

1/29 LMA

MINUTES
LIBRARY, MUSEUM & ARTS COMMITTEE MEETING
January 29, 2020 11:00am
Westport Town Hall, Rm 309

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Amy Kaplan, CHAIR
Harris Falk
Dick Lowenstein
Brandi Briggs
Wendy Batteau
Lisa Newman
Mark Friedman
Arline Gertzoff
Karen Kramer (present by conference call)

OTHER RTM MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sal Liccione
Jessica Bram

ALSO PRESENT:

Jim Marpe, First Selectman
Ian Bruce, Library Trustee Board President
Approximately 12 members of the public

Meeting called to order at 11:04am.

Agenda Item 1. The committee discussed the wording of its charge, which reads:

“The proper sphere of business of the Library, Museum and Arts Committee shall include study of the operation of the library facilities of the Westport Public Library, the facilities and operations of the Earthwatch (but only so long as town fund are being used therefore), the facilities and operations of any municipal museums which may come into being and the facilities and operations of any arts council and/or arts programs for which appropriation of town funds are sought or made and which are not under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education.”

All agreed that although historically this committee has confined its studies to the Westport Public Library and Earthplace (formerly known as Earthwatch), it is proper that we should study the other various arts appropriations which appear in the annual budget. In previous years, the Westport Museum (previously known as the Westport Historical Society) received funds of \$7500 for record storage, but as of FY 20-21, that request would not be made, and Mr Marpe confirmed.

Agenda Item 2. Other groups that the Committee found to be under our sphere of business include the Arts Advisory Council and the Levitt Pavilion. Various members of the committee pointed out that The Levitt Pavilion receives funding in more than one budgetary line, receiving \$8000 listed in 911 Miscellaneous, approximately \$20,000 through the Park and Rec budget, and also receives office space and grounds maintenance, which are of value but not broken out in the budget. Mr Marpe invited the Chair to a meeting of the reconstituted Levitt Pavilion Governance Board, scheduled for February 13.

Agenda Item 3. Committee discussed the process of recruiting and choosing appointees to the Library Board. Brandi Briggs and Wendy Batteau, former chair and member of the committee, explained how the normal process had been disrupted by the remodeling of the Library and the very specific needs of the board throughout that time. It was clear that the process had originally been a concurrently run search for both types of appointees, with due deference given to each body on its own appointees. We looked at information the Board posts online as well as the Library Bylaws for guidance on qualities needed in appointees, and discussed whether the RTM appointees had any significantly different desired qualifications. The committee felt that one point of difference would be the financial requirements, but also felt that returning to the historical model of working together would best serve all parties. Ian Bruce, President of the Library Trustee Board, expressed that he understood the committee's discussion, and would be happy to return to a close collaborative relationship with the committee.

There was a motion to adjourn, and the motion was seconded. The meeting adjourned at 12:15.