

Draft Meeting Minutes
Approved November, 16, 2023
North Haven Memorial Library Board Meeting
Tuesday, October 3, 2023

Minutes

Present: Ralph Black, Shauna DeStefano, Gina Falcigno, Michael Fletcher, Susan Griffiths, Kathleen Sheehan Imholt, Erin MacDonnell, Dean Volain, Sandi Lion, Secretary

Absent: Ruth Bryant, Laura DeVaux, Mary Anne Hardy

1. The meeting was called to order by Michael Fletcher at 6:28 p.m.
2. Michael Fletcher requested that the minutes of the September 21, 2023 meeting be accepted. A motion was made by Erin MacDonnell and seconded by Kathy Sheehan Imholt to accept the September 21, 2023 Meeting minutes. All were in favor.

Old Business:

Strategic Plan Discussion with Maxine Bleiweis & Associates.

- Maxine Bleiweis and her daughter, Erica Byrne, introduced themselves to the Board and offered background information on their history. Then they discussed how they would gather information and answered questions from the Board.
 - Maxine was a director at three different libraries from 1974 – 2015.
 - In 2015 Maxine formed her LLC, Maxine Bleiweis & Associates (MBA).
 - She was asked by another library to help with their strategic plan. Maxine started working with her daughter, assisting with strategic plans in Connecticut, Maine, New York, and New Hampshire.
 - Maxine and her daughter also assist with library space planning and customer service.
 - Maxine attends National and International Conferences to keep informed of library trends and practices.
 - Erica formed her own Strategic Planning Consultant business in 2011.
 - Erica is responsible for following the timeline and getting details completed. She has made many connections in the CT communities.
 - Gina Falcigno asked if Maxine would be looking strictly at this library or other departments that would come into play and conduct key informant interviews.
 - Maxine enjoys running focus groups because they help to figure out key players and people who would be valuable contributors.
 - Erin MacDonnell asked about the process.

- Erica explained that they assist in preparing 1 to 2 strategic plans per year for other entities. Their Strategic Plan process generally consists of:
 - Talking to/surveying the community and analyzing the data
 - Documenting changes you want to see in the library based on the community response
 - Maxine provided a program example to help people feel more connected and engaged in their community.
 - Setting goals to implement the changes
 - Michael Fletcher asked if they would be available to help make adjustments to the completed plan if the need arises.
 - Ralph Black asked about collecting data.
 - Erica stated that MBA will collect external data from all demographics of the town and conduct the following:
 - (10) Key informant interviews
 - Resident interviews
 - Focus groups, including 4 different demographics
 - An anonymous survey with open/ended questions
 - Erica then discussed MBA's strategy for collecting internal data.
 - Library staff should be a part of the planning process
 - Staff interviews
 - Observing staff
 - SOAR Assessment
 - Needs Assessment
 - Maxine made the following suggestions:
 - When creating the community survey, make it available in several languages
 - Have a timekeeper to stay on track
 - Gina Falcigno asked how Covid affected past plans at other institutions. She asked Maxine and Erica if they would be able to handle unexpected challenges to the plan.
- Susan Griffiths discussed the anticipated Strategic Plan writing timeline beginning February-March 2024 and completion by June 2024. If we feel that we need more time and help, the timeline could be extended.
 - Susan Griffiths asked the consultants if we were to move forward, would they review the grant application. Erica replied that they would review the grant.
 - Susan Griffiths and Michael Fletcher thanked Maxine and Erica for their presentation.
 - Ralph Black stated that he was very impressed.
 - Susan Griffiths and other Board members like the fact that this firm has extensive experience working in and for libraries.
 - After additional discussion once Maxine and Erica left, the Board expressed that this firm would be a good fit for this project.

- Michael Fletcher asked for a motion to accept Maxine Bleiweis & Associates as our Strategic Plan Consultants contingent upon the CT Humanities Capacity Grant being approved.
 - A motion was made by Erin MacDonnell to accept Maxine Bleiweis & Associates as our consultant contingent upon grant approval. Dean Volain seconded the motion. All were in favor and impressed with the presentation.

Adjourn:

The next regular Library Board meeting will be held November 16, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. A motion to adjourn was made by Gina Falcigno and seconded by Ralph Black. The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.