

Ms. Caroline W. Jacobus

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Status

Name Ms. Caroline W. Jacobus
Application Date 2/27/2023
Expiration Date 2/27/2025
Board Member Caroline W. Jacobus
Status Validated

Board	Vacancies	Status
Rogers Free Library Board of Trustees	2	Pending

Basic Information

Name
Ms. Caroline W. Jacobus

I would like to be appointed to the position because:

Libraries in general – and the Rogers Free Library in particular – are places of unbounded curiosity, where the whimsical and the practical meet, where adventure is encouraged and the impossible embraced, where intimate, individual encounters between authors and readers take place, where parents, children and friends find shared enthusiasms and interests in a nonjudgmental space of safety. In past years and in the future, libraries are places where societal issues of book access/banning and efforts to welcome or marginalize vulnerable communities are being played out. The Rogers Free Library is the strongest, most central institution in this lovely old town. In my years in Bristol, I have seen its experienced and talented staff deal with drag queens, recession-related jobs support, and COVID pandemics. I have seen them nurture the love of books and ideas in small children, expand their space and programming to welcome in the teens in our town, and find new ways to enlarge and improve the lives of adults and seniors in our community. I would welcome the opportunity to work with the Board and staff of the Rogers Free Library to expand its efforts to meet community needs, to ensure its fiscal health and physical plant, to bring out the best in library staff; and to play a major role in helping Bristol and its citizens – of all ages – to grow in ways that are healthy, kind, hopeful and rewarding.

Resume File

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Cover Letter File

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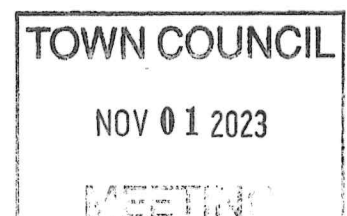
Contact Information

Address
35 Church Street
Bristol, RI 02809

Resident
Yes

Email

Phone



Occupation

Yes, I am a city employee

No

Registrations/Certifications

B.A., M.S.W.

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CAROLINE W. JACOBUS
35 Church Street
Bristol, RI 02809

Caroline has served for 30 years as the Executive Director and Director of nonprofit organizations in New Jersey with a specialization in Grants Administration and Development. She was the ED of the Court Appointed Special Advocate program in Essex County, the largest CASA program in NJ, for 7 years. She subsequently served as the Director of Community Outreach for NJ's only HIV / AIDS long-term care facility, ensuring funding and strengthening relationships with collaborating organizations for 12 years. She served as the Grants Administrator for Morris Habitat for Humanity, responsible for writing and administration of public, private, and corporate grant applications for 5 years.

She was a founding trustee of four nonprofit organizations – the Women's Project of New Jersey, the Women's Fund of New Jersey, Friends of Pitney Farm and Friends of Historic Bristol – which have grown, prospered, and successfully carried out their organizational missions. She served on the Board of the Mendham Borough Library, Mendham, NJ, in the 1980s.

She was the Managing Editor of *Past and Promise: Lives of New Jersey Women*, the nationally recognized historical reference volume on 400 years of New Jersey women and the director, editor and principle researcher for *NJWomenCount*, a Rutgers University executive newsletter fostering policies to better the status of women.

She holds a BA from Mount Holyoke College and an MSW in Administration from Rutgers University Graduate School of Social Work.

She served on the Session of the First Presbyterian (Hilltop) Church of Mendham, NJ for multiple terms and on the boards of the Mendham Borough Free Public Library, the Women's Project of New Jersey, the Women's Fund of New Jersey and Friends of Pitney Farm. She served as Council Chair of the First Congregational Church of Bristol and currently serves as the Council Vice Chair, Chair of the Stewardship Committee, and Asst. Treasurer. She also holds a Board executive position with the nonprofit Friends of Historic Bristol.

Caroline moved to Bristol in 2016.

Caroline W. Jacobus
35 Church Street
Bristol, RI 02809

February 27, 2023

Members of the Bristol Town Council
10 Court Street
Bristol, RI 02809, and

Trustee Nominating Committee
Rogers Free Library
525 Hope Street
Bristol, RI 02809

Dear Mesdames/Messrs.,

I am honored to be considered for a Trustee position at the Rogers Free Library. This sensitively expanded historic library was one of the major draws resulting in our move to Bristol in 2016. Having come from and raised what might be termed “library-centric” families, my husband Robert and I were pleased to visit the library early on in our retirement search and find such a warm welcome, clear effort to meet the needs and wishes of diverse members of the community, and willingness to explore new ideas.

Having experienced libraries from both the user and, once previously, from the Trustee side, I can characterize them in general – and the Rogers Free Library in particular – as places of unbounded curiosity, where the whimsical and the practical meet, where adventure is encouraged and the impossible embraced, where intimate, individual encounters between authors and readers take place, where parents, children and friends find shared enthusiasms and interests in a nonjudgmental space of safety. In past years and in the future, libraries are places where societal issues of book access/banning and efforts to welcome or marginalize vulnerable communities are being played out. The Rogers Free Library is the strongest, most central institution in this lovely old town. In my years in Bristol, I have seen its experienced and talented staff deal with drag queens, recession-related jobs support, and COVID pandemics. I have seen them nurture the love of books and ideas in small children, expand their space and programming to welcome in the teens in our town, and find new ways to enlarge and improve the lives of adults and seniors in our community. If RFL does not

already have a regular book/mixed media delivery system to senior citizens and other populations, it sounds like something to explore.

Rogers Free Library holds a wealth of assets: an accessible location; a forward-looking, vision-based Board that values community, effective, policy-based operations, and fiscal responsibility; a strong director and talented, flexible staff whose input is sought and recognized; a safe and multi-faceted physical plant that reflects the investment the citizenry of Bristol has placed on literacy, relationships and community; a healthy and committed Friends organization that supports the library's mission; reliably supportive municipal and state governments; thoughtfully-created strategic plans and policies; a growing base of programming for all ages and interests; a rising generation of children and teens who bring energy and excitement to the library; a surrounding community that values the library's mission and the work that it does.

My current experience serving collaboratively in multiple executive capacities at the First Congregational Church in Bristol and with the Friends of Historic Bristol, as well as my community, needs-oriented and financial training as a Social Work administrator, my years of creating and working in nonprofit organizations and previous experience serving on a library board, have all shaped my appreciation of libraries as key community institutions and honed my skills as an institutional advocate and steward. To my knowledge, I have no conflicts of interest and would welcome the opportunity to work with the Board and staff of the Rogers Free Library to expand its efforts to meet community needs, to ensure its fiscal health and physical plant, to bring out the best in library staff; and to play a major role in helping Bristol and its citizens – of all ages – to grow in ways that are healthy, kind, hopeful and rewarding.

The New York Times published "A Love Letter to Libraries, Long Overdue" on February 14, 2023, saying "The modern library keeps its citizens warm, safe, healthy, entertained, educated, hydrated and, above all, connected." What other entity can say as much?

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Caroline W. Jacobus". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a large, stylized 'C' at the beginning and a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right.

Caroline W. Jacobus