Meeting Minutes

EAST HADDAM LIBRARY SYSTEM

September 9, 2021

Location: EHFPL or On-line

6:30 PM

Mission Statement: "The East Haddam Public Library System seeks to enrich lives by helping to build communities of lifelong learners. The system provides access to historical collections, offers materials in print and digital formats, and gives community members opportunities to share in public discussion"

Trustees Present: Dawn Barlow Bill Barney, John Bielot, Chris van Valkenburg, Jane Chisholm, Juliana Tryon Ranaudo, Janine Broe, Vicky Riley Pach
Absent: Chris Delisle
Also Present: Michael Gilroy, Library Director; Rob Smith, First Selectman

1. Call to order
   The meeting was called to order of D Barlow at 6:30 PM.
2. Review Minutes from June 10, 2021 meeting
   Minutes were accepted as submitted.
3. Reports:
   a. Director's Report:
   (https://docs.google.com/document/d/1FectLsDi_c2ptPu6FjLexBU9bCKGlJrD/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=102428661722328381978&rtpof=true&sd=true);
   i. COVID-19 Update: Mask mandate was dropped briefly and re-instated; returned materials are being quarantined overnight; common areas are being disinfected; relevant signage remains in place (distancing, masks, hygiene, etc); complimentary masks, wipes etc are available to patrons.
   ii. Buildings: minor flood damage occurred in EHFPL children's area (CT State of Emergency 9/2/21 from Hurricane Ida); it did not affect books or fixtures, and is now cleared and dry. The Rathbun elevator was temporarily inoperable, but restored by service that included lubrication. A window unit air conditioner has been installed in the Rathbun children's area.
   iii. Programs: Storytime and Babytime programs will re-start next week; EHFPL events are planned for 9/10 (Harry Potter), 9/15 (domestic cats) . and 9/24 (craft). Book clubs (1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month) remain online activities. Interest in developing a teen Books-to-Movies club is being explored this month. The Library calendar Is up-to-date with these and several other activities.
   iv. Budget: the town budget passed on the 27 July referendum, including wage increases for the Library staff that were proposed.
   v. ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) Grant: The $16,508 grant was approved by the CT State Library with a few important revisions. The OWL Webcam, upgraded projectors, screens, and speakers were removed from the proposal and replaced with more equipment to enhance our new outdoor space. We will install verification software on our Wi-Fi so Patrons can "log-in", rather than maintain our current open access model (see below). The updated grant can be found here: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xG62arwE9kDctgzB8MC0eMP7QdaiaU5p/view?usp=sharing
   vi. Friends groups are active (Fall Harvest Fairy Garden; October Booksale etc).
   vii. Unruly resident incidents: The staff were subject to 3 incidents involving the same person; 2 involved visits by the police who officially warned the man, on their 2nd interaction with him, that visiting either library will be considered "Criminal Trespass" in the future. Staff are aware to call the police if the man makes another appearance. Police noted that the man involved in the incidents had been sitting in the EHFPL parking lot at odd hours prior to the incident, and have asked us to disconnect the Wi-Fi after hours until we can install verification software.
   viii. Staff Updates: Intern Hannah Leibowitz left for UCONN; Anastasia has completed her MLS and will continue at EHFPL, in addition to her new part time job at the Killingworth Library.
   ix. East Haddam News Online article: Library Director M Gilroy was interviewed in August and the article, highlighting the libraries, was published on the front page today. The Director made clear that the Town is working to put together a feasibility study and a building committee to evaluate the pros/cons of Library renovation, expansion, or new construction and bring their findings to taxpayers, and that absolutely no decision has been made on the issue, to date.

b. Subcommittee Reports

i. Finance Committee: met on 7 Aug and reviewed 2021 budget which was within budget plans, noting that the phone and electric bill increases had been expected and planned for; boiler and tank removal are being looked into (the First Selectman indicated this is being planned for this fall); the 2022-2023 budget could focus on supporting in the general library collection.

ii. Governance Committee: Met on 8 September 2021 and reported that: Staff reviews are expected to be complete by the end of September; the Town website has inconsistencies that should be corrected (Director M Gilroy will contact the Town); the deadline for providing write-in candidates to the CT Secretary of State is 4 PM on October 19. Library Director M Gilroy will contact the current Democratic candidate, and invite them to the monthly BOT meeting. There will be 3 Board of Trustee seats open for the 2021 election: 2 Democratic candidates are running; there is an Republican/un-affiliated seat open with no current candidate running.

iii. Programming Committee: met on August 2, 2021 and reported that John Davis was contacted to schedule a 2nd presentation on vaccines for the "Talk with the Expert" series; books have been awarded as prizes in the summer reading program; July's Poke Party was successful; Scrapbooking/craft events will continue. New plans include programs led by library staff for teens and for children, a wildlife program (bat walk), a Library booth was well attended at the Celebrate East Haddam Day on 4 September; the East Haddam Art League had a display in the Rathbun building; development of a Town Trivia program is being considered.

4. Unfinished Business

a. ARPA Grant: see Item 3.a.v, above; purchases must be completed by 30 June 2022.

b. Library Covid-19 Update-Changes to Restriction: see Item 3.a.i, above.

c. Budget: The new budget process will begin in a few months.

d. ALA Rural Communities grant: work on this grant continues.

e. Library Board 2019 Effectiveness and 2021 "Year of Recovery" Goals

i. Support town in creating a plan to address current needs and future development of the EHLS: The town is recruiting members for Library building exploratory committee < link to application on town website>.

ii. Community Involvement: the Library booth was successful at the Celebrate East Haddam Day, attended by approximately 3,000 people (including many new town residents with children), exceeding expectations; the Library expects to have a presence at the Oct 2 town event; and may have some presence (possibly outside) for the Family night in December. Coordination with Historical Society programs (especially nature-related) may continue; further coordination with the Land Trust is possible. An additional suggestion included contacting veterans associations to gauge interest in developing presentation(s) and/or some library-supported communication forum for the community to hear from veterans.

iii. New Ways to provide Library Services: new programs are under consideration, new out-reach on town events are planned (see above); a "Makers Space' (such as available at the Weston town library) was described as something to consider for the EHFPL (dedicated area with computers and printers near the reference librarian); this would be particularly useful for adult patrons.

f. Become more effective Trustees: ACLB (Association of Connecticut Library Boards) conference is upcoming and expected to be virtual/on-line; BOT members are encouraged to consider registering and attending.

5. New Business:

Town Committee Recruitment: Interested residents are being recruited for membership on the committee evaluating library building options to make recommendations to the town and tax-payers. Interested people can fine applications for membership on the town website. Vicky Riley Pach pet the BOT know that she will not be running in November for another term.

6. Audience of Citizens

No citizen input was received.

7. Adjournment without objection at 7:52 PM.

The next Meeting will be on 14 Oct, 2021, at 6:30 PM, to be held at EHFPL and by ZOOM online.
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1_esgevce4RHRf-pRjXI7VzDIHbXa0qB2

These minutes are posted on the EHLS Board of Trustees site:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1FSN8D7cman5FdKlv14z5g_ItFvIlVJRW.