

Watchung Library Advisory Board  
4/3/18 Minutes

Called to order by WLAB President Amy Fiorilla at 3:22 PM.

Present were:

Amy Fiorilla  
Council Liaison Steve Black  
Tamara Benc  
Eileen Dicken  
Margaret Ellis  
Library Manager Hannah Kerwin  
Keith McCoy, SCLSNJ  
Virginia Hartmann

Absent:

Maureen Greenbaum  
Michael Vignola  
Annette VonBrandis

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved with one correction. (Moved by Fiorilla, seconded by Dicken.)

Steve Black asked Hannah Kerwin if the cleaning situation has improved. Hannah reports that the cleaning is OK. She also reports that the smoke detector now has a more conventional monitoring system instead of the phone line it used to depend on.

Black reports that he called PSE&G after the March 21st snowstorm to facilitate getting the power turn back on at the library. Part of the problem was that the library parking lot was not plowed until Saturday morning, which meant that PSE&G could not get to the library to make repairs.

Amy Fiorilla asked about a window that has been broken for a while on the barn by the library. Black said he would call the DPW about that.

Virginia Hartmann asked why the library parking lot was not plowed for so many days. Black said "You're at the bottom of the list" and that the DPW had to clear all the roads first so that emergency vehicles could get through if the need had arisen.

It was pointed out that the Warren Library had heat and internet access and so many people there that they ran out of seating. Watchung Library had no heat, no power, and was not plowed.

Steve Black said that he doesn't know why the Borough has the library "so far down the list," but observed that the library could have been used as a warming center.

Black reported the Borough Council is "all over the place" with respect to what to do about the library and has "vacillated." He is expecting a statement to be drafted by Councilman Bill Nehls with a "directive" regarding the library to be presented at the April 19th Council meeting.

Amy Fiorilla asked "How will the newest Council member get informed about the library?" Black replied "I can invite her to a WLAB meeting."

Virginia Hartmann made the following points:

It is not fiscally responsible to collect \$821,000 from Watchung residents (the county library tax) and turn it over to other towns and then not have a library in our own town.

It is not fiscally responsible let the state matching funds (The New Jersey Library Construction Bond Act approved by voters last November) opportunity go by when our library needs to be renovated, reconstructed, or replaced.

Fiorilla added, "Why would we pay so much and get nothing back when we could pay a little more and get so much more?"

Regular Business

WLAB President Fiorilla welcomed our newest member Tamara Benc.

Treasurer's Report

Ending Balance for November	\$9,279.76	
December deposits	\$429.04	finer
	\$2.62	fish donations
Debits	\$50.00	Aqua Services for monthly maintenance
New Balance for December	\$9,661.42	
January deposits	\$292.54	finer
	\$26.81	fish donations
Debits	\$50.00	Aqua Services for monthly maintenance
New Balance for January	\$9,930.77	

On Jan 18 the Peapack Gladstone Bank account was closed and a check was issued for \$9,930.77. Dicken forwarded the check to Bill Hance to open an escrow account for the Watchung Library Advisory Board.

February deposits	\$174.06	finer
	\$2.65	fish donations
Debits	\$50.00	Aqua Services for monthly maintenance
New Balance for February	\$10,057.48	

On March 5, Dicken received an email from Kason Farnella, the owner of Aqua Service Professionals. He said that they can no longer provide the cleaning service at \$50 per visit. He will give us one more cleaning service at that price and then it will go up to \$100 per visit.

Ellis moved to authorize Treasurer Dicken to find a new, less expensive service for the fish tank. Fiorilla recommended checking with Sharon Orlando about fish services because she used to handle that. Tamara Benc offered to reach out to the Watchung Boy Scouts to see if a scout might do it as a community service.

Other Business

Ellis moved that we change our meeting start time to 3:30 to allow our new member to arrive on time. Dicken seconded. Motion carried. Fiorilla will inform Borough Clerk Michelle DeRocco of the change.

Fiorilla asked Black whether we can get a report about the WLAB on the Council's regular agenda. That would allow residents to speak about the library at Council meeting during the first public comment period. Black will look into that.

The next meeting of the WLAB will be Wednesday, May 2nd, at 3:30 PM in the Bicentennial Room of the Watchung Library.

Meeting adjourned around 4:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret A. Ellis