

**Southington Library and Museum**  
**255 Main Street**  
**Library Board Meeting**  
**September 8, 2003**

Meeting called to order by Chairman David DellaVecchia at 7:02PM.

**Members in Attendance:** David DellaVecchia, Edward Pocock, Robert Cusano, Carol Ladd, Theresa O'Connor, Christopher Palmieri, Heidi Bittner, Sandra Micalizzi, Valerie DePaolo.

**Guests:** Doris LaRese, Janet Mellon, Justin Malley

**Secretary Minutes**

**Public Communications:** Director Jay Johnston acknowledged the presence of AFSME union president Janet Mellon and visitor Observer staff writer Justin Malley.

Johnston stated that the library had various letters, thank yous and communications, which were mostly positive, regarding library activities.

**Secretary Minutes:** Chris Palmieri said that corrections to the June minutes were not noted in the July minutes. Sandra Micalizzi made a motion to address the discrepancies in the June and July minutes and that the July minutes will be revised. Chris Palmieri seconded. All members, except for Bob Cusano and Carol Ladd, voted in favor. Cusano abstained because he was not present at the July meeting, Ladd arrived after the vote. Approved. The changes were: Chris Palmieri made a motion to place assets of the library under the management of the finance department and under the direct control of the library board, assets to include only trust funds income, memorial gifts and gifts. There was discussion about Johnston waiting before posting the position (of Children's Librarian). The position is currently posted, to be filled during this fiscal year. Discussion was held concerning the question of change in the posting of the job. There was an error found in the July minutes. It was stated that there was a problem at the Barnes Museum, on Meriden Ave. It should have read, "Merrell Ave."

**Treasurer's Report:** Chris Palmieri pointed out that 100% of the new telephone system line item of the budget was spent. Director Johnston assured that the system was completely in and that a few small problems had been taken care of and that it was running smoothly. There was, however, one change to its original plan to have no auto attendant. There was an auto attendant feature placed on the system, which enables a caller to choose an extension. The board agreed that the system is good. There have been no more complaints from the public about malfunctions, as in the past. The oil tank removal project is under way. Johnston contacted a company who was removing an oil tank from the Old Library grounds. The company proposed to not remove the library's tank but to pump out residual fluids from the tank, examine it and fill it with slurry, all for approximately \$2,800.00. The fire marshal and fire chief have affirmed this. In the past, the job had been budgeted for \$15,000.00. The fan system of the HVAC may cost approximately \$12,000.00 or \$13,000.00 to fix. With the decrease in the proposed cost of the oil tank job, Johnston will be able to go to the board of finance and request a transfer. The question arose as to whether the HVAC job should go out to bid, but Johnston said that because the company performing the work is already a vendor of the library, it shouldn't have to go to bid. In addition, the current repair is under \$3,000.00. If the cost of the next stage in repair was over \$10,000.00, Johnston would go to

the town council to have the need for the bid process waived. When the repair got to that point, Johnston said he would follow the proper procedure. The tank should be worked on by next week. Chris Palmieri questioned the Barnes events supply line item because it was showing as being 98% spent, only one month into the year. Johnston would check into the matter. Bob Cusano made a motion to approve the treasurer's report, Theresa O'Connor seconded. All voted in favor. Approved.

**Friends:** Doris LaRese was at (Ted's) to view the clock that Friends of the Library are purchasing for the Children's Department. While there, she saw a sign meant for a Young Readers' department, which were individual letters in the shape of board games, spelling out "Young Readers". She was impressed at its presence and said that the Friends would like to purchase it for the Young Adults' department, as it was priced reasonably for such good artwork. The board decided that they would like to see samples of the sign. They pointed out that they had wanted to do something for that area of the library. The Friends' book sale was a dismal flop, according to LaRese. She said they had made more on last year's sale and they will plan to have the sale twice a year, to move their stock of books. Ideas on how to entice more interest in the bookstore were discussed, tying in book giveaways with upcoming library programs. The next scheduled Friends of the Library meeting would be on October 14 at 7PM. Johnston is planning to take a picture of as many of the thirty-five volunteers as can be present, holding their banner to use in a membership drive in January and for the website. Johnston praised the number of dedicated volunteers involved in the Friends. Marketing the Friends group, at the Apple Harvest festival was discussed. LaRese told of efforts put forth last year, but pointed out that they were located too far away from festivities.

**Director's Report:** The library is doing well, with growth showing in all categories. Adult Reference is up by 22%, Children Reference is up by 13.9%, Combined Lending is up by 2.5% and Total Service is up by 8.3%. Much energy has gone into programming, in the Children's and Adults' departments. Employees are doing a fantastic job, with a tremendous number of new initiatives going forward. With an opening for the new Secretary/Curator at the Barnes, Johnston said he is looking forward to beginning the next phase of the museum. He was pleased with the amount of work Angelo Mauro has done with reorganizing items at the museum. Now that the items are showing better, it is an indication as to how much there is to be developed. Digitizing the library's and the museum's collections, which had been discussed at previous meetings, could now begin to take place. There were hopes of having the whole collection available on the Internet, in approximately ten years. The next person to take the curator position, Johnston pointed out, will face this challenge by leaving a digital legacy to the community. The new automation system is in place at the library and Johnston said that the same technology could be used for the Barnes Museum. The curator position could be posed soon. If all went well, the position's beginning date should be at the first of October. Valerie DePaolo said that people are concerned that the library should still be about books and people, and is pleased that the annual report emphasized a people focus. Children's Librarian Ellen Adamczyk has given notice that she would be leaving to take a job in Wethersfield. Her leaving is the reason why Storytime in the Children's department was postponed. The position, which was in arbitration, is the same one that Adamowicz is vacating. Mellon said that the union would proceed. If the other person involved were upgraded to grade 6, they would stop with the proceedings.

## Committee Reports

**Barnes Museum Committee:** Before the Taste of Southington took place, the Barnes Museum committee met with the fire marshals, to make sure that the building was in good standing. Four members and director Johnston went through the house, with the marshals. Many problems were found and most were corrected. The sprinkler system will soon be installed over the furnace. When all proper changes have been made, the fire marshals will conduct another inspection. Recently applied paint is peeling from the house. Johnston suggested contacting a restoration company who knows best how to take care of the old house and that a five-year plan should be made. Snow guards for the Merrell Ave. side of the garage-shed sill need to be installed before winter. The roofing company promised to do the job before the snow flies. The leak in the roof, which was repaired last year, is back. It is in the same place, where the roofs come together.

**Fountain:** Committee chairperson Chris Palmieri reported that the fountain dedication went well, with many town dignitaries in attendance. Channel 3 News videoed and aired the event on the evening news. The plaque arrived in time for the dedication. The power supply needs changes, which the electrician will do. A float switch will be installed in the fountain to keep the water level up so there will be no need for it to shut off. In the winter, it will be drained and wrapped. A cover has been ordered.

**Taste of Southington:** Chairperson Valerie DePaolo said that the Taste of Southington was wonderful again, this year. She wanted to thank everyone, including Jeanne Chmielewsky, who helped out. There were ten vendors participating and even though two didn't show up, board members were pleased with the turnout. They decided that ten or twelve vendors would be a good number to have at future Tastes. Some of the public told board members they wished it had lasted longer into the evening, but members pointed out that Music on the Green took place right after the Taste. They talked of extending it until 7:30PM, in future years but said it seemed to have continued this year until 7:30. Thank yous will be sent out to those restaurants who participated and to people who helped.

**Buildings and Maintenance:** Outside landscaping at the library has been a focus for the last month. Johnston thought the library had progressed to where it should be, with the exception of study carrels, which will be installed under the stairwells and a browser bin for the children's department. He wanted to have tabletops in the reference room changed, to make them rectangle-shaped. The board disagreed and said they like the round ones that are there. The library now has two rocks outside the building, one being the Indian Rock. All three of the houses, owned by the library are now vacant. Demolition of the buildings was put into the budget but was not approved, so Johnston will budget it next year. Maintenance and liability of the buildings was discussed. The board suggested having them condemned by the building inspector so that the council could work on taking them out.

**Finance:** As soon as the audit at the finance department is finished, the finance department, as agreed will maintain library funds.

**Personnel and Policies:** There are now two openings on which Johnston hopes to take posting action by tomorrow. The staff is doing a great job on their many projects. There are six or seven grievances, most resolved and others soon to be.

**Old Business:** The Barnes Museum budget was set at a certain amount in the past years, but some expenses for events such as Taste of Southington and for the Apple Harvest Parade have increased. Adding a separate line item for programming for the Barnes was suggested.

Johnston is hoping for a jack-o-lantern festival at the Barnes, this October as well as adding more programs to increase use and develop interest in the house. Proper appropriation of payment for items for the Taste of Southington, such as stickers touting the library and those mentioning the museum, was discussed. The Summer Reading books program ran well, according to Sandra Miccalizzi. When she ordered a summer reading book from the St. Paul's list, it was promptly procured. She will see if she can work with Friends on a purchase agreement for some of next year's books.

**New Business:** Ed Pocock thanked the board for attending his retirement party. The meeting went into executive session at 8:15. Chris Palmieri made a motion to go back into regular session. Sandra Micalizzi seconded. All approved. The meeting was reconvened at 9:10. For public knowledge, the board is maintaining the current qualifications of the Curator position, at the Barnes Museum. The job should be by tomorrow, first at the Barnes Museum.

Chris Palmieri made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Bob Cusano seconded. Approved. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
Harriet Bitar