



Cheshire Public Library Advisory Board

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

Minutes from the Joint Meeting of the Library Advisory Board and the Friends of the Cheshire Public Library Monday, September 21, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. Mary Baldwin Room, Cheshire Public Library

I. Call to Order

Attendees:

Library Board: Carol DiPietro, Craig Wilson, Kathy Nankin, Dalena DeSena (7:07pm)
Friends of the Cheshire Library: Tom Morck, Deb Morck, Linda Musco, Sue Duffy, Jim Archambault, Debbie Wylie, Fellis Jordan, Michael Liapakis, Rita Hughes (7:20pm)
Library Staff: Ramona Burkey, Library Director; Deborah Rutter, Library Deputy Dir.

The joint meeting of the Cheshire Public Library Advisory Board and the Friends of the Cheshire Public Library was called to order by Library Director Ramona Burkey at 7:05 p.m. in the Mary Baldwin Room of the library. Ms. Burkey welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

Ms. Burkey explained the renewal process for the Library's Strategic Plan. The strategic plan is the long term plan and direction for the Library, setting the priorities to focus energy and resources. The Library's Strategic Plan process initially started in 2005, and the most recent plan was approved for the period of 2012-2016. The Library's Strategic Plan, which also includes the Mission Statement and Values Statement, focuses on the following roles:

- Provide lifelong learning opportunities and educational programming.
- Serve as a popular materials library.
- Be a source for information resources.

Prior to tonight's meeting, Ms. Burkey e-mailed the following questions to the Board and Friends, to help start the process.

- *Think about Cheshire as a town: our strengths, weaknesses, challenges, opportunities, priorities.* Where is Cheshire as a community? What does Cheshire need most?
- *How can the library help solve some of Cheshire's challenges or problems? How does the Library fit into this?*
- *What would the ideal Cheshire Public Library look and feel like for patrons? For staff?*

Ms. Burkey explained that tonight is the initial discussion, but over the upcoming year there will be plenty of opportunities to brainstorm while we renew the strategic plan.

Ms. DeSena talked with her children, a local business owner and two local educators, who shared the following comments:

- Would like a more inviting, welcoming interior atmosphere. Perhaps an area with soft music playing. Areas where soft talk is welcomed.
- More multicultural activities – foods, dance, arts, etc.
- Chromebook classes for students in grades 3-4, using high school students to teach the elementary students.
- Technology classes for seniors
- Some nice, comfortable furniture
- Loved the Interlibrary Loan program

Ms. DiPietro felt our community's strengths included good Parks and Recreation programs for all ages - children and adults. Also we have a strong senior center.

Ms. Wylie commented that there is no transportation available on the weekends for seniors to get to activities in town (library, Fall Festival, other weekend events) other than the grocery store. Ms. Nankin suggested approaching Elim Park for possible help with the weekend transportation concerns.

Ms. Morck misses the coffee table and chairs in the lobby.

Mr. Wilson asked when the last library survey was performed. Ms. Burkey replied the last library survey was performed in 2010; she has those survey results and many of the suggestions from that survey have been implemented. Mr. Wilson recommended we do another survey, which will be statistically responsive. In 2010, our country was still in the midst of economic difficulty. Now with the economy more stable, this would be a good time to reach out to residents for their input. Mr. Wilson reminded the group we are challenged by infrastructure issues. He also thanked the Friends for their support of the Library and programming.

Mr. Morck asked how the library actively interacts with the education system. Ms. Burkey shared it has been challenging as the school system is under a lot of pressure with curriculum, testing, and budget demands. In the past 6-12 months, we have started making inroads:

- Meeting with school librarians.
- Partnering with the schools for the summer reading programs.
- Sending home notices about library programs. Are getting programs included in the Principals' Newsletters.
- Per the school system's request, we have purchased more "guided reading" books, labeled with levels – these books have been very well received and utilized.

Ms. Morck asked if the Library staff does presentations at the schools. Ms. Burkey responded:

- The library staff does presentations about the summer reading program at the elementary schools.
- This year they will be going to the aftercare programs at the schools to do STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) and reading programs.
- They visit nursery schools, bringing books and “Story Time in a Box” materials.
- Mr. Liapakis commented that this summer, library staff visited his son’s Parks and Recreation summer camp, which his son greatly enjoyed.

Mr. Wilson recommended asking for school partnership ideas in the surveys. “What can the Library do to support your child’s learning and educational needs during the school year and summer?”

Ms. DeSena commented that at her child’s elementary school, the teachers are encouraging the students to go to the public library if they don’t have access to a printer at home to print their computer work. Ms. DeSena also shared that middle school students have less opportunities to visit the school library during the day, making the public library even more important to students as they get older.

Ms. Jordan stated one challenge is making the public aware of who we are and what we have to offer to the community. Mr. Wilson added there are multiple venues of communication. We need to do more campaigning – we are under-marketed. Ms. DiPietro added that many people do not know what the Friends do, including sponsoring many of the educational programs. Ms. Jordan spoke at the Summer Reading Program Finale, explaining who the Friends are and what we do. She had hoped to see an increase in Friends memberships after that program, which has not occurred. Ms. Burkey stated we spend so much time doing what we do, but we don’t spend the time telling people what we do, and as a result people still have outdated ideas of what libraries do.

Mr. Wilson feels the strengths of the Cheshire Library are:

- A dynamic library
- Strong support from the Friends
- A bi-partisan collaborative aligned Board

Ms. Jordan feels we need more communication between the Board and the Friends so we know what each group is doing and can support each other. Although the Friends receive minutes from the Board meetings, everyone felt that the opportunity for the groups to meet face to face is very beneficial. Ms. Burkey suggested the groups meet together regularly to touch base, perhaps bi-monthly or quarterly.

Ms. Hughes asked that each group be kept informed during budget season so we can express our support.

Ms. Burkey thanked everyone for their thoughts and participation, and asked the group to keep thinking about the questions to provide more feedback in this process.

The Joint Meeting between the Cheshire Library Advisory Board and the Friends of the Cheshire Public Library ended at 7:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Kirby,
Recording Secretary
Library Advisory Board

**Minutes from the Regular Meeting
of the Library Advisory Board
Monday, September 21, 2015 at 7:30 p.m.
Evelyn Moss Room, Cheshire Public Library**

I. Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Cheshire Public Library Advisory Board was called to order by Carol DiPietro at 7:42 p.m. in the Evelyn Moss Room of the library. This meeting convened at the conclusion of the Joint Meeting between the Cheshire Library Advisory Board and the Friends of the Cheshire Public Library.

Mrs. DiPietro welcomed everyone back and hoped everyone had a nice summer. Mrs. DiPietro also announced that Mr. William Hellyar, our recently appointed Library Board member, has resigned as of this morning.

Roll Call - attendance was taken at Joint Meeting.

Members present:

Carol DiPietro, Chair
Craig Wilson, Vice Chair
Dalena DeSena, Treasurer
Kathy Nankin
Ramona Burkey, Library Director

Members absent:

Judy Knott, Corresponding Secretary
Joy Hostage
Rob Oris, Town Council Liaison

Pledge of Allegiance

Board members recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. June 15, 2015 Meeting Minutes

MOTION was made by Craig Wilson to accept the minutes as presented. **MOTION SECONDED** by Kathy Nankin. The minutes were approved with a voice vote; **VOTE:** Unanimous.

III. Treasurer's Report

The Library Board's unencumbered account balance was reported to be \$850.00.

IV. Reports of Committees

A. School-Library Partnership

The September report from Lucas Franklin, the Head of Children's Services, was read by Mrs. DiPietro.

Summer Reading was a success this year. The month of July we hit a new programming record of 2059 attendees for programs for the month. I will send copies of the monthly stats for Children's Programming and a copy of our September handout via Ramona. Mrs. Burley distributed those materials.

Program highlights from the summer:

1. The Night Skies Planetarium (giant inflatable dome with a projection of the night sky) reached over 305 youth and caregivers. We received much praise for this program and were asked to bring it back again in the future.
2. Lego Brunch (donuts, story time and LEGO building) was also a success reaching over 95 youth and caregivers.
3. The Teen Volunteer Program reached 30+ teens each week throughout the summer and gave us opportunities to do things around the library that we normally wouldn't have been able to do (clean stuffed animals, cleaned every surface of the children's room, cut out bookmarks, etc.)
4. Our weekly Babies program had over 50 youth and caregivers throughout the summer. This program has received great praise from attendees.
5. Tween Tuesday saw a spike this summer reaching around 30 tweens each Tuesday.
6. Our Summer Reading Finale at Artsplace had over 175 attendees.

We're on track to share our Summer Reading Software with the school system next year (we would register each child for the Summer Reading Program in schools who wish to share the Summer Reading Software to track books read). This will streamline the process for the schools who typically use paper forms.

The Children's Department has been invited to help the School System revamp the Summer Reading Lists for school students (K-8) for summer 2016.

Starting September 28, we will be visiting one of the Elementary Schools each Monday to lead a program for the YMCA's after school program.

Upcoming Programs:

1. Donuts with Grownups (Saturday, September 26 at 10:00 am): Ages 3-8. Donuts with Grownups Story time is designed especially for working families with children ages 3 and up who can't make it to our regularly scheduled story times during the week. Enjoy crafts, activities, music, stories and of course Donuts as a family! This program is designed as a family event to give bonding time. Each session will also have a literacy building station to help young ones start building necessary pre-literacy skills or enhance those skills for older children.
2. 'Who Was' Book Club: HELEN KELLER (Wednesday, September 30 at 4:00 pm): All Ages. If you love reading books from the 'Who Was' series, then this is the book club for you! We'll make sure that some extra copies are available in the Children's

Room! At the meeting, we'll chat about what we discovered in the book and do one or more fun activities inspired by that person's life.

3. Rick Riordan New Book Release Party! (Tuesday, October 6 at 6:30 pm): Ages 8+. Are you a fan of Rick Riordan's book series, like Percy Jackson and the Heroes of Olympus? Then this is the party for you! October 6th is the day that Rick Riordan releases the first book in a brand-new series: Magnus Chase and the Gods of Asgard, Book 1: The Sword of Summer. We'll have some fun Norse mythology activities and even a chance for a few lucky kids to win their very own copies of Riordan's new book!
4. S.T.E.A.M. Punks-High School Edition (Thursday, October 15 at 3:00 pm): Grades 9+. Investigate the many elements of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, & Math. We'll explore robotics, electronics, arts & crafts, food science and much, much more. We'll put things together, take things apart, play games, and have a ton of fun!

This month we sent out Summer Reading Handouts to each elementary school student in Cheshire (2,200 total).

V. Communications

Mrs. DiPietro received numerous (over 100) emails as the result of a controversial book situation in another town. The library board decided to keep the book on the library shelves. Town residents were upset about this decision and questioned how the board members were selected. Via email, the town's librarian asked how library board members were selected in other towns.

VI. Report of the Chair – Carol DiPietro, Chair

Mrs. DiPietro shared information about the Naples (FL) Library winter fundraiser – the 2016

Nick Linn Lecture Series, sponsored by their Friends of the Library of Collier County, Inc. The four authors in the series are: Adriana Trigiani, Kate Andersen Brower, Alafair Burke, and Tess Gerritsen. There are 4 different price points for the series: Publisher Series \$480; Editor Series \$390, General Series \$350 and Lecture Only Series \$250. This lecture series uses a large venue and always sells out.

Mrs. DiPietro also shared the following newspaper articles:

- Republican American article (9/16/15): "Library's Book Nook Celebrates 25 Years" by Laraine Weschler, about the Watertown Library bookstore's 25th anniversary.
- A photo in the Republican American entitled "Playing at the Library" showing 3 children playing at a library.
- Republican American article: "Library Director turns to public for help" by John McKenna. The budget for the library in Morris CT was cut so drastically that the librarian has asked the public for donations to purchase books, CDs, DVDs, paper, ink, office supplies, etc.

Mrs. DiPietro volunteered at the Library booth during the Fall Festival on Sept. 12th.

Mrs. DiPietro received a call from a friend in West Hartford who was happy to be able to get a film from the Cheshire Library that her library in West Hartford did not have.

Mrs. DiPietro also ran into 2 former educators who were not previously aware of the numerous programs offered by the Cheshire Library. They are watching their grandchildren, and said the programs have been a “lifesaver” to them with their grandchildren.

Mrs. DiPietro also saw reports on NBC News featuring library programs in different cities, including “Books on Bikes in Seattle and “Word on Spoke” in San Francisco.

Mrs. DiPietro announced the ACLB 2015 Trustee Leadership Conference on Nov. 6th at the University of Hartford Gray Conference Center. Mrs. DiPietro shared the program entitled “Where are we going?” Mrs. Burkey asked the Board to let her know by Oct. 5th if they plan to attend the conference.

VII. Report of the Library Director – Ramona Burkey presented the following report:

Programs and Services

At the September 12 Fall Festival at Bartlem Park, we spoke with more than 700 people about library services. Our summer reading program for kids and teens was again very popular, with 645 registrants.

We will be closed on Monday 10/12 for Columbus Day. Our Sunday hours (1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.) begin on November 1 and continue through March 2016.

Selected Upcoming Events (more programs, info, exact dates and registration at cheshirelibrary.org):

- Preschool Learning Lab: Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m.; ages 3-6.
- Movie Matinees: Tuesdays at 1:00 p.m.
- Tween Tuesdays (ages 7-12): Tuesdays at 4:00 p.m.
- Tune Time for Tots: Wednesdays at 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. (ages 1-2 and 2-3).
- Builders’ Brigade (Lego building club): 9/23 at 4:00 p.m. and 10/8 at 4:00 p.m.
- Cigar Box Purse Craft Class: Thursday 9/24 at 6:00 p.m.
- ABC Amigos Bilingual Story time: Fridays at 10:00 a.m. (ages 3-6)
- Yu-Gi-Oh, Teen Games, Teen Time, Anime Club: Fri. afternoons at 2:30 or 3:00 p.m.
- Town-Wide Scavenger Hunt: Saturday 9/26.
- Donuts with Grownups Story time: Saturdays 9/26 and 10/17 at 10:00 a.m.
- Bouncing Babies (birth to 2): Mondays at 10:00 a.m.
- “Help! I’m Addicted to Sugar (and White Flour)!”: Monday 9/28 at 6:30 p.m.
- “Who Was” Book Club: Wednesday 9/30 at 4:00 p.m.
- “The Not So Good Life of the Colonial Goodwife”: Wed. 9/30 at 6:30 p.m.
- “STEAM Punks: Middle School Edition”: Thursday 10/1 at 3:00 p.m.

- Ask A Lawyer: First Thursday of every month from 6:00 -8:00 p.m. in the Moss Room
- Drop-In Tech Help: Monday 10/5 at 4:00 p.m.
- Cheshire Cats Classics Book Club: Monday 10/5 at 7:00 p.m.
- Rick Reardon New Book Release Party: Tues. 10/6 at 6:30 p.m. (ages 8 & up)
- “Germans to America, 1683-1893”: Tuesday 10/6 at 6:30 p.m.
- Oktoberfest with Beer Historian Will Siss: Thursday 10/8 at 7:00 p.m. (history of CT beer brewing)
- Retirement Series: Social Security – Tuesday 10/13 at 6:15 p.m.
- “Gizmos, Gadgets and Goo: Mad Scientists Club”: Wednesday 10/14 at 4:00 p.m. (ages 7-12)
- Coin Collecting: Wednesday 10/14 at 6:00 p.m.
- “STEAM Punks: High School Edition”: Thursday 10/15 at 3:00 p.m.
- “Keeping the Stress Out of Holiday Shopping with Coupons”: Thursday 10/15 at 6:00 p.m.

Personnel

This summer, we welcomed new Page Charlette Alfieri to our team. We are currently interviewing for two more Pages, as both Aisha Alam and Mike Pierry will be vacating their positions to move to new jobs. We'll miss them, but we're glad they've agreed to stay on as substitute Pages.

In December, Gail Roberts, Head of Technical Services, will retire after 35 years of service. Gail has had a tremendous influence here at CPL; we will truly miss her considerable expertise and her gracious, warm demeanor with customers and coworkers alike.

Financial

I recently submitted a grant application to the Connecticut State Library for Phase 2 of our remodel of the library, which began with the Main Level in 2012. This project would focus on the Upper and Lower Levels, providing a much-needed facelift for those areas of the library. In response to questions, Mrs. Burkey explained the shortcoming of the building and current setup. She would also like to add more study rooms in the lower level. Currently they have changed the upstairs quiet reading area upstairs into an additional area for programs.

Buildings and Grounds

We recently upgraded many of our interior signs (including a directory) using bequest money from the estate of Lois Bernier. The piece de resistance is the sign outside the Children's Room, which features a tree with leaves that can be changed with the seasons. A plaque recognizing children's librarians Sue Hartley and Cindy Tencza's years of service will be affixed to the tree soon.

Policies and Planning

I continue to solicit input about the upcoming renewal of our Strategic Plan, which expires in calendar year 2016. Mr. Wilson recommended that the Board have

separate meetings to work on the strategic plan. Mrs. Burkey will set these meetings up via email. Mr. Wilson also recommended that we develop a communications plan and a publicity plan by year end. Mrs. Burkey will include Mary Dattilo, who handles publicity and social media for the library, on the communication and publicity planning. Mr. Wilson suggested that in our survey, we should be explicit about our shortcomings in the physical facility and consider the possible purchasing of adjacent properties for the long term best interest of the Town.

Mrs. DiPietro shared that Cheshire is not a “destination” location to bring people into town (for restaurants, shopping, events, etc.). Mrs. Burkey added that Cheshire does not have a true “town center”. Mr. Wilson commented that due to the lack of business revenue, the tax burden falls on the local residential taxpayer.

Artsplace

Our summer reading program finale party at Artsplace brought in about 200 attendees; we were thrilled with this turnout and the exposure it gave to Artsplace. We will definitely plan more large events at Artsplace in the future.

Other

Please let Ramona Burkey know by Monday, October 5 if you would like to attend this year’s Association of Connecticut Library Boards conference. This year’s conference will be held on Nov. 6th at the University of Hartford Gray Conference Center.

Mrs. DiPietro asked how the new “tip jar” was doing. Mrs. Burkey responded they have collected approximately \$50-\$60 per month from the jar, which is deposited into the Library gift account.

VIII. **Unfinished Business**

None.

IX. **New Business**

None.

X. **Adjournment**

MOTION to adjourn was made by Craig Wilson and **SECONDED** by Kathy Nankin.

VOTE: Unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Cheshire Public Library Advisory Board will be held on Monday, October 19, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the Evelyn Moss Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Kirby,
Recording Secretary