



## **Cheshire Public Library Advisory Board**

**Cheshire Public Library  
104 Main Street  
Cheshire, CT 06410**

### **Regular Meeting Minutes**

**Date: October 26, 2020**

VIA VIDEO TELECONFERENCE  
(PER EXECUTIVE ORDER OF THE GOVERNOR OF CONNECTICUT)

*Public access made available through streaming on YouTube at  
<http://www.youtube.com/user/cheshirelibrary/live>*

*Public comments accepted at [tech@cheshirelibrary.org](mailto:tech@cheshirelibrary.org) and by voicemail at 203-272-2245. Video will be available on Channel 14 and on demand at 203-27 as soon as possible.*

#### **I. Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the Cheshire Public Library Advisory Board was called to order by Harold Kramer at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

#### **Pledge of Allegiance**

Board members recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **Roll Call**

##### Members present:

Harold Kramer, Chair

Terry Grahame

Jodee Heritage

Dalena DeSena

Beth Crowley

Sylvia Nichols, Town Council Liaison

##### Member absent:

Tod Dixon, Secretary

##### Guest

Tom Morck, President, Friends of the Cheshire Public Library

## **II. Approval of Minutes from September 21, 2020**

Motion made by Terry Grahame to approve the Minutes from September 21, 2020 as amended. Jodee Heritage seconded the motion which was approved unanimously by those present.

Correction: The next regular meeting of the Cheshire Public Library Advisory Board will be held on **Monday, March 16**~~October 19~~, at 7:00 p.m.; corrected to read **Monday, October 26<sup>th</sup>**.

## **III. Tom Morck, President, Friends of the Cheshire Public Library – Presentation**

Tom Morck said that The Friends of the Cheshire Public Library was established in 1895 and funding 90% of the Library's programs including two high school scholarships, adult/children programs, librarian development and purchase of equipment and furniture. The Friends currently have 380 members of which 14 are business members. Primary funding comes from the two book sales that take place in the Spring and Fall, online book sales, lobby sales, and annual membership drive. Membership drive is solicited to both residents and businesses in town. Money also comes from bequests, special gifts and investments. Hopefully there will be a turnaround in 2021 and activities will resume.

Because of the pandemic, the book sales have been cancelled this year but there is enough investment money available to proceed with the two high school scholarships.

Harold Kramer thanked Tom Morck and the Friends for their tireless efforts year over year and suggested a liaison from the Library Board attend The Friends meetings.

## **IV. Treasurers Report**

There is \$1,185.00 in the treasury.

## **V. Report of the Chair**

A letter to the Cheshire Herald written by Harold Kramer was posted in the Cheshire Herald last week. It reads as follows:

To the Editor, The Cheshire Herald,

I would like to commend the Cheshire Public Library staff for their outstanding efforts in adapting the library to a new and expanded digital service model during this ongoing COVID pandemic. They transitioned quickly and efficiently to online programs and services that have served the community well, particularly when the library building could not be open during the initial stage of the pandemic.

Specifically, since the end of March, they have offered over 200 virtual programs with over 3,000 attendees. At the end of June, they started Grab & Go, a contactless curbside service where library patrons could pick up library materials in a safe environment outside the library back door. Library Director Beth Crowley told me that this service is heavily used and averages 60 pickups of library materials per day. In July, they began an online "Matchbook" program that provides reading suggestions based on individual preferences for people who were unable to visit the library.

Library users can now apply for and renew their library cards online so that they can use library services remotely. Library patrons have also availed themselves of the Library's vast amount of downloadable content, such as eBooks, audiobooks, magazines, and videos. Downloads have been up about 80% from the previous year.

Since September 16<sup>th</sup>, the Library building has been open for in-person visits during limited hours. You can check the library website for details.

With so many of us at home during this crisis, I again want to express my thanks to the Library staff for providing these essential services to the residents of Cheshire.

Harold Kramer

The letter has received over 100 likes on the community forum and is great PR for the library. Beth Crowley shared the letter with her staff and it was a great morale booster. It will be on the November Town Council meeting agenda for discussion.

Harold Kramer would like to continue meeting format by inviting guest speakers.

### **Report of the Library Director Re-Opening Update**

- **In-person hours:** Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> in-person visits began for browsing, picking up holds, and using copier and fax machine. The week after evening in-person visits were added to the schedule. Evening visits are on Mondays and Wednesdays eliminating the morning hours to keep time available for staff to clean high-touch surfaces during the week (3x per day).

**Current in-person hours** are Monday & Wednesday 1 pm – 7pm, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 10 am – 4 pm and Saturday 10 am – 1 pm.

- **Grab & Go:** Continues with curbside pickup for patrons who are not comfortable coming into the library although the hours have been reduced in order to cover the needs of in-person visits.
- **Phase 3/Capacity:** Libraries are expanded to 75% capacity. The capacity limit cannot be increased with impacting the ability for patrons and staff to properly socially distance. In reality, there is 50% regular hourly foot traffic (30 visits versus 60 visits per hour) and capacity limits have not been reached in any areas of the library.
- **Programming:** All programming remains virtual until further notice. The usual Fall programs for children, teens and adults have restarted. Sylvia Nichols will be helping to decorate homes for the holidays on November 30<sup>th</sup>. Library and Artsplace staff worked with the Cheshire Chamber of Commerce staff to coordinate and execute the Scarecrow contest which has been a particularly notable bright spot during these challenging times. The event was so

successful that scarecrows more of them were displayed after the contest deadline.

CHESHIRE PUBLIC LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD  
Meeting Minutes

5

Deputy Director, Deb Rutter and Artsplace Director, Joan Pilarczyk were commended for their hard work on the Scarecrow committee.

Respectfully Submitted by  
Beth Crowley  
Library Director  
bcrowley@cheshirelibrary.org

203-272-2245 x33021

*Please see our monthly calendar at [www.cheshirelibrary.org](http://www.cheshirelibrary.org) for a full listing of library programs and events.*

**VI. Unfinished Business**

Sylvia Nichols will ask that Harold Kramer's letter to the Cheshire Herald be included as an agenda item at the next Town Council Meeting. Copies of the letter will be available for reference.

The discussion will continue regarding honoring Joy Hostage. Donations will be determined and calculated.

**VII. New Business**

Sylvia Nichols proposed an idea to give recognition to individual town departments by creating a canvas focusing on their offerings, photos and interesting facts and features. The canvases will be displayed for a decided period of time. Recognition will be extended to town sports groups and non-profits. Social media and public access will introduce and announce when canvases are on display. Harold Kramer will contact Middlesex Community College Advisory Board to ask for photography volunteer.

**VIII. Adjournment**

The meeting ended at 7:40 p.m.

CHESHIRE PUBLIC LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD  
Meeting Minutes

6

The next regular meeting of the Cheshire Public Library Advisory Board will be held on **Monday, November 16, at 7:00 p.m.** in the Evelyn Moss Room at the Cheshire Public Library, 104 Main Street, Cheshire. Please notify Beth Crowley at 203-272-2245 x33021 or Harold Kramer at 203-272-8134 in advance if you are unable to attend.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Guite, Recording Secretary