

Manchester Public Library Board
Meeting Minutes
March 8, 2021

Meeting was called to order at 6:34 pm

Members Present: Miriam Byroade, Heather Doucette, Grace Cedrone, Joyce Hood, Karl Hasel, Ashley Odell, Jessica Scorso, Mary Fischer

Also present: Doug McDonough, Norma Nevers, Stephen Stephanou (Asst. General Manager), Stephen Ristau (Manchester Resident) Thomas Scheinblum (Manchester resident), Jeff Capone (DiMeo Schneider)

Not Present: Melissa Pattacini

Review of Financial Investments

- DiMeo Schneider's Consolidation/Integration with FIA went well
- Markets: Risk assets and equity doing ok. October was rough, but rebounded by year's end
- Overall returns of 12.1% for the quarter very strong and small cap stocks did especially well
- Emerging markets had quite sizable returns as well so there are generally good numbers coming from equity
- Fixed income high yield corporate bonds did well for the quarter
- IT driving a lot of the market, library has a few of these in the portfolio and they did well
- Small cap outperformed large; value outperforming growth; both helpful to the portfolio
- International Developed vs Emerging. Bit of a reversal, outperforming large cap US for the first time in many years
- DiMeo believes there will be a sustained economic recovery and these patterns will continue; commodity markets rebounded nicely over the quarter
- Fixed income outperformance coming from corporates and high-yield; Treasuries have not performed great with the current low interest rate environment
- Jarvis: began the quarter at \$3.1 million; 11.9% return for the quarter, YTD 12.6% overall performance, 8.8% on 5 year return; with 2020 being so strong, the firm has been reevaluating/adjusting/adapting thinking around portfolio and anticipated future returns, so they're considering moving to a lower allocation to fixed income over the next 6 months
- Taggart: began the quarter at \$1.1 million; return for quarter is similar to other portfolios
- Whiton: began the quarter at \$1.1 million, and return is similar as well. Since the most recent Whiton capital project (parking lot, etc) is not totally finished, money remains to be spent from the Whiton totals shown.

Official Board Business - Adoption of Minutes

- Move to approve the three sets of Library Board Minutes from November 9, 2020, January 25, 2021 and February 22, 2021; minutes approved unanimously, after noting that the spelling of Mary Fischer's name will be corrected in the February 22, 2021 minutes
- Under **Election of Officers**, it was Moved to:

- Re-elect Heather Doucette as secretary; unanimously approved
- Re-elect Jessica Scorso as vice-chair; unanimously approved
- Re-elect Miriam Byrode as chair; unanimously approved

Public comment: None

Librarians report

- To date for the fiscal year (July through February), the library has loaned out 82% of the circulation of materials compared to the same dates for last fiscal year, which is outstanding considering that we're still in the middle of a pandemic. We are looking ahead to see what springtime brings, as more families receive vaccinations!

New Business

- Approval of expenditures from the Jarvis and Taggart Funds
 - Karl Hasel moved that in keeping with the Library Board's previously approved Spending Policy, we approve the expenditure of \$118,258 from the Jarvis account for book purchases. All were in favor.
 - Miriam Byrode moved that in keeping with the Library Board's previously approved Spending Policy, we approve the expenditure of \$46,094 from the Taggart account for book purchases. All were in favor.
- In support of the Build America's Libraries Act, Miriam and Stephen Ristau have both sent letters to Congressman Larson regarding Manchester's endorsement of the act; if it passes, \$5 billion would be available to assist with renovation and construction of libraries.

Manchester 21st Century Public Library Task Force

- Specific next steps for work groups were reviewed. What are the next steps and action items for these workgroups?
- Assets and Needs Analysis Workgroup:
 - Eventually we will work on the calculations of the Connecticut State Library's Worksheet that can help define the needed square footage for a town's public library, which helps to justify and communicate why we are looking for the space we will likely be looking for
 - Clarifying the vision for the library and the goals for resources and how the library should function will help figuring out the information to plug into the "calculator"
 - State library has for many years had comparison statistics that can help demonstrate the ways Manchester's library is utilized and perhaps compared to others with similar resources
 - Mary and Heather will take a look at the data to try to tell the story
 - Workgroup will brainstorm the various questions we especially want to examine; start with prompts from Stephen's word map, while Mary and Heather will convert it to a google doc, and will soon begin to solicit additional input from 21st C. committee members and library staff.
- Features and Benefits of a 21st Century library workgroup:

- Passport to libraries is a statewide program in prior (non-pandemic) years which encourages people to visit public libraries throughout the state, and local libraries that have received recent construction include East Hartford (expansion and parking lot), Vernon (expansion and parking lot) Wallingford (an essentially all-new building plus a parking lot), Stamford (for the façade and mix-used), Bishop’s Corner Branch of the West Hartford Library (shared space)
- May need to divide up to visit all these
- Design a “rubric” or guide for features to look for in common
- Eventually include municipal partners in the conversation: schools, senior center
- Miriam and Ashley will help with defining the key questions that should be asked of staff
- Jessica will fact find from message board that is looking at senior center/municipal building combinations
- Stephen and Thomas will get started on the tour of CT libraries
- Community Outreach and Engagement workgroup:
 - Repurpose Schools Committee is in process of scoping out a community engagement approach; will be selecting a consultant to assist with that, although the timing doesn’t dovetail perfectly with this 21st Century Public Library Committee's work
 - Survey/small set of questions for those that use the library, like a comment box
 - Google form on the website
 - Survey link to go out with email
 - Social media outreach
 - Common set of questions across all formats, but keep it simple
 - Will translate into languages in the community, it is a fairly small fee to get translation professionally for written communication
 - Need to start identifying some simple rating scale response items that can be used to gauge community needs/interests
 - Steve S. assured the Board that Brianna Smith (town communications) is available to assist regarding possible directions with survey questions
- Building Repurposing & Sites
 - To be revisited later in the process
- March 29th for next meeting @ 6:30 pm
- Move to adjourn: 8:32 pm and all were in favor.