Minutes

Dover Public Library Advisory Commission
July 19, 2016

IN ATTENDANCE: Zach Carter, Scott Cole, Margie Cyr, Lois Dunning, Gertrude Jackson, Scott Koenig, Beth Petit de Mange, Jill Street, Bob Wetherall

Zach called the meeting to order at 5:02pm.

Margie started the meeting off by introducing Catherine Wimberley, Head of Children's Services. Catherine gave a presentation on the *Maurice Sendak the Memorial Exhibition: 50 Years, 50 Works, 50 Reasons*, which will be on display at the library and at the Biggs Museum, from July 29 through September 11. The exhibition is a retrospective look at the life and art of the iconic author and illustrator. Each piece of art will be accompanied by a quote by celebrities, other writers and famous politicians telling what Sendak's work meant to them in their own life. The library has created several interactive pieces to accompany the exhibit as well as many programs including Breakfast with the Monsters at the Grey Fox Grille, author presentations and discussions, a film screening on Loockerman Way Plaza, and the Children's Theater, Inc. will be doing a performance of Really Rosie at the Schwartz Center. Catherine invited everyone to the grand opening of the exhibit on July 29 at 6:30pm.

Margie introduced two of our Library Assistants, Nicholas Coll and Kerri Hollyday to present on Comic Con. Kerri explained that one of the library goals is to provide our patrons with an experience that extends beyond the traditional expectations of a library. Comic Con started as a unique way of getting new people into the library using Pop Culture. In preparing for our 3rd Comic Con, we have expanded out into the community to include many partners including the Biggs Museum, Dover Art League, Delaware Division of Libraries, Delaware State News, Kent County Tourism, and the Schwartz Center for the Arts. The event has grown substantially over the past few years, this year we have 41 artists, over 19 programs, over 60 vendors and 15 food trucks lined up. Nicholas reported that we had approximately 2,500 at our first Comic Con in 2014. In 2015 we had over 7,000 in attendance. We are anticipating 10,000 people this year. Nicholas compiled statistics in comparison to other Comic Con events in the area, which are all 3 day events and charge admission anywhere from $80 to over $400. Otacon in Baltimore drew about 12,000 people, Awesome Con had 14,000 people and Baltimore Comic Con drew about 5,000 people. Looking at local 3 day events, Firefly and Big Barrel, in their first year, had about 30,000 in attendance and Dover Days had about 55,000. Kerri invited everyone to come out for the Comic Con kick-off on Friday night, August 5 starting at 5:30pm on Loockerman Way Plaza; the main event will be held from 10 – 5pm on Saturday, August 6.

After a quick review, Beth made a motion to accept the Minutes from March 15, 2016. Lois seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion passed.

Margie reported on the FY2016 annual statistics. Computer usage statistics have leveled off at around 52,000, circulation statistics have leveled off a little higher than previous years. Program attendance continues to climb partly because the library is doing larger events such as Comic Con and Sendak. New library cards have leveled off a little higher at about 350 per month. Wireless usage has decreased from prior years but is still quite high at over 1,200 users each month.

Margie reported that In March the library hired 2 part-time Librarians. One of the librarians, Mary Hanes, has just submitted her resignation. Mary lives in New Castle Co. and has taken a position as a librarian at the De Academy of Medicine. This will bring her closer to home and she will doing something more related to where her passion lies, which is special libraries. We're sad to see her go, she is a wonderful librarian and has been a nice addition to our staff. Our new Library Page decided after two weeks that it was not what she wanted to do. She has taken a position at Barnes and Noble in Christiana. We recently hired a new Library Clerk, Devon Coventry. Devon has just finished her teaching degree but has decided she would like to be a librarian. We are hoping that she'll go to library school and work for us as she earns her master's degree in library science. Catherine was recently promoted to Head of Children's Services, we took her vacant position and changed it to a full-time Library Assistant position; Nicholas Coll will be moving into that spot from his part-time Library Assistant position. Some other internal changes are the upgrade of a Library Clerk I position to a Library Clerk II. Once these positions are filled, we will merge the Technical Services and Circulation departments and Michelle Hughes, Assistant

Director, will take over as supervisor. Audrey Avery will move from Circulation to managing the Adult Services staff.

Comic Con kicks off Friday, August 5 at 5:30pm with a block party on Loockerman Street. The "In Harmony" concert will be held on the plaza at 6:30pm, with fireworks at dusk. Doors open at 10:00am on Saturday for the big event.

Margie expressed how grateful we are for the support for the Sendak exhibition. The exhibit is extraordinarily expensive to bring in town. The Friends very generously donated $10,000 to support the event. We've also received a grant from the Kent County Fund for the Arts and the Delaware State News has done all the publicity and printing for us; that's a package worth about 10,000.

Zach reported that the Council on Libraries will be meeting on August 4 to approve the budget; Dover should be receiving approximately $3,000 more in State Aid over last year. The Council on Libraries will be doing a study on the feasibility costs and benefits of enabling higher education academic libraries to become eligible for construction assistance. Margie asked about the status of the Route 9 library. Bob said it should open next Fall and it will have an impact on our State Aid funding.

Jill Street joined the meeting an introduced herself to the Commission. Jill is a Dover native and is happy to be joining us. She believes there's a lot of good things happening in the library and would like to continue to support them.

Bob reported that the Friends have been earning about $2,000 a month from the sales from the Book Shop. As Margie said earlier, the Friends have allocated $10,000 to support the Sendak exhibition. Jill asked if the Friends ever coordinate with other libraries to have one large annual book sale. Margie said they did something similar a few years ago, but the amount of money raised wasn't worth it because they make so much money from the Book Shop, which is open all library hours.

Margie reported that the Dover Library Foundation is concentrating on growing the permanent endowment. The formal endowment fund, which is held by the Delaware Community Foundation, was created from a $15,000 anonymous gift and a will bequest that the library received. The City Council allowed the will bequest to go to the Foundation. The Foundation has an annual appeal that is sent out annually, this year they are going to try to increase the appeal and focus solely on fundraising to grow the endowment. The Foundation has formed an events committee that is very interested in increasing the visibility of the Foundation in the community and are looking for fundraising opportunities. Margie explained that the endowment was created to support the library. The Foundation has set a goal to raise $500,000, once they reach that threshold they'll decide if there's a percentage of the earnings that that they would like to use or they will increase the threshold.

Margie shared information on the Summer Feeding program taking place in the library now. The program is funded by the USDA and managed by the Delaware Division of Libraries. The DDL was successful in getting grant money and funding from the USDA to bring in summer associates whose role is to create enrichment programs that takes place at the same time the children are receiving free lunches. The end goal is that no child goes hungry during the summer. Any child 18 and under is eligible for a free lunch. We have a partnership with the Boys and Girls Club out of Wilmington who bring in the lunches every day. It's been a little dicey here, we didn't find out about the Summer Associates until the middle of June well after our summer programming had been finalized. Jill asked if this was separate program from the Capital School Districts' program. Margie said yes and that there are actually several programs going on at the same time. It's a wonderful program and the Summer Associates have been great, but Margie expressed concern on the lack of coordination of the program, if more planning doesn't happen next year we may not be participating. Michelle Hughes attended a meeting on the Restoring Central Dover project and talked at length about the Summer Feeding program in an effort to spread the word out into the community. Margie said that the library is also working on ways to get out into the community and ways to get the community into libraries through some sort of public transportation in an effort to better serve the area.

Beth made a motion to adjourn. Lois seconded the motion. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 6:10pm.

Next meeting: September 20, 2016