

Mission Statement: The mission of the Watchung Library Advisory Board (WLAB) is to advise, support, and promote the interests of the Watchung Borough Free Public Library.

The meeting of the WLAB was held through an audio and video call. Please go to the Watchung Borough web site to view the video. The meeting was also held in person in the Bicentennial Room of the Watchung Library.

Please be advised that, pursuant to a Borough policy, all committee meetings will be recorded; at 4:04 PM all participants were alerted that recording had begun.

President Tamara Benc posted the agenda (which had been emailed in advance to all members) then opened and called the meeting to order at 4:05 PM.

Attendance:

Tamara Benc, President – present
Margaret Ellis, Vice President – absent
Stella Couchells, Treasurer – present
Virginia Hartmann, Secretary – present
Bradford Leigh, WLAB member – present
Barbara Steinfeld, WLAB member -- absent
Lindsay Goodloe, Borough Council Member, Library Liaison – present
George Alexis, School Superintendent – present
Hannah Kerwin, Watchung Library Branch Manager – present
Patricia Keane, Valley View Librarian – present

Minutes of the September 15, 2021 meeting were e-mailed to members in advance of the meeting for review. The WLAB approved the minutes.

Treasurer's Report: Dr. Couchells reported that the September 15, 2021 balance was \$10,447.67. Subsequently, \$19.99 was debited from the escrow account on September 15, 2021 for a supply of fish food provided by REEFSCO. An additional \$160.00 in total was paid out to REEFSCO for the library's \$80.00 monthly aquarium cleaning, on October 15, 2021 and November 15, 2021 respectively.

Residual SCLSNJ library fines in the amount of \$7.64 were deposited to the account on November 8, 2021 resulting in a current balance of \$10,195.32.

Friends of the Watchung Library Report: Vice President Ellis was unable to attend the meeting. She gave her report to President Benc to present. The Friends book store is open for business in the Bicentennial Room. Donations to the book store should be left on the table provided in the old entranceway to the library.

Also, one volunteer is needed for the Friends board.

Watchung Library Branch Manager Report: Ms. Kerwin reported that the Arts Center was painted recently. For a period of time, the painters blocked the entrance to the library. When asked to move, the painters refused. In the future, Ms. Kerwin wants the borough to notify the library when workers will be present in the library area.

The broken retaining wall on the side of the library and the underground remnants of an old swimming pool have been removed and replaced with a gradual grading of the land.

The carpet in the lowest level of the library was flooded by Hurricane Ida. But the downstairs area is now open again.

Ms. Kerwin reminded everyone that one can reserve a room in any library. The writers' group is meeting again.

The cleaning of the library has much improved with the hiring of Matt King. Ms. Kerwin wants a scheduled delivery of toilet paper and other supplies rather than having to request supplies.

Council Member Liaison Report: Ms. Goodloe, Borough Council Member and Library Liaison, reported that the new Engineer/Head of the Department of Public Works is now a full-time position.

There was no news on whether the Watchung Library received a grant from the Library Construction Act. On October 18, 2021 the SCLSNJ stopped collecting late fees for overdue library material. To make up for this lack of funds, Secretary Hartmann and Vice President Ellis sold Watchung Library Christmas ornaments. The sale netted \$331.00. Ms. Hartmann made arrangements to bring Dr. Couchells the \$331 in cash. Dr. Couchells directed Bill Hance to deposit it in our escrow account as a fish donation.

New Business: President Benc announced that it has been suggested that the WLAB change the time of their board meetings. A motion was made and seconded to change the meeting time to 5:30 PM. The motion passed. The January 19, 2022 meeting and all subsequent meetings will be held at 5:30 PM in the Bicentennial Room. Any resident of Watchung can also attend by Zoom.

The WLAB agreed to plan and pay for a library staff/volunteer Holiday luncheon. A limit of \$250.00 was agreed upon for the cost of the party. The event will be held on Wednesday, December 15, 2021 from 4:00 to 6:00 PM in the Bicentennial Room. The hosts of the luncheon are the volunteers who make up the WLAB. The WLAB members will order the food, obtain checks from the escrow account to pay for the food, visit the vendors to make sure they will agree to accept checks, and pick up and deliver the food, plates, and utensils before the luncheon.

President Benc recognized the excellent work that Ms. Goodloe did as our Borough Liaison this past year. She was always sure to address all our concerns and answer our questions promptly and professionally. Ms. Benc asked Ms. Hartmann to publicly thank Ms. Goodloe at the next Borough Council meeting.

The Borough Holiday Party held for all Borough volunteers and staff will be held on December 10, 2021.

The dates for the 2022 WLAB meetings are as follows:

Watchung Library Advisory Board Minutes, November 17, 2021 – FINAL

January 19
March 16
May 18
July 20
September 21
November 16

The next WLAB meeting will be held on January 19, 2022 at 5:30 PM.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 PM.