 Town of Portland, Connecticut

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**Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer Portland Public Library**

**Portland Library Board of Directors**

**Special Meeting**

February 28, 2022 1:00 PM

Portland Library Mary Flood Room

**DRAFT MINUTES**

1. **Call to Order**

Chairwoman Laurel Steinhauser called the meeting to order at 1:04 P.M.

Library Board Directors in attendance: Betsy Graziano, Myra Finkelstein, Don Eiler, Melissa Woodward, and Laurel Steinhauser. Also in attendance were Library Director Jan Nocek and Friends of the Portland Library President Maureen Muir.

1. **125th + 2 Anniversary Celebration Planning**

Discussion took place around the planning of the Library’s 125th + 2 Anniversary Celebration. Directors confirmed that the event will take place Saturday, June 11th from 11 A.M. - 2 P.M. and will take place rain or shine. If there is inclement weather the Board needs to have a contingency plan to move most activities indoors. The Library has three pop-up canopies and Don volunteered to look into pricing out a tent rental. Board members agreed that a tent could be a good idea in the event of rain to hold some portion of the activities outside, but could also be useful on a very sunny day.

Jan shared that there is bathroom access at both the Library and at the Waverly Center and that we shouldn’t need to rent additional outdoor bathroom facilities. Jan also shared that Jenn Renk is coordinating the Summer Reading Program kick off and has proposed combining this annual event with the Anniversary Celebration. The Summer Reading kick off usually involves bringing a performing act to the Library and Jenn is currently looking into who this might be. Board members agreed this was a wonderful idea. Jan shared that the summer reading theme this year is “Off the Beaten Path” with references to the outdoors, hiking, etc. Board members discussed the possibility of tying this theme into the summer window painting and coordinating with the artist to have the windows painted in early June in the week leading up to the celebration. Maureen shared an idea about a raffle to discuss with Jenn, suggesting that in the month leading up to the celebration children can earn raffle tickets for reading or checking out books. The wining raffle ticket could earn a child the ability to help design the window painting or perhaps have an animal named after them. Another idea is that the prize drawing could happen during the celebration and winners could get book bundles or other library themed prizes. This could help build awareness and excitement for the celebration event.

Board members discussed needing a Volunteer Coordinator. The Board could talk to PHS Principal Kate Lawson or the PHS Librarian about recruiting high school students to help on the day of the event to earn community service hours.

Discussion took place around food for the event and whether to invite food trucks and if so which types. Generally members agreed it was a good idea to have food available. Jan and Betsy agreed to speak with Melilli’s to see if they would be interested in selling ice cream during the event. If not, members brainstormed about lining up an ice cream truck, Vecchito’s lemon ice truck, or Chet’s Italian ice (formerly a vendor at the Cromwell Farmer’s Market). In addition there was conversation around a hot dog truck. Betsy will approach the owner’s of Top Dog and Muster Dog. There were questions about where to park food trucks (the police parking lot, the village district parking lot, or the Waverly Center parking lot) ad how permitting works.

Laurel reported that she spoke with Captain Milardo and confirmed that the Board can shut down a portion of the parking lot space to use for the event and that the Board will not need to pay for police staffing as long as the event doesn’t involve blocking off any roads. Captain Milardo offered to send an officer with their police dog to attend the event. Laurel will coordinate that with the police, and will be in touch with Bob Shea about having a Fire Truck at the event.

There was discussion regarding publicity for the event. Jan shared that banners for the 100th anniversary of women’s suffrage had a big visual impact in the library seating area and that the Board may wish to design and print several large banners to be displayed starting in early May. Jan also mentioned wanting good documentation of the event and members discussed asking Jim Tripp to take an overhead drone shot of the event. Myra volunteered to speak with local photographer Dan Castelli about whether he would be willing to be the official event photographer.

Members agreed that the event should be paid for from the Endowment Fund and that the Board was willing to spend up to, but not more than, $5000. This will be added to the agenda for approval at the next regular meeting.

Board members discussed that there should be activities both inside and outside during the celebration. Ideas for indoor activities include a photo display of Portland history in coordination with the Portland Historical Society (Jan will connect with them), a video loop of elected officials, community members, and children who use the library expressing their appreciation for the Portland Library, and a chidren’s history-focused scavenger hunt (Laurel will connect with Jenn about this idea). Ideas for outdoor activities include a fire truck and police dog, face painting, balloon animals, creative movement or stretching with Miss Alicia, read aloud in the gazebo, a bounce house, art classes for teens or adults with local artists (collage, decoupage, painting…), simple craft for kids (bookmark making…), and performances. The performance program could include the Summer Reading Kick Off band, PHS acapella group, a local band, as well as an official proclamation by the First Selectman. Board members agreed that they should invite First Selectman Curley, the Board of Selectmen, Rep. Carpino, and Sen. Needleman for the official proclamation as well as recognize all former Library Board members.

There was discussion around inviting local groups to participate including the Meshomasic Hiking Club, the Airline Trail Steering Committee, the Portland Historical Society, and the Middlesex Land Trust.

1. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:40 P.M.