

**Somers Library Board of Trustees  
PO Box 443  
Somers, New York 10589**

**MEETING MINUTES  
June 17, 2020**

Acting President Parisi called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

The members present were: Ian Carnow, Laura Parisi, Ann Westerman, and Christine Williamson-Canavan.

Library Director Andrew Farber was also present.

Mr. Hasl is no longer on the Library Board of Trustees.

The meeting was held remotely via Zoom.

**Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Mrs. Westerman and seconded by Mrs. Parisi to approve the May 13, 2020 monthly meeting minutes as submitted. All were in favor.

A motion was made by Mrs. Westerman and seconded by Mrs. Williamson-Canavan to approve the May 22, 2020 special meeting minutes as submitted. All were in favor.

**Announcements and Correspondences**

There were no announcements and correspondences this evening.

**Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer's Report was presented.

Copies of the Abstract of Audited Vouchers #6, and Somers Library Vouchers were distributed. Mrs. Westerman made a motion to approve the Abstract of Audited Vouchers #6, dated June 17, 2020 in the amount of \$81,799.50, which included voucher numbers 99730 to 99739. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Williamson-Canavan. All were in favor.

The contractual amount spent this past month was \$4,383.01. The largest expenditures were: Kencal Cleaning (cleaning) \$1,586 and Overdrive (library materials) \$1,435. Payroll and benefit charges were \$77,416.49. Total Library spending for all accounts was \$81,799.50.

The Gift Fund balance is \$37,981 (\$30,629 - Chase + \$7,352 – PCSB). Deposit of \$300 plus interest incurred of \$.25 - Chase.

On January 3, 2019, the Town of Somers transferred \$137,200.00 from the Somers Library Gift Fund Account at Chase Bank to a Town of Somers Finance Department Account/NY Class Readers Digest at a NY Class. The current total is \$140,617.09 as per Carolyn Brush in the Finance Department.

On June 1, 2018, the Town of Somers transferred \$300,000.00 from the Somers Library General Account at Chase Bank to a Town of Somers Finance Department Account at Signature Bank at an interest rate of 1.11%.

The Town of Somers then transferred the \$300,000.00 in principal to NY Class in November for a 2.15% interest rate.

Then the Town of Somers transferred \$600,000.00 to NY Class on May 13, 2019.

On October 2, 2019, the Town of Somers transferred \$100,000.00 from NY Class to the Somers Library General Account to fund payroll and other expenses.

The Town of Somers transferred \$400,000.00 from NY Class to the Somers Library General Account to fund payroll and other expenses on November 27, 2019.

Then the Town of Somers paid \$70.00 to Worker's Comp from the Signature account in January 2020.

The Town of Somers paid interfund reimbursements to the general fund for worker's comp, Home Depot and Kencal Cleaning in February, March, April and May 2020.

On April 2, 2020, the Town of Somers transferred \$200,000.00 from NY Class to Chase Somers Library General Account to fund payroll and other expenses.

As of May 31, 2020, the balance in the Chase Somers Library General Account is \$67,708.24.

As of June 11, 2020, the carry forward in NY Class in Library General is \$333,880.91 as per Carolyn Brush in the Finance Department.

As of June 11, 2020, the carry forward in the Signature Library General Account is \$1,102,828.03.

Mrs. Williamson-Canavan is unsettled about the Trustees not knowing exactly how much of the budget went into the Library accounts included. Since the statements are not issued, this information cannot be verified.

### **Director's Report**

The Library re-opened on June 15<sup>th</sup> with curbside services only. Over 100 pick-ups have taken place over the last 2 ½ days. The first day was very busy. There have been a lot of returns which have to be quarantined for seven days. Plans had to be tweaked

a bit as more people were needed to answer the phones and emails, and less getting the books off the shelves. The staff has been divided into two teams with each being present in the Library every other week and working from home on alternate weeks. Mr. Farber will continue to keep the Trustees updated on the progression of the re-opening. The Trustees have been very happy with how Mr. Farber has been handling this situation and he has been very proactive. The plan he implemented is excellent and should be used as an example for all. The Board commended Mr. Farber on all the day-to-day updated information he provided on the COVID-19 restrictions and protocol for the Library. Mrs. Westerman applauded Mr. Farber's leadership skills and all agreed. He is a most reliable source informing the Town of updates, having the best and most up to date information.

Now that the Park is open, deliveries from Baker and Taylor as well as Mid-West Tapes has resumed.

No statistics have been provided at this point, but the distribution of e-books has gone from 1,800 to 3,200, and over 1,000 on line videos have been reserved.

Mr. Farber is researching retrofitting the bathroom doors with automatic door openers.

The Town is in the process of researching disinfecting equipment so some of the disinfecting can be done in-house, particularly in the bathrooms.

The Town has made arrangements to have the buildings disinfected with a fogging machine every other week, UV lights installed on the air conditioning systems, and the air ducts cleaned. There is plenty of hand sanitizer and more gloves, as well as masks will be supplied shortly. Councilman Garrity has been keeping the Library supplied with masks. Stickers for the floor will be provided and the plexiglass has been delivered.

The Town's re-opening plan has been shared with the Trustees.

The Safety and Health Assessment policies still have to be finalized.

Chuck Dammeyer cleaned the gutters and caulked around the windows. Once again, during the last powerful storm, the gutters overflowed with rainwater causing water to leak through the windows into the Program Rooms. When this happens, it causes a slipping hazard and gets into the heaters. Since the Library is going above and beyond to keep the building sanitized and safe for the public as well as the staff during the COVID-19 pandemic, Mrs. Williamson-Canavan feels it would be prudent test the Library for mold since the gutters issue has resulted in water penetrating the building for 3 years and has not been fixed. Focus should be especially intense in the Program Room where much of the leaking occurs. Nobody who uses that room should be at risk. Mr. Carnow reminded everyone that the Somers Library Foundation recently took back funding they raised to add enhancements to the Program Room as a result of the continuous issue of water leaks which has not been fixed by the Town.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

There was no Old Business this evening.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Resignation** – Mrs. Westerman addressed her colleagues on the Board and told them she truly enjoyed working with all of them as well as being a member of the Board of Trustees, but she was completely appalled at the decision the Town Board made to not reappoint Jim Hasl to his Trustee position. She noted Jim was dedicated and generous, gave a tremendous amount of time, energy and management talent to the Library. She further noted that it shows such a lack of appreciation for the Library Board and all other volunteer Boards in Town to treat a volunteer with such contempt and she cannot believe the Town Board made the decision to do this during a pandemic. She wanted to resign as soon as it happened, but did want to see the reopening and budget to fruition. As a result, it is with great sadness that she is submitting her resignation effective at either the end of July or August as she wants to further along the reopening of the Library and get the budget process done.

Mr. Farber said Mrs. Westerman will be missed, but he understands the reason for her decision.

Mrs. Parisi echoed Mr. Farber's sentiments. Mrs. Westerman was a huge asset to the Board, as was Mr. Hasl. She is sorry it had to come to this, but believes it is for good reason and very understandable. Mrs. Parisi appreciates Mrs. Westerman's willingness to stay on for a while longer to help out. Mrs. Westerman said there are too many moving parts to leave now and she wanted her colleagues to have time to prepare for her exit.

Mrs. Williamson-Canavan said she has no words, but is not surprised. She does not agree with the Town Board not reassigning Mr. Hasl and said it is a smack in the face to the Library Board of Trustees and other Boards in Town. The Library is one of the crown jewels of Somers and is the only game in Town. The Town Board had repeatedly slammed her and the other members of the Board. It is disgusting the way the Town treated Mr. Hasl. Mrs. Williamson-Canavan completely understands Mrs. Westerman's decision, she is very sorry and will miss her terribly.

Mrs. Williamson-Canavan directed Mrs. Schirmer to review the recording of this meeting so her comments can be published in the minutes verbatim, if possible. All other Trustees agreed that they would like their sentiments and comments recorded as well.

Following are some of the comments made by the Board members:

Mrs. Parisi said it is very difficult to answer to or work with a group that holds volunteers so loosely and callously, which is a sign of disrespect and lack of appreciation particularly for Mr. Hasl. It has been made clear that if the Town Board doesn't agree with an opinion, they feel threatened and want to shut it down. It is a shame that the

Trustees are losing two extremely gifted and talented volunteers. They were so motivated and did a lot of good things for the Library. It is very sad.

Mrs. Parisi also noted that at the very least they all have been extremely affected by the Town Board's decision and time will tell what will happen as a result of that.

Mr. Carnow added that there was no notice, discussion, involvement or explanation as to why the Town Board didn't reappoint Mr. Hasl. It is capricious and obvious that his head or any other volunteer's can be on the chopping block.

Mrs. Williamson-Canavan added that the Board of Trustees had such a great working relationship and accomplished so much with positive press to make the Town Board look good. You would think they would try to keep things intact for any other reason but politics. Clearly that is not the case. She thanked Mrs. Westerman for offering to stay on for the budget season.

Mrs. Westerman reiterated how stunned she was that Mr. Hasl, the Library Board of Trustees MVP was not reappointed especially in the middle of this difficult time. Mrs. Westerman said she was sorry. She is only staying on a while longer to help the Board members, Library and staff.

In closing, Mrs. Parisi said Richard Clinchy was the only Town Board member who reached out to her and Mrs. Westerman in an effort to rectify the situation. Not only are we volunteers, but residents and we don't deserve to be treated in a disrespectful and nasty manner.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m. and the Trustees will meet next on Wednesday, July 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. in the Library.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Schirmer, Secretary  
Somers Library Board of Trustees

cc: Library Board of Trustees  
Town Board  
Town Clerk  
Director of Finance