

**Skaneateles Library Association  
Board of Trustees  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
(Special “Zoom” Meeting)  
October 13, 2020**

**Supporting Our Mission:**

**To inspire learning, enrich lives, and connect our community**

**Realizing Our Vision:**

**To be the cultural and informational hub of a vibrant, thriving community  
by creating spaces and experiences that are welcoming, enriching and sustainable.**

**Present:** President Dave Hempson, Vice President Susanne Guske, Treasurer Andrew Hagen, Secretary Danette Davis **Trustees:** Manny Arroyo, Karen Morrissey Bedard, Patti Carey, Ralph DeMasi, Scott Elia, Amanda Latreille, Dave Lee, Bob Lotkowitz, Tara Lynn, Maura Molnar, Larry Palmieri, Amy Rolleri, Laurie Spencer, Katrina Zepp **Staff:** Library Director Nickie Marquis, Deanna King, Librarian.

**Members of the Public in attendance:**

Janet Aaron, Courtney Alexander, Christine Buff, Cait Campbell, Paula Conan, Ed Conan, Diane Fellerman, Gary Girzadas, Sandy Hadley, Taryn Jirousek, Monica Lynch, Dee Maguire, Bill Marquardt, Fran McCormack, Mary Morrissey, Kathleen Morrissey, Melissa Paolino, Scott Rogers, Lori Ruhlman, Candace Scruggs, Jack Severance, Carol Young, John Young

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 PM by President Hempson.  
This meeting was held online via Zoom due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

**Public Comment:**

There were no public comments at this time.

**President’s Report:**

President Hempson thanked the library staff for assisting patrons to obtain materials and providing technology and other assistance during the pandemic. He thanked the library board for all the ongoing committee work which has been taking place via Zoom.

President Hempson then gave the following recap of how the board has arrived at the current decisions regarding the future of the library.

**New Library – update:**

About 40 years ago the Skaneateles Library Association board minutes reflect the understanding that libraries were evolving and were no longer just book repositories. Over the ensuing 40 years, boards would discuss space constraints in the existing building, however, very little was done.

About 5 years ago the Stella Maris opportunity surfaced, and the wheels got turning. Although that opportunity did not materialize, the understanding that the existing library building, at over 100 years old, had some significant shortfalls was brought to light. The library board decided to evaluate the

prospects of renovating the existing library, building a new library, or simply doing nothing to address these concerns. The board, at the time decided that doing nothing, was not an option.

Libraries play a vital role in the communities they serve, and we knew we were missing the boat, so to speak. We decided it was important to realize our vision “To be the cultural and informational hub of a vibrant, thriving community by creating spaces and experiences that are welcoming, enriching and sustainable.”

Regardless of the decision to build or renovate, the board decided to retain the existing library building and either renovate or repurpose it for community benefit. There is a profound love of the building and its preservation is an important piece of the decision making,

After significant input, conceptual drawings, cost estimates, many discussions, small group meetings with community organizations, and deliberations on both options, the Board decided in December 2019 that a new library would better serve the needs of the community for the next 100 years.

The decision to retain the current library building was predicated on the fact that it would be self-sustaining. In other words, the occupants of the building and the uses of the building would generate sufficient cash flow to make the building cost neutral. We developed an economic plan that makes this viable.

The decision to build new prompted the Site Committee to once again search for a new location.

Many possible locations were identified and an objective evaluation process was undertaken.

Some locations that looked promising were not available, some were not zoned appropriately, some did not fit the profile that was developed.

Tonight, we will vote on the location that the library's Site Committee is recommending.

The cost of the new library will be funded through fundraising efforts, meaning private donations and grants - we will not use taxpayer funding for this endeavor. The new library will be built with flexibility, Covid accommodations, and space to meet the needs of all our residents and taxpayers.

We will also be investing in the current building, working to make it more accessible, and plan to take care of it for years to come.

Although the process will take many years, we are dedicated to providing a library that fulfills our mission and vision to serve the needs of the Skaneateles community.

### **Approval of the Minutes:**

The September 8, 2020 Regular Meeting minutes were approved.

### **Library Director's Report:**

Director Marquis emailed the report to board members on Friday. The report explained that due to county budget cuts to OCPL, interlibrary loan deliveries have been reduced to 3 days a week. With the 7-day quarantine period for materials, patron wait times have increased.

Virtual tech help sessions are being offered by staff twice per week. Assistance is also provided

over the phone to patrons. Adult programs will continue to be virtual through the end of the year. Director Marquis explained that statistics for the number of items loaned out during the pandemic shutdown decreased dramatically while the use of downloadable resources increased. Downloadable use has remained high even with the reopening of the building.

Director Marquis noted this addition to her report: an elementary grade book club has started with favorable reports from participants.

#### **49 E. Genesee Street Committee:**

Vice President Guske reported that Jean McGlynn has joined the committee as a community member and her input is appreciated. The committee is working to showcase the art and architecture of the building while securing anchor tenants to ensure the building is financially self-sustaining. The building will be used by community organizations, especially non-profits.

**Front Steps:** Permit approval has been received from the Village Historical Preservation Committee for rebuilding the steps and ramp. The committee is acquiring quotes and will post a drawing of the design. The new platform will incorporate the entrance into the Sphinx, making that annex accessible. VP Guske pointed out that the work will be done in stone which will last longer than cement which has needed continuing repairs.

**Barrow Gallery:** The committee is working on providing a separate entrance into the gallery so that visitors do not need to walk through the library.

**Elevator and interior work:** The committee is working with the library's architects to plan for the installation of an elevator. They are also addressing ventilation issues and other renovations.

**Site Committee:** Trustee Elia reported that the committee has narrowed the decision to a final site recommendation. He presented the following resolution:

Proposed resolution on behalf of the Skaneateles Library Association

RESOLVED:

The Skaneateles Library Site Selection Committee recommends to the full board the acquisition of the property at **75 Fennell Street** from the Town of Skaneateles as the preferred location for a new library.

The site is currently owned by the Town of Skaneateles and is located between Ace Hardware and SAVES.

After years of diligence evaluating multiple sites, the Site Selection Committee has determined that the Fennell Street site offers the best location for the construction of a new library. This is based upon the criteria the committee developed, as well as the following:

- The site is over two acres, which will accommodate the library and adequate parking.
- The site is zoned appropriately.
- The site is close to the town center and is easily accessible.

- The site allows a drive-thru book pickup and drop-off, and there is ample green space to consider appropriate passive recreational use.
- The site is in close proximity to and walking distance from neighborhoods.

The Skaneateles Library charges the Site Selection Committee to work with the Town of Skaneateles, the Village of Skaneateles and other appropriate parties to determine feasibility of the Fennell Street site and to negotiate the best cost to be brought to the Library Board for review and approval to proceed.

***I move that the board pursue the Fennell Street site as the location for the new library, working with the Town and Village to secure the parcel and pave the way for a new library.***

The motion was seconded by Trustee Carey. The motion passed with Trustee Arroyo opposed.

Trustee Spencer expressed appreciation to President Hempson for his work in moving this process forward and to the Site Committee, and especially Trustee Elia for staying on the board to lead the work the committee has been doing.

#### **Treasurer's Report:**

Treasurer Hagen noted that the fiscal year ended September 30 and we are now in the 2020/2021 budget year. We received our \$350,000 tax funds from the school district today.

He commended Director Marquis for controlling expenses this year when we did not have the book sale, our largest fundraiser. The operating budget has a balance of \$16,000, partly because of receiving a PPP government loan due to the pandemic. Our expenses for downloadable resources are up this year. This includes resources such as Kanopy which the library is charged a fee for each time a patron uses the service.

Financial information was distributed to the board last week. The Finance Committee discussed creating a partnership with the Central New York Community Fund which would make their resources available to the library. For example, when we begin capital campaign fundraising, the Central New York Community Fund would be able to receive donor gifts of stocks for the library, liquidate, and invest them. Vice President Guske pointed out that working with the Community Fund would further diversify our investments.

Trustee Hagen made the following motion:

***I move to approve the transfer of \$50,000 from the Endowment Account at NBT Bank to the CNY Community Foundation for investment in an Agency Fund.***

The motion was seconded by Trustee Elia. The motion passed unanimously.

**Fund Raising Committee:**

Vice President Guske reported that the committee has been tapping into the wisdom of community members who have experience in fundraising for a capital campaign.

**Barrow Gallery Update:** President Hempson reported that the Barrow Management Committee has drafted a Mission, Vision, and objectives for the Gallery. Now the committee is building actions to support the objectives. Director Stankivitz's professional experience has been a huge help in the long-range planning process. The Gallery will be launching a fundraising campaign to help pay for the side entrance steps into the gallery, the vestibule, as well as other interior work and the ongoing maintenance of the artwork.

**Public Comment:**

Paula Conan congratulated Trustee Elia and the board for bringing the plans for the library forward despite obstacles, especially in this trying year. She is hopeful and excited about the Fennell Street site. She extended her thanks to Director Marquis for her excellent running of the library during this difficult pandemic year.

Diane Fellerman commended Trustee Elia for his work on the site decision. She asked for any details about the site to help envision what it will look like. President Hempson responded that the library will most likely be sited near the street with a sidewalk, a drive-up book drop on the SAVES side, parking spaces to the side and back, a possible gazebo and nature area, and a bridge over the creek to connect with the trail that runs along it.

Diane asked if the library director's report is posted as she feels that would be interesting each month. She praised Treasurer Hagen for his financial reports and explanations which she appreciates.

She encouraged the board to keep moving forward with the plans as she wants to be alive to see and enjoy the new library.

President Hempson thanked the public for their comments.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:23 PM

**Next Meeting: Tuesday November 10, 2020 at 6:30 PM EST – online via Zoom**

***Remember to VOTE on November 3.***

Submitted by Danette Davis, Secretary