

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm.

Members Present: **Margot Chapman, Co-Chair; Laurel Steinhauser, Co-chair;** Myra Finkelstein; Betsy Graziano; Melissa Woodward

Absent: Donald Eiler, Jade Richardson

Others present: Janet Nocek, Library Director; Maureen Muir, President, Executive Board of Friends of the Portland Library, Ralph Zampano, Liaison to the Board of Selectmen.

- 1) Public and Staff comments – no comments
- 2) Agenda –added to New Business: Discussion of a proposed mural. Modified agenda moved: 1) Myra; 2) Betsy.
- 3) Approved Minutes of July 21, 2022. Motion 1) Myra 2) Betsy Approved with two abstentions (Myra and Melissa)
- 4) Corresponding Secretary's Report – Betsy Graziano
 - a) Betsy sent out the order to B&D Donor Recognition for donor tree rocks and leaves to be engraved. This order was confirmed by the company
 - b) Betsy gratefully acknowledged receipt of a donation by Ralph and Bernice Zampano in honor of the library's 127th Anniversary.
 - c) Jan noted the Portland Garden Club will be celebrating their 75th Anniversary at the Library October 5th at 1:00 pm. The club planted the garden in front of the library and provides exhibits throughout the year as well as the seasonal urn decorations. Betsy suggest that the board send a card congratulating the club on their accomplishments to their president, Susanne Anderson.
- 5) Old Business
 - a) Kindness Project – grant funded by Community Foundation of Middlesex Count. Melissa Kelly is working on the seed library which will be an ongoing project. The events planned for Chatham court this summer did not happen. Maureen said the Friend have supported this type of activity and Jan said there is possibly \$1,000.00 still available from the grant.
 - b) Permanent Library outdoor Sign – Laurel suggested that the decision on the sign be put on hold for two reasons. The board is contemplating production of a library logo, and winter will be upon us. Spring installation would make sense. The Board agreed. There was a brief discussion about the logo design. Laurel suggested that more thought is needed regarding the message to be conveyed via the logo. She also would like to reach out to professional designers and possibly Wesleyan students. Jan noted there may be some students also at the community college that might do a design project.
- 6) New Business
 - a) Hoopla Funding - Out of \$8,400 available through Board allowance and state grant funding in 2021, there is \$2,246 remaining. Possibly this will cover through January 2023. Jan reported that a cap on e-audiobooks has disappointed patrons and borrowing has decreased. Myra asked if funding could come from the operating budget. There was a brief discussion of the current media budget. Laurel asked Jan to bring back details on the costs and funds available at next meeting.
 - b) Mural Proposal – Jan reported that s local artist approached Ryan Curley to propose painting a mural on the wall in front of the library along Freestone Ave. The option of painting the

mural on the library building was discussed. Laurel will reach out to Ryan and the artist, inviting them to the October meeting. The board would like to see samples of her work as a muralist and address questions about the placement and the long term maintenance of the mural.

- 7) Friends of the Portland Library
 - a) The artist reception took place for Sarah Schneiderman. There will be another art reception for Paula Slym Lee in October.
 - b) Read and Recycle program is scheduled for 9/24. 10 am to noon. All are invited to donate gently used items.
 - c) The annual book sale is 10/21 to 10/23. Volunteers are needed to set up on Thursday 10/20 in the afternoon and to pack up on 10/23.
 - d) Friends voted to fund purchase of replacement of an AWE standalone computer (\$3500) that was requested by the Director. This is geared to preschools and beginning readers. It is safe and fun to use and no internet connection is required. Alison Harris Friends treasurer suggested a plaque be placed with it to honor a long term, very generous donor, Julia Kobus
 - e) The New StoryWalk had a grand opening September 9.
It is located at Riverfront Park.
 - f) The Friends will provide funding for the fall season window decorating and the Board will alternate; Memorial Funds will provide for the winter-themed window art
- 8) Chairs report
 - a) Co-chairs Margot and Laurel met with Chris Rowlings of Fiducient for a review of the Endowment Fund investments and were assured that the investments are sound.
 - b) Planning for the anticipated retirement of the Library Director: Laurel suggested that some Board members form a committee to work on the process.
 - c) Summer programming for children and teens was impressive. Kudos to the Youth Library staff: Jennifer Renk and Patty Ballou.
- 9) Director's Report

We received a grant from the state library to assess our broadband connection. An assessment is scheduled for 10/18. This is part of the infrastructure funding to address digital equity. Candidates for the open position will be interviewed soon.

The Portland Garden Club's anniversary celebration will take place at the Library October 5
- 10) Other discussion
- 11) Adjournment 8:35 pm. Motioned 1. Betsy – 2. Myra

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Graziano, with editing by Janet Nocek, 9-10-2022