**Franklin Public Library**

**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

**February 22, 2021**

**Present**: Sandi Brandfonbrener, Monique Doyle, Kathleen Gerwatowski, Ginette Preto, Amanda Rabbitt, Barbara Steele of the Board, and Library Director Felicia Oti. Charleen Belcher was absent.

**Call to Order**: Sandi called the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

**Public Comment:** Mitzi Gousie, Assistant Youth Services Librarian, attended the meeting. Mitzi specializes in technology and STEM programming. Her current focus is getting more STEM programming up and running. She has expanded the “Girls Who Code” club to include grades 3-5. Girls Who Code for grades 6-12 had already been underway. In addition to coding initiatives, there are icebreaker activities to foster sisterhood. Boys are welcome in the club. Thus far there is one boy.

Mitzi also handles the “Dungeons and Dragons” program. Pre-pandemic approximately 12 students met once a week. Now two sessions are held each week with 8 young people in each session to play D&D for two hours. From August through December, these young people met independently for a total of 272 hours. Collaborative storytelling, improvisation, and math are some of the key benefits of this program.

On February 27th, Mitzi is launching a monthly craft class for any age called “Make with Miss Mitzi.” Younger children may require adult supervision. Thanks to donations from the Friends of Franklin Library, wonderful craft supplies are available for pick up to participate in the craft.

The Board was very impressed with Mitzi’s enthusiasm and wealth of ideas for future programs. Sandi noted how fortunate we are to have Mitzi on the Library Staff. She works only 19 hours per week and accomplishes so much.

**Minutes:** The minutes of the January meeting were approved.

**Report of the Board Members:**

**Kathleen:** Kathleen noted that the Cranston [RII] Public Library system has been open for some time with browsing periods of 15 minutes. There is no need to schedule in advance and everything runs smoothly.

**Monique:** Monique viewed a well-attended webinar given by the Burlington Public Library in coordination with Harvard University about Norman Rockwell’s art and its depiction of inclusion and exclusion. She suggested that the Franklin Public Library explore such programming.

**Amanda:** Caleigh Keating is starting a pilot program with Virtual Library Academy for an art show. Amanda also noted that Caleigh is providing books on topics of interest for young people upon request.

**Reopening plans:** The Franklin Public Library staff has discussed a reopening plan. They plan to start small, from 1-3 p.m. in the afternoon. They would limit the number to 20 people, four of those for an hour of computer use. No date is set yet. Felicia noted that the community is very satisfied with curbside delivery at this time. Ginette asked again if it would be possible when the weather improves to roll out carts on the patio for young children. The self-checkout app may make this feasible. Felicia will speak to Mitzi and Caleigh to discuss this idea. Monique suggested a gift book and pencil for incoming kindergarteners as a “welcome to the library” gift at the appropriate time.

**FY22 Budget**: Felicia said the budget process has started, which is good news. She is hoping there will be no cuts. The library budget meets the municipal appropriations requirement which means there is no need to ask for a waiver. The Town Administrator has asked that departments not request anything new at this time.

**Next meeting:** The next meeting will be held on March 22, 2021.

**Agenda for next month:** At the next meeting we will review the strategic plan, consider questions for the library survey, and receive a reopening update.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Gerwatowski