

**Preliminary  
Portland Library Board of Directors  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
March 17, 2022**

**Note:** This session was live; however, zoom was available if needed.

Board Present: Margot Chapman, Betsy Graziano, Laurel Steinhauser, Myra Finkelstein, Melissa Woodward

Absent: Don Eiler, Jade Richardson

Others Present: Jan Nocek (Library Director); Maureen Muir (President, Friends of the Library), Ralph Zampano

**1. Public & Staff Comment**

Laurel Steinhauser called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. No public comment.

**2. Additions and Approval of the Agenda**

Betsy Graziano made a motion, seconded by Margot Chapman, to approve the agenda; no changes; no objections, no abstentions; motion carried unanimously.

**3. Review Minutes:**

**a. Actions on the Minutes of the Regular Meeting February 17, 2022**

Under 5B, add Melissa and Betsy to the committee members. Myra Finkelstein made a motion, seconded by Betsy Graziano, to approve the amended February 17, 2022 minutes; all were in favor; none opposed; no abstentions; motion carried.

**b. Action on the minutes from the Special Meeting on February 28, 2022**

Myra Finkelstein made a motion, seconded by Margot Chapman, to approve the February 17, 2022 minutes; all were in favor; none opposed; no abstentions; motion carried.

**c. Action on the minutes from the Special Meeting on March 14, 2022**

Maureen instead of Myra suggested This Land is Your Land. Betsy made a motion, seconded by Margot Chapman, to approve the amended February 17, 2022 minutes; all were in favor; none opposed; no abstentions; motion carried.

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**4. Corresponding Secretary's Report**

Betsy Graziano reported that there were no new donations. She had sent a hand-written note to the family of Helen Sutkowski but hasn't heard back as to what should be put on the leaf or stone. Betsy will call and ask. Margot will give contact information for the inscription company to Betsy. Laurel talked about getting a couple of rocks, maybe one large and one small, to balance the side below the tree.

**5. Old Business**

**a. Re-entry – Status of COVID Measures**

Jan reported that there are many people coming in. The meeting rooms are again being used. The Library will be going back to the 8:00 p.m. closing. Regarding the mask mandate, some wear them others don't. Things are working out well.

**b. CFMC Grants Status**

Jan said she didn't have much to report on. There were a couple of ideas, like the surprise squad. Tom brings things down to earth. He said gift cards are a nightmare for auditing. Jan hopes to keep it going but it is coming along slowly.

**c. Celebration of Library Anniversary – Planning**

Ideas about possible participants was discussed:

- Lin Tracey said she and her band will play. She asked that we pay her musicians \$95 each for their time;
- Don and Laurel need to walk around the green and measure for the placement of the tent. The group will include Margot, Myra, and Melissa. Laurel will schedule a date with Don and then advise the others.
- At the next full team meeting, a plan will be developed indicating the responsible person for each task and the remaining tasks to be assigned. The Historical Society said they would be willing to fill some of the needs.
- Sharon Hoy suggested using the ice cream truck that is used for the Portland Fair and Donna Rossitto's food trucks.
- A contact of the Library has a tent that can be used.
- Sharon Hoy said she could bring her therapy dog; the children will read to him.
- Margot mentioned having a fundraiser. Local businesses would be visited. With their support, they would be given a printed card that says something like "I am a supporter of Portland's 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary" with levels of donations. A list of donors would be maintained with level of participation. This was appreciated but not possible at this time.

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- The next committee meeting will be Monday, March 28 at 1:00 p.m.

**d. Approve Funding for the Library Anniversary Celebration**

The tentative budget was reviewed. “ Friends” may be willing to fund some of the items. Margot Chapman made a motion to approve an expenditure from the Memorial Fund of up to \$2,500 for support of the 125<sup>th</sup> Portland Library Anniversary celebration to be held during 2022 in accord with the plans made by the Anniversary Committee. It was seconded by Myra Finkelstein; all were in favor; none opposed; no abstentions; motion carried.

**e. Proposed FY 2023 Budget – Any Updates**

A brief discussion took place regarding the budget workshop held the night before, including the letters that were in support of the Library. The security cameras are included as a capital item. Ralph Zampano said that is usually an interesting discussion.

**6. New Business**

**a. Policy Discussion: Library of Things – Patron Use of Non-Media Items**

The draft is to be emailed.

**b. Resolution Regarding CLA Statement on Intellectual Freedom**

Jan Nocek had distributed the document. It is in response to what is happening in other areas of the country regarding book censorship.

Betsy Graziano made a motion, seconded by Margot Chapman, to accept the resolution that the Portland Library Board of Directors support the CT Library Association Intellectual Freedom Statement Against Censorship, all were in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, motion carried.

**7. Friends of the Portland Library**

Maureen Muir reported the following:

- Jenn Renk made a presentation at the Executive Board Meeting of the Friends. The Friends are going to be contributing a sum up to \$1,000 for the library to purchase play materials for the Children's Department of the Library.
- The Friends are receptive to the idea of making a donation to support some programs at the Library's 125 (+2) Anniversary Celebration.
- The next Read and Recycle will be held on March 26.

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**8. Chair's Report**

As a reminder, Laurel said that the board members need to be careful regarding social media and the FOI rules. Be conscious that when we speak regarding the Library, we may be speaking on behalf of the Library. Be careful when speaking about the Library publicly. Margot said she is impressed with what is going on at the Library, and the number of people coming back.

**9. Director's Report**

**a. Updates on Services**

Things are going well. A meeting of the Solidarity Committee will take place next week. They are trying to get other speakers on topics that will make a difference, i.e., social justice, African-American, etc. There is an administrative meeting coming up. Ralph Zampano told of the tight bond that is being developed between Parks & Rec, the Library and the Senior Center.

**10. Adjournment**

Margot Chapman made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Myra Finkelstein; all were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon R. Hoy, Recording Clerk



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## Intellectual Freedom Statement Against Censorship

The Connecticut Library Association (CLA) advocates and educates in defense of intellectual freedom – the rights of library users to read, speak freely, and have unrestricted access to information, as guaranteed by the First Amendment. We are committed to defending the constitutional rights of all individuals, of all ages, to use the resources and services of libraries.

Recently, organized attacks have targeted library materials and programs by BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and Jewish authors that address race, racism, enslavement, history, sexuality, gender identity and expression, bigotry, and antisemitism. This is a callous systemic erasure to undermine and eliminate the diversity of thought and experiences that reflect the BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and Jewish communities. These assaults of intimidation threaten the livelihood and safety of authors, library workers, educators, and board members. CLA vehemently condemns these acts of censorship and intimidation.

We believe in the [Library Bill of Rights](#), [Freedom to Read Statement](#), and Article 19 of the [Universal Declarations of Human Rights](#). Intellectual freedom is a core value of the library profession, and a basic right in our democratic society.

There is no good censorship. Any effort to restrict free expression, or the free flow of information, aids discrimination, and oppression. Fighting oppression with censorship is self-defeating. Critical thinking and civil discourse from all points of view must be protected and encouraged in a democracy. Any attack on these tenets is an affront to the rights of all people and works against the values of equity, diversity, and inclusion for which all libraries strive. Attempts to suppress and censor denies the individual the freedom to exercise critical judgment and to make their own decision about what they read and believe. We believe in the free enterprise of ideas and expressions.

We reject the claim that removing, labeling, or relocating a title will somehow shield children from the ideas contained within, especially in our connected digital world. We further reject the notion that anyone can perform the work we do without significant engagement with the professional ethics and expertise of librarianship. Libraries are safe places for children to encounter ideas in an environment that nurtures curiosity. Occasionally these encounters will include ideas that might be challenging, but we support the right of readers to be challenged, to learn, and to grow. Librarians and educators are the critical connection between readers and their books. It is our responsibility to champion these rights.

We pledge to stand with, defend, and assist our colleagues and library users in fighting censorship in all its forms. Exposure to a wide variety of perspectives and the unfettered exchange of ideas is necessary to preserve the freedoms guaranteed in a democratic society. We oppose the restriction, removal, banning, and censorship of books and other library materials that limit the freedom to read, speak, publish, or obstruct intellectual freedom.

CT Library Association, 2/10/2022

