

CRANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

A meeting of the Cranston Public Library Board of Trustees was held on Wednesday, October 11, 2023 at 6:08p at the Cranston Central Library.

Present were:

Jack Tregar

Regina Spirito

Jen Cowart

R. Drayton Fair

Michael Goldberg

Diane Schaefer

Larry Warner (arrived 6:18p)

Ed Garcia, Library Director

Julie Holden, Assistant Library Director

Allyson Quintanilla, Secretary for the Board of Trustees

INTRODUCTION: 6:08p

The meeting was called to order at 6:08p.

MINUTES: 6:08p

A motion was made by Michael Goldberg to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of September 13, 2023. Jen Cowart seconded. Motion carried (5-0).

LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION REPORT: 6:09p

Administrative Updates

-Branch 7 update: All the materials purchased for Branch 7 are cataloged and ready for use. The van is scheduled to be delivered to Graphic Innovations to be wrapped on October 6th.

-Capital Projects Fund/Learn365 grant: Director Garcia was involved in discussions with the Mayor's office about potential use of the state grant funding for a community center at various potential locations around the city.

-Diversity Assessment grant update: All the materials for this grant have been purchased. Cataloging and processing for the collection are ongoing. \$4,000 in grant funds were spent on books for Central as part of this grant.

-Rhode Island Catholic: We had a recent incident at the Auburn branch involving the Rhode Island Catholic newspaper. The past five weeks of issues were found in the garbage by the custodian. They were soaked with water and ripped into pieces. Damage and destruction of library materials is a misdemeanor per RIGL 11-44-15. In consultation with the Cranston Police an officer responded to complete a report. I have asked them to file a report with the Attorney General's office as this incident clearly targeted religious materials. I also reported the incident to the Rhode Island Library Association Intellectual Freedom Committee and the American Library Association Office of Intellectual Freedom.

-AASL Award Ceremony: The Central Library will be hosting a ceremony on October 30th to award Senator Jack Reed with the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) Crystal Apple Award. AASL Past President Kathy Lester will be traveling from Michigan to present the award to Senator Reed.

-Dean Estates donations: CPL worked with the Mayor's office to accept donations for two weeks for the residents affected by the floods at the Dean Estates apartment complex. Cranstonians dropped off dozens of bags of clothes, shoes, blankets, toiletries, and gift cards.

-Dean Estates waive damaged materials fees: In anticipation of potential damaged materials from Dean Estates apartment residents who were affected by the flooding, the library put in place a process to waive any lost or damaged materials fees for items damaged in the flooding. We also received approval from 30 other RI libraries to waive fees on their items as well.

Buildings and Grounds

-Update on the Knightsville exterior door. The library has brought in Chirico Construction to conduct some repairs to the exterior door to prevent future flooding. The estimate is \$1500.

-The library received 3 NaloxBoxes from the Governor's Recovery Friendly Workplace office. The Naloxboxes contain 2 doses of Narcan, gloves, a respiratory mask, and we will be deciding where to put them. They are meant to be for access to the public.

-Michael Goldberg asked for an update on the water penetration in the exterior wall of the C-Lab at the Central Library. Director Garcia responded that he has met with the City Engineer to determine a cause. The city building maintenance department replaced all the weather stripping around a nearby window. The City Engineer is also reviewing the library blueprints to determine if there is a nearby water line that could have a potential leak.

Programming

-Evening Storytime update: in 2022, youth services used a grant from Senator Hanna Gallo to enhance our evening storytimes. Our focus was providing an opportunity for working parents to bring their children to preschool literacy programs. We identified these characteristics for successful evening programs:

- Provide snacks since these programs happen around dinner time
- Allow a wide age range to attend so whole families can come
- Use a large space to accommodate different energy levels and sensory needs (Most kids are required to sit and walk in lines during the day, and they need freedom of movement at the end of the day, while other children need to seek out a quiet corner and have space from others.)
- Plan around high-interest themes that make the storytimes worth the extra effort to attend (Examples include glow-in-the-dark storytime, "AAAAAAHHHHHH" storytime, birthday storytime, breakfast storytime, and Bluey storytime.)

Since we established these standards, we have offered 25 evening storytimes at the Central and William Hall libraries, with an average attendance of 26, which is comparable to attendance at our very popular morning storytimes. However, the most important measure of success is that we are reaching a group of people who do not attend our morning storytimes.

For example, 85% of the people who attended the most recent evening storytime at Central were not signed up for any morning story times during the three month period from August to October. The most recent program also inspired this comment on Facebook: "Love that you're doing storytime for kids after school! My toddler is in pre-k and was so sad. All the Storytimes are in the morning and we can't go anymore." Early literacy programs are an essential part of the public library's mission, and now high quality storytimes are available to more people.

-Ward 6 candidate forum: The library hosted in partnership with the Cranston Herald a very successful candidates forum for the Ward 6 city council special election. All four candidates participated. There were 70 people in attendance.

-Banned Books Week events; The library held two Banned Books Week events on 10/3 and 10/4. The 10/3 event at William Hall Library was held in conjunction with the ACLU and featured local authors reading selections from banned books. That event had 104 people in attendance. The 10/4 program: Freedom to Read - Challenges Then and Now was in conjunction with the Sandra Bornstein Holocaust Education Center. Adult Services Coordinator Dave Bartos schedule the program which featured Oaklawn Branch Librarian as moderator, Michael Goldberg with opening remarks along with Brigitte Hopkins, Westerly Public Library Executive Director, Bill Lancellota, Westerly Public Library Assistant Director, Steven Brown, Executive Director of ACLU of RI and Michael Bryant, Professor of History and Legal Studies at Bryant University. The event was live streamed. 25 people attended in-person.

Staff Updates

-Ed Garcia was invited to join the Rhode Island Digital Equity Working Group which is housed at RI Commerce.

-Ed Garcia was a guest speaker at the Rhode Island Genealogical Society annual meeting to discuss genealogy resources at the Cranston Public Library.

-Robin Nyzio and Zach Berger started in their new positions at the Central Library and William Hall Library on October 2nd.

A report on the 2023 Summer Reading Program and information about the Cranston Arts Commission Hispanic Heritage Month art show at the Central Library were distributed.

BUDGET REPORT: 6:21p

The budget report was distributed reflecting July 1, 2023 - September 30, 2023. Director Garcia reported that he was assured by the city Purchasing Agent that the library's electricity rates will not increase with a potential Rhode Island Energy rate increase. The City has locked in contractual rates for two years.

The new Finance Director has questioned whether the library complies with the Cranston purchasing ordinances. Director Garcia met with Chief of Staff Moretti and prepared a memo outlining the purchasing authority of the Board of Trustees.

NEW BUSINESS:

Proposal of revision to the Board of Trustees Bylaws: 6:30p

The revised version of the Board of Trustees Bylaws was distributed to the Board. The Trustees will bring this revision to the November meeting for discussion and possible vote.

Approval to transfer ownership of library van to the City of Cranston: 6:34p

A motion was made to move to transfer ownership of the old library van to the City of Cranston by Drayton Fair. Larry Warner seconded (6-0).

ADJOURNMENT: 6:41p

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Regina Spirito. Diane Schaefer seconded. Motion carried (6-0).