

WATERBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

UNOFFICIAL MINUTES

28 North Main Street – SAL Room

Monday, April 14, 2025, at 5:00 PM

Present: Anna Black, Michelle Baker, Erin Mooney, Margaret Moreland, Kit Walker, Rachel Muse, Tom Leitz, DeAnna Romstad

Anna called the informal, discussion-only meeting to order at 4:59 PM.

Public Comment: None

Outreach/Patron Services Librarian's Report

- Rachel introduced DeAnna Romstad to the Board.
- This 20-hour a week position is responsible for the Library's many on-site and off-site community outreach activities. In addition to her time at the help desk, DeAnna brings a pop-up library, with many free resources, to the Senior Center on the first Wednesday of each month and collaborates with the Historical Society on their "mystery artifact" talk. She delivers books to the home-bound, coordinates the Library's art gallery, visits the homeless shelter monthly to promote Library services and issue Library cards, and works to make the Library a part of numerous community activities. She has also collaborated with local groups, such as the Regional Planning Coalition, to set up informational tables. The Library will have a table at the upcoming Volunteer Fair and DeAnna and Sandra are beginning to plan for the Library's participation in the NQID parade in the summer.
- Last month, DeAnna also hosted the Library's first ever Great WPL Puzzle Race, receiving lots of positive feedback!

Municipal Manager's Report

- Tom reported that the Town should begin contract negotiations with AFSCME within the month. The first step will be setting ground rules for the talks. Bargaining procedures require that the already agreed-upon staff salary increases may not go into effect until after there is a contract.
- The budget's regular pay line may need to be adjusted upward as it has been agreed that employees will have the right to cash out some of their accrued time.
- Waterbury has not yet be affected by federal cut-backs although it is likely that some funds, including those administered by the EPA and FEMA, may not be forthcoming.

Library Commission Treasurer's Report

- The Morgan Stanley trust account decreased significantly over the last month - as expected given the volatility of the market. We are still getting 4% on our cash savings.

- Michelle talked with Morgan Stanley and was advised not to “tweek” our investments until the market more calms down.

Library Director’s Report

- The Winter Watercolor artists created hundreds of original bookmarks for the Library to give away to mark Library Week. Rachel was asked to represent the Vermont Library Association at the State House when the proclamation for National Library was introduced.
- The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) has largely been disbanded. It has traditionally provided funding for interlibrary loan services, the ABLE Library for the visually impaired, and many subscription databases, as well as partial support for the Summer Reading Program. VTLIB has funding for these through September, but even that is not certain. The Library is putting bookmarks in all outgoing ILL books to make people aware that ILL is funded by IMLS and has been posting VTLIB flyers in Library to inform patrons about what services are at risk. Board members can assist in raising awareness.
- Most books are currently printed in China but there are mixed messages about how tariffs might affect Library costs.
- The Children’s Garden will be planted this year in plots immediately behind the Library’s Books in Bloom Garden. Sandra and Rachel will be presenting a session on the Children’s Garden at the Vermont Library Association annual meeting in May.
- Work continues on creating the new designated Teen Space.
- There will be some very exciting programming in May around the Vermont Reads book, *Gather* by Kenneth Cadow. The Library is collaborating with Clif on this series.
- DeAnna and the Friends will attend the Waterbury and Revitalizing Waterbury Volunteer in May.
- The Lydia Taft Pratty Library in Dummerston will join the Catamount Library Network.
- Rachel is attending a six-month series of workshops around libraries and homelessness.
- The Youth programs continue to thrive. In particular, the Crochet Club will be working on a group project to crochet parts of a coral reef – part of a global arts and environmental movement to raise awareness of the environmental dangers.
- Teens experimented with yarn embroidery mandalas in Teen Makerspace and members of the Queer Reads Book Club discussed Bloom by Kevin Manetta.
- The Thrive in ’25 series wrapped up in March and Building Better Waterbury hosted its second session – this one on Design and Construction,
- There has been some success in containing the energy of the after-school crowd and the number of kids should decrease as the weather improves.

Meeting adjourned at 6:01.

Next meeting: Monday, May 12, 2025, at 5:00 PM, in the SAL room.