

**Approved
Windsor Library Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
Dec. 5, 2023**

Present: Cheryl Curtis, Fran Ward-Nelson, Caren Barry, Betty Hellerman, Carol Sama, LeighAnn Tyson, Kaitlin Walsh, Michael Zager, Gaye Rizzo
Absent: David Raney, Denise Panos

Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM by Cheryl Curtis.

Cheryl asked for a volunteer to take minutes for the meeting. Carol Sama agreed to be Secretary.

Public Comment: None.

Resignations and Appointments: Cheryl Curtis welcomed Kaitlin Walsh as a recently appointed member of the Library Advisory Board.

Staff Reports:

Fall was a busy time at both libraries with about **35,000 visits** during **September** and **October**, **37,000 items** checked out, **1,500 program attendees** and just under **5,000 public computer users**. Staff answered nearly **7,500 reference questions** and provided one-on-one **tech help to 334 people**. The **meeting rooms** were used **646** times during those two months by over **2,500 people**. Overall we saw a **20% increase** in library usage **this fall** compared to last fall.

Nightmare on Broad St. went very well with over **3,100 treats** handed out at the library to little trick-or-treaters dressed in Halloween attire. The annual event, sponsored by First Town Downtown, ran for two, very busy hours. Thanks to **David and Loretta Raney** for, once again, volunteering their time to help staff with treat distribution and to those of you along with Windsor Library Association members who donated all of the treats. I say “treats” rather than “candy” as the pretzels from **Betty Hellerman** and **Valerie Gange** continue to be a huge hit with the kids.

Another **fall event** worth noting was a first-ever **Citizenship party!** As part of the **Book-a-Librarian** service which offers one hour appointments for **one-on-one technology help**, Librarian **Cailey Klasson** helped two residents over several months with the lengthy online process of completing their application for **U.S. citizenship**. Upon hearing the good news that the application for one resident, **Hasna**, from **Bangladesh** had been approved, Cailey invited staff to join her with **cake and congratulations** on Oct. 30 in the library meeting room. Hasna was joined at the reception by her son, **Sardar**, and **Liz Burke**, his **tutor** from the

Wilson Branch Library tutoring program. Hasna worked as a **chemistry professor** in Bangladesh and hopes to now be able to pursue similar employment here. **Sardar** is a **5th grade student** at JFK Elementary School and plans to attend the CREC Academy of Aerospace and Engineering on Kennedy Rd. next year. He has dreams to become a scientist. He also shared that he **loves penguins**.

Cailey has also been busy this fall working with **Sophia Wilson**, our new **student intern**. A senior at Windsor High School, **Sophia** is a talented artist and has had success selling her **pottery** and **painting** creations on **Etsy**. She is proficient with all of the equipment on the **Mezzanine Makerspace** and has been a great teacher to patrons interested in learning how to use them. Sophia would like to become an architect and has applied for early admission to M.I.T. To learn more about Sophia and her work you can visit her at <https://sophiamiwilson.com/>. Sophia's internship is funded through a **grant** from the **Conn. State Library**.

The library was fortunate to receive a **\$1,250 donation** (with **matching funds from Microsoft**) from the granddaughter of one of our former volunteers, **Anne Lasser**. The funds are being used to furnish the small Kidspace program room with **child size tables** and **chairs**. A **\$200 donation** from a retired couple who moved from Pittsburgh to be closer to family in Windsor was used to purchase large colorful **wall decals** for that room

Kidspace has also become the recipient of a number of **books in braille**. After receiving a request from the **parents of a blind child** for Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone in Braille, Children's Services Librarian, **Alex Remy**, reached out to the **American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults** and is now receiving **one free Braille book each month** from them to help develop a collection for the visually impaired. The savings to the library for this new collection of materials will be significant as a single book written in Braille can **cost four or five times** as much as the same title in regular print due to the specialized production process and materials required. Windsor's collection will be shelved in Kidspace, with many titles of interest to **readers of all ages**.

The **Wilson Branch tutoring program** kicked off another year of service in mid-**October**. **Tutoring coordinator, Tricia Jeffery**, reports that there are currently **21 children** paired with the same number of **adult volunteers** for **one-on-one homework help** for students in grades 1-8. Recently, tutors met with staff from the **Windsor Public Schools** to receive additional **training** on how best to **supplement** the instructional needs of the students.

Staffing at the libraries has remained **stable** since we last met. In anticipation of winter absences due to staff illness and vacations to warmer weather, **Mark Gervino**, our Head of Reference and Technical Services hired **Bridget Carbonetti** as a part time substitute librarian. Bridget grew up in Windsor, moved

to Vermont and has come back with her husband to raise their family here. The libraries currently have 10 full time and 31 part time employees on staff.

After the **daytime theft of two catalytic converters** from cars parked in the main library lot this fall, the decision was made to **install security cameras** on that side of the building. Not only do the cameras provide information to **help police** deal with theft and other questionable activity in the parking lot but they offer a greater sense of **security** to staff and patrons. The **Wilson Branch** has had cameras in their lot for several years.

Interior cameras at the **branch** helped police track down one **woman stealing CDs** and **another stealing DVDs** on two separate occasions. All of the items have been returned to the library.

An additional **enhancement** to the main library **parking lot** this fall was **new line striping** of all of the spaces and **re-marking of the fire lane**.

As I'm sure you know, every **ten years, residential property in Windsor is revaluated** and **this is that year**. The tax burden then gets **shifted from commercial to residential** for the next **5 years**. Many of us were **shocked** when we received the envelope in the mail this week with our new, much larger property assessments. How this will affect the mill rate and taxes in Windsor for FY 25 is still unknown. What I can tell you is the each of the Department Directors was asked, this morning, to create Decision Packages that would include cuts of 5% to our operational budgets. For library services, this translates into a \$96,000 cut!! Stay tuned for more information about its potential impact on services to the public next fiscal year.

Windsor Library Association Update:

Mike Zager reported that fall fundraising is in process and that they are a little behind where they were at this time last year. The target is \$21,000. The topic for the winter meeting is still under consideration. It may be "emerging trends in libraries". One member of WLA is an architect who helped with the Windsor Library addition and can speak to the way new trends are impacting the building/reconstruction of libraries. WLA is planning to hold the winter meeting in late February or early March.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

Motion: To accept the minutes.

Made by: Fran Ward-Nelson

Second: Mike Zager

Vote: Cheryl Curtis Y Carol Sama Y Fran Ward-Nelson Y Denise Panos absent
Caren Barry Y David Raney absent LeighAnn Tyson Y Betty Hellerman Y

Kaitlin Walsh Y, Michael Zager Y

Set next tentative meeting date: March 5, 2023 at 7PM (Meeting Room #1)

Motion: To adjourn

Made by: LeighAnn Tyson

Second: Caren Barry

Vote: Cheryl Curtis Y Carol Sama Y Fran Ward-Nelson Y Denise Panos absent
Caren Barry Y David Raney absent LeighAnn Tyson Y Betty Hellerman Y
Kaitlin Walsh Y Michael Zager Y

Meeting adjourned at: 7:25 PM

Respectfully submitted: Carol Sama