

**TOWN COUNCIL AND LIBRARY BOARD
WORKSHOP MEETING**

Tuesday, October 26, 2004

Town Council Chambers

7:00 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Doody called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present were Mayor Michael Doody, Deputy Mayor Vincent Candelora, Council Members Mary Bigelow, Andrew Esposito, Donald Fucci, John Lappie and Joanne Wentworth. Library Board members present were Judith Barton, Marion Bradley, Carolyn Candelora, and Judy Neubig.

Also present were Town Manager Karl Kilduff and Library Director Robert Hull.

Library Board Member Suzanne Kolakowski arrived at 7:10 p.m.

Council Member Ashley Joiner arrived at 7:15 p.m.

Council Member George Guertin was absent.

2. DISCUSSION: FUTURE COURSE OF ACTION FOR THE LIBRARY SYSTEM

Town Manager Karl Kilduff presented for review the following documents: a Memorandum dated October 26, 2004, the letter submitted by the Library Director, the letter from the Library Board, prior Space Needs discussions, a Plan for the North Branford Public Libraries Future that was put together by the Library Board in 1997, and an analysis done by the Library Director in 1997.

Deputy Mayor Candelora spoke on the issue of keeping two separate libraries versus one central library. He felt that this issue should be discussed prior to moving forward on any major capital project. He stated that the prior survey done showed that the townspeople were in favor of keeping the two libraries. He also pointed out that it has been stated that there is not a significant cost savings in combining the two libraries into one central library.

Library Director Bob Hull reviewed the survey from 1991 and confirmed that the townspeople at that time were in favor of keeping the libraries in their existing locations. He stated

that there was an approximately 10% return on the survey, which is a typical return rate.

There was discussion on the expansions planned for the Atwater and Smith Libraries.

Library Director Bob Hull responded to this. He spoke at length on the addition of an elevator at the Smith Library and the possibility of a small addition next to the elevator in order to maintain the current space at that library.

Town Manager Kilduff reviewed the schematic drawings that have been done for the Smith Library and include three different schemes.

Mayor Doody questioned how the trusts for each of the libraries would be affected if there was one centralized library.

There was a brief review and discussion on the separate trusts for the Smith and Atwater Libraries.

There was also discussion between Council members and Library Board members on two separate libraries versus one centralized library.

With respect to the issue of duplications, Library Director Bob Hull noted that some books would still be duplicated with only one library building. He noted that savings would be found in periodicals and picture books for children. He confirmed that currently the two libraries share staff as well as their collections.

Councilor Bigelow questioned the children's programs run at the libraries.

Library Director Bob Hull spoke on the story hours and special events, noting that sometimes participants must be turned away due to lack of space. There was discussion on running these programs at the Community Center, and Library Director Bob Hull confirmed that some programs have been done there.

There was discussion on re-surveying the townspeople with respect to the issue of two separate libraries or a centralized library. Library Director Bob Hull stated that the Library Board would be willing to do another survey.

Mrs. Bradley pointed out that the Town does not own the Smith Library property as it is owned by the Church. This parcel would revert back to the Church if the library is no longer located on it. Mrs. Bradley spoke on the two separate centers of the Town. She indicated that the plans for the Atwater Library have been drafted and include a special meeting room large enough to accommodate the programs sponsored by the Library Board. She spoke on the various programs held at the libraries, including book discussions and tutoring sessions.

Library Director Bob Hull also addressed the issues relating to capacity. He pointed out that the proposed meeting room at the Atwater Library could be open to other Town groups for use as well.

Library Director Hull questioned if it was the consensus of the Council that something needs to be done with respect to the libraries. Council members concurred that it is the consensus of the Council that something must be done with the libraries.

Deputy Mayor Candelora noted that the acquisition of the Swajchuk property by the Town has again raised the issue of a centralized library.

Mrs. Bradley spoke on prior Town purchases at a centralized location.

There was considerable discussion on the issue of a location for a library. Town Manager Kilduff noted that libraries are usually located on main roads, near population centers, and in the service areas of a town. He also spoke on the natural limiting factors of the Swajchuk parcel, pointing out that there are no sewers on Forest Road. He felt that this parcel was good for passive

and active recreation.

Ms. Kolakowski stated that she was concerned with the idea of a central location.

Councilor Wentworth spoke on the need to address ADA issues at both libraries.

Library Director Bob Hull stated that he was concerned with the timeframe for centralizing services as he felt that this would mean further delays.

Town Manager Kilduff spoke on the need to develop a master plan for the future of library services as well as a space needs assessment. He noted that funding would be required and that timing would be a consideration.

There was further discussion between Council members, Library Board members, Library Director Bob Hull and Town Manager Kilduff on the library space needs in North Branford. Library Director Bob Hull stated that the State Library has a planning program that can be utilized for some of the planning.

The Town Manager will obtain cost estimates from architects and the Library Board will do an analysis of the libraries' future in the next 20 years. It was noted that a survey can then be done on whether or not there should be a centralized library or the two libraries should be maintained.

Town Manager Kilduff spoke on the potential land use of the Swajchuk property, which could support a 40,000 square foot building possibly consisting of a library, community/recreation center, and senior center.

There was further discussion between Council members and Library Board members. There was also discussion on the previous survey that was done.

All parties discussed a centralized library versus the benefits of keeping the two existing libraries.

There was also discussion on the time frame for a decision as well as the work to be done.

16. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Councilor Lappie moved, seconded by Deputy Mayor Candelora, to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

VOTE: Passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosanne Krajewski,
Clerk to the Council