

Minutes of the Libraries and Cultural Affairs Committee Meeting

Held on Thursday, January 12, 2017 at 6:00 PM at the Spuyten Duyvil Branch of the New York Public Library at 650 West 235 Street, Bronx, NY 10463

Present

Marvin Goodman
Sylvia Alexander
Amy Joy Robateau
David Gellman

Affiliation

CB8, Committee Chair
CB8, Committee Member
CB8, Committee Member
CB8

Speakers/Guests

Tim Tureski,
Tiffany Moustakas
Tom C. Durham
Kira Di Betta

Branch Manager, Spuyten Duyvil Library
Riverdale Press
Community Resident
Community Resident

Committee Members Absent

Martin Wolpoff
Philip Friedman

The meeting began at 6:15 PM. The Chair introduced Tim Tureski, the branch manager of the Spuyten Duyvil Library. The branch opened in 1970 and is now too small for the current community because of the many schools nearby and many senior group centers and many families of young children. These all make for a large circulation of books and a large attendance at the programs. The schools are overcrowded, and when the school day ends, the library becomes overcrowded. Funding was made available for a new HVAC system and an interior renovation which will increase interior space, but this has not yet begun. Overcrowding is especially bad on inclement weather days. New carpeting was a great addition to the library, and even provided extra seating. For further expansion, the foundation structure of this library makes a second floor unfeasible.

Mr. Tureski has been at this library since 2003. There are three librarians at this branch. The library programming includes three toddler times a week, a decoding program for teens and pre-teens, which began last fall and a new coding program for children. There is an arts and crafts program for teens and pre-teens. Mr. Tureski announced that the Riverdale Kingsbridge Academy (MS-HS-141) will be teaming up with the library. This allows teachers to borrow many books for classroom use and permits students to borrow more library books with no penalties for late returns. For this, the cost to the school is only a few hundred dollars a year. School librarians schedule visits with this library. The NYPL librarians visit the 7th and 8th grade classes at RKA to inform students about the library's programs,

which include homework assistance and book talks. The librarians visit P.S. 24's kindergarten classes for a read-aloud program and to enroll students in the library. There is also an on-going program with the 7th and 8th grade classes of St. Gabriel's Catholic School where presentations of library programs have been given. The library has a new smart TV which is used for slide shows and for adult films. The films are usually shown each Saturday afternoon and are always films which received good acclaim. There are also live performers for Saturday programs.

The library's bathrooms will be getting larger changing tables for infant use. Bathrooms are still not wheelchair accessible. The library is getting a new fire alarm system which includes smoke alarms and strobe horns, which send signals automatically to the Fire Department. There is an emergency exit from the library. Furniture has been re-arranged to provide additional space for teen groups. New chairs are expected to replace old cracked, vinyl lined chairs. New tables will be added. For new programs there are 10 laptops and 5 desktops. The library would like tables where laptops can be charged. There is a Wi-Fi system at the library, usable even when the library is closed.

New programs at the library, such as the pre-toddler program begun when the community shows an interest in them. An additional librarian position helped to expand these programs. All performers at the library need clearance. Grants were received for the creative writing workshops programs. There are advanced tech programs also, with input from high tech librarians. Volunteers, both adults and high school students, help out to shelve books. The library has an adult book discussion program which has been at the library for 12 years. There are seven books discussed each year, one per month. The library orders the books to be discussed in sufficient quantity for the group. These discussions enable participants to get different viewpoints about each book. There is also a book discussion group, moderated by a librarian, where each participant talks about a particular book. There is a teen advisory moderator as part of the homework help. Participating in teen programs encourages community service. Participants in the knitting and crochet groups assist each other. New programs have been added over the years and attendance has increased at all. Each branch library has a cable box connection which enables the library to utilize offerings for library visitors.

Council member Cohen provided funding for a library guard on weekdays to help keep order in the library. Noise levels in the teen section have been reduced.

Old Business

The minutes of the December meeting were approved. In response to a question about the moving of the Van Cortlandt Library Branch to its new site at 3882 Cannon Place, the chair indicated that Peter Pamphile, Branch Library Manager, had indicate this would not occur until 2019.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 PM. The next meeting will be held on February 9th at 6:00 PM at the board office. The guest speaker will be Sheila Reinhold, who will speak about the program "Intimate Voices", which gives performances in our community.

Submitted by:

Marvin Goodman, Committee Chair