

**BOARD OF AGENTS –
SILAS BRONSON LIBRARY MINUTES –
Monday September 17, 2018**

PRESENT: President De Carlo, Vice President Wrenn, Secretary Cullinan Agents: Harrell, Ranando, Ogrodnik, Ryan, Albini, Beatty, Cummings

ALSO: Director Raechel Guest, Heidi Barbieri, Lisa Bartkus

CALL TO ORDER: President De Carlo called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

AGENDA: MMSP (Ogrodnik, Harrell) to approve the agenda.

MINUTES: MMSP (Cummings, Ogrodnik) to approve the August 20th minutes

COMMUNICATIONS/PUBLIC COMMENT:

Kelly & Justin from the Executive Board of Literacy Volunteers came in to read a statement regarding the Berman Memorial.

We are here today to speak about the dedications of the chair in the children's library and the tree outside the library that were named in honor of Katherine Berman. With the recent details that have come to light regarding the heartbreaking events that are surrounding Kathy's death, the LVGW board recognizes that this was a horrible tragedy. With respect, we believe these events do not take away from what Kathy Berman and the Berman family have done for the residents of Waterbury by promoting literacy. A graduate herself from Wilby High School, a teacher at Chase Elementary school, a past board president of LVGW, and a longtime friend of Literacy are just a few ways she dedicated her life to improving the lives of many through education. Her consistent dedication and participation at our annual dinner has proven to be beneficial in our efforts to raise funds to help the countless tutors that serve the greater Waterbury area. We are proud to say she has been a past member of our board and a constant friend to Literacy Volunteers of Greater Waterbury. We hope that despite the tragic circumstances surrounding her passing, you will agree with us that Katherine Berman did a lot of good for the residents of Waterbury through her constant support of LVGW. The dedications we made to her in May serve as a reminder of all the good she did and we hope they will continue to do so. We thank you for your time in listening to us tell you a little about the positive legacy of Katherine Berman.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT—included with board packet:

Front Plaza – LaRosa will be returning to install the chlorine filter for the fountain and do some repairs including leveling the fountain, which currently overflows on one side, and fixing problems with the concrete near the stairs.

Library Park Renovations – I spoke with Mark Lombardo, Supervisor of Parks & Golf Courses, about the Library Park renovation project. He expects that the new design plans for the park will be available in a couple of months. I requested that the library have a seat at the table, as we will be directly impacted by the project.

Saturday Scheduling – we resumed Saturday hours at the main library on September 8th. We anticipate resuming Saturday hours at the Bunker Hill Branch in October.

Staffing Additions & Vacancies – Two new staff members joined us last week. Jeffrey Coutts, Librarian II, who previously worked at the New Haven Public Library and has been assigned to our Adult Information Services division. Eric Rodriguez is our new Maintianer I and will be working the evening/Saturday shift. I am currently interviewing candidates for the Admin. I position. Once that is filled, our only remaining vacancy will be the Librarian II position which is on hold until March.

Waterbury Garden Club – the Garden Club returned a few weeks ago and planted colorful mums on the back patio and side patio. Agent Beatty asked if we can have mums put on the seat wall out front. Director Guest said that it was a seat wall for patrons to sit on.

East Wing/Teen Zone Renovation – I am waiting for Public Works to confirm whether or not they can do the

demolition needed for the East Wing Renovation. After that we will go out to bid for the new carpeting, glass walls, wiring and other items.

Collection Agency – we have asked Corporation Counsel to advise us on severing our contract with American Adjustment. In the meantime, we are no longer sending them new bills. A current trend in public libraries is the elimination of all late fees and, in some cases, lost or damaged book fees. If fees are over \$5, patrons can no longer borrow anything from the library. People living in poverty are disproportionately affected by this policy, as they are the ones least able to pay the fees. Children who are most in need of the library's resources often end up losing their library privileges because their families can't afford the fees. I have included copies of articles and sample policies addressing this topic for your consideration. There are currently 4,579 patrons (18% of our total cardholders) whose borrowing privileges have been suspended due to fees. This does not include patrons who no longer have cards at all due to this issue: patrons are deleted from the system after 5 years of inactivity. Last year, we collected about \$16,000 in fines and just over \$2,000 for lost or damaged books. If we were to eliminate fines entirely, we would need to find an alternate source of revenue. Agent Ogradnik suggested maybe changing the limit from \$5.00 to something higher. My concern when I was looking at that was that it would become a habit to only return books when they want to take others out.

Main Reading Room Shelving – We are in the process of reorganizing the books in the Main Reading Room. As a result of clearing shelves for the video collection, it became apparent that we could make better use of space by taking a more planned approach to shelving. I am optimistic that we will be able to remove shelves closest to the windows without having to relocate any of the collection to storage. The rows of shelves along the windows currently create very narrow aisles that are not ADA compliant. By removing one row each along the windows, we will be able to create pleasant study/reading areas for our patrons.

Whale Update – Torrco has launched a fundraiser for the library to assist with the reinstallation of the whale sculpture. They are soliciting donations for the Friends of the Library. I spoke briefly with members of the Stein family at Torrco's trade show; they are very enthusiastic about helping to restore the whale. There is an open question of where to put the sculpture once it is finished, since it is a wind chime, placing it indoors is problematic. It may be possible to install it outside over the front entrance, at a height that would keep it safe from thieves. Sample notepads were on the meeting room table with the new logo on it that Torrco had made to help raise money for the reinstallation for the whale. The money donated for the whale restoration will be put in the Friends account and kept track of. President De Carlo thought that a possible location for the Whale could be outside above the front entrance where it could still be a wind chime and with lights on it.

New Library Cards – We have placed the order for new library cards. These will feature our new logo and include keytag cards. Barcodes will be preprinted on the reverse (we currently purchase separate barcode stickers for our cards). Once the cards are here, we will do a publicity drive to promote the library and encourage patrons to come get a new card. Library policy sets the price for replacement cards at \$3 for adults cards and \$1.50 for children's cards. We have also revised the bags that we hand out to new library card holders; replacing the old logo with the new one. Agent Harrell asked about the library cards last month that were not renewed. Director Guest said it looked like the renewal sticker was just not put on the cards.

Director Guest reviewed the Museum stats and noticed that when she does a push on Facebook for the Museum passes such as Beardsley Zoo we see an increase in usage.

Committee Reports:

Finance:

The Finance committee met and discussed the following items:

1. Rollover of the remaining Insurance Claim of \$59,171.70 to be added to the current rollover of \$43,267.65.
2. Distribute the \$60,786.87 from the Anna Paul Donation of the total FY18 rollover to be included in the budget of the Teen/YA Renovations.
3. Add the \$3,264.37 from the McLarney, Vieillette & Angevine Funds to the Bronson Book Budget.

Agent Beatty asked if any of those funds are restricted. Director Guest responded that McLarney & Viette are restricted and we follow the restrictions.

A motion to rollover and to distribute and to add under the Finance and Fundraising Committee was made by Agent Cullinan and seconded by Agent Ryan and approved unanimously.

The Finance Committee met again with Tom from Wells Fargo along with Michael Leblanc from the Finance Department. We have started a draft of an Investment Policy for the Board to read over, we met again with them on the 11th of October. If anyone sees anything that we might need to change please contact Holly or Tim with your questions so that we can address them at the next meeting. Our hope is that after the meeting on October 11th we will have a complete Investment Policy for the Board to discuss at our October meeting. Secretary Cullinan asked if we had an Investment Policy in the past. Vice President Wrenn responded that we did not and that this is a first. President De Carlo suggested that we will need to review the Policy each year and make any necessary changes. Director Guest stated that there would be one more additional appendix to the policy that she and Heidi need to fine tune; the Bronson Fund is many different funds and a lot of the money that was donated has restrictions from the donors and this needs to be added to the Investment Policy. Agent Ogrodnik would like the statement where it says timely basis defined under investment policy review section to be a more defined time frame.

Secretary Cullinan asked how we decide how much to spend on book budget from the Bronson Fund. Director Guest responded that we are currently using 4% of the balance.

Building & Projects:

We spoke briefly about the Library Park Renovation which is in process and might possibly start next year. Audrey had mentioned she is attending a Middlebury Library adult program and suggested that perhaps our Library look into it. Raechel had also mentioned that we have already reached out to seniors. Agent Beatty asked what the Middlebury program for seniors was. Agent Harrell responded that a group will be coloring cards for veterans. The Building Committee also decided to meet at 5:30 each month prior to the board meeting instead of 5:00.

Hall of Fame:

October 20th at 2 pm at the Mattatuck Museum we will be having our inductee ceremony. Director Guest let the board know that included in their packet was our new Books and Happening which includes the Hall of Fame Ceremony. Secretary Cullinan asked what our next steps are with the Hall of Fame. President De Carlo and Director Guest stated that they will be working on the necessary changes after the Hall of Fame Ceremony.

Friends of the Library:

Agent Harrell was unable to attend the last Friends Meeting but did let the board know that they are working on Mardi Gross.

Waterbury Cable Council:

President De Carlo will try to attend the next meeting on Wednesday November 14th at 5 pm.

Other:

OLD BUSINESS:

Treasurer Vacancy – we are still working on finding a Treasurer.

Term Appointments – we have not heard any updates from the Mayor's office

NEW BUSINESS:

Agent Cummings let the board know about the Anti Bullying Event on October 1st at 6 pm in the Children's room that she was doing with and 11 year old author Miriam Azeez.

Berman Memorial – Agent Albini brought up the Berman Memorial and he disagrees with the name being placed on the plaques from the donations in her memory. In the past we have removed people’s names who did good deeds and then bad deeds later and their names were removed. President De Carlo reminded the board that an adult Chair and 6 children’s chairs for Story time along with a tree in the front of the Library were donated by Literacy Volunteers in memory of Kathryn Berman with plaques in front of the tree and outside the picture book room. Agent Ogrodnik asked if we could change the plaques to read Berman Family instead. Agent Ranando reminded the board that there was a lot of publicity regarding the donations and that Mr. Berman’s picture was in the paper. Agent Albini asked what message does this board want to send, does the plaque and the furniture mean that much to the library. Agent Ryan asked if we could remove the plaques quietly. Agent Albini stated that he would not publicize it but he would want it removed. Agent Cummings said what about what Agent Ogodnik said about changing it to the Berman Family. Agent Albini said that it that wasn’t the intent and Agent Cummings said it was not the intent to have it come off either and Agent Albini stated that his personal it is personal opinion that it would be a copout to just change the name. Agent Albini asked what the library and this board is gaining by leaving that name on the plaque. Further discussion was had regarding the removal of the plaques from the Library by the Board of Agents where they decided to form a committee consisting of President De Carlo, Vice President Wrenn, Agent Albini & Agent Cummings (who disclosed she is on both boards) to have a discussion regarding the boards concerns and feelings regarding the donations and plaques. President De Carlo will reach out to the Literacy board to plan a private meeting.

Sisters to Sisters is having a guest author on September 20th and Agent Harrell invited the board to attend. Also, CT Fallen heroes will be recognizing 4 veterans on September 29th at Holiday Hill from 10am to 4 pm.

MMSP (Cummings, Ryan) to approve payment of Bronson bills of \$3,535.41

ADJOURNMENT: MMSP (Ryan, Albini) to adjourn at 7:07 pm.

NEXT MEETING: Monday October 15, 2018 – 6 pm,

Respectfully submitted:
Lisa Bartkus for Anne Marie Cullinan, Secretary