 Camp Snooze participants this year – the largest amount of “campers” to date! The library is collaborating with the Ridgefield merchants on the Shop Local theme where 10% of profits are donated to charity. HSBC bank awarded the library a \$10K grant for Children's programs at the bank's grand opening on Oct. 23rd. The focus of HSBC's giving is on youth education and we are working with them on a project to benefit this group.

A vote is required to extend the \$500K Library grant related to the building extension. Move to extend grant. Motion approved.

Friends of the Ridgefield Library

Bob Leavitt reported that there were 30% more books donated this year than any prior year. Bob requested permission to proceed with procuring a large (40') storage container to be located in the lower parking lot on the southeast edge of the property. Bob provided a map, site plan and pictures. It requires no electrical power or heat. If approved, he will act as library rep and go through the Planning and Zoning board process. The board discussed any potential liability issue; it was determined there is none.

Motion to approve Bob proceeding with a storage container. Motion carried.

Development Committee

Mary reported that the Annual Appeal is underway. The Library received \$68,922 during the last three weeks. The goal is \$158K. There is a good, steady flow coming in at this time.

Abigail stressed the importance of thanking contributors three times. She suggested a Thank-a-thon to be scheduled one night in February when board members make calls “following up to say thank you”. We need to be comfortable with asking and thanking our supporters. Another idea is for board members to give a 2 minute overview before various library programs begin. Consider what corp/local businesses will help sponsor programs.

Community Involvement

Abigail updated the board on the Younger Set committee who has good ideas for programs. We need BOD members involved during the day if possible. The new Library Card was displayed. Thanks to Mary for making this happen. The cost will be between \$5-10 each – a great gift idea. There will be a packet coming to explain that the original library card is free and that the newly designed cards will need to be purchased. Abigail was thanked for her efforts on writing over 200 personal notes.

Annual Board-to-Board Dinner

The dinner is set for Sunday, November 2nd at the Wilton Library. We still need a number of responses.

Library Director’s Report

Chris distributed the LD report. Motion to approve. Motion carried. The next CT Library Board (ACLB) meeting is scheduled for October 31st.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee met earlier and reviewed the investment report. Concern over portfolio which is down 30%, overall market is down 45%. New regulations require a more fully-funded pension, costing an extra \$100K per year each year for the next seven years. The committee is examining pension options.

Nominating

Tom Hoban indicated that he met with one of the two candidates. This individual is still considering this. There is no update on the second candidate.

Building Improvement

Lori stated that the committee is reviewing if the strategy plans and documents are still valid. This work is intertwined with the Strategic committee. Underlying goals and values are instrumental to the direction this committee will pursue.

Development Consultant

Rebecca Bryan applauded the board’s efforts that \$7.1M has been raised – more than any other non-profit in Ridgefield. This board has done amazing work over the last 2.5 years. She encouraged the board to stay focused and continue working on a plan so that when time is right we are ready.

Much of the hard work has already been done. It is important not to retreat at this point. Rebecca reminded the board of the importance of remaining open and engaged with their networks and the community. Inform people that “as a donor of \$500, you’re in the top xx% of donors”. All campaigns have twists and turns. During challenging economic times, people still give, they are simply more selective on where their money will go. The Board needs to solve these problems which still exist. The need is still there.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

Recorded and respectfully submitted,
Dee Pantano, Executive Assistant