

**Skaneateles Library Association
Board of Directors
Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday December 14, 2021
(Special Zoom Meeting)**

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, Ralph DeMasi, Scott Elia, Dave Lee, Bob Lotkowitz, Maura Molnar, Larry Palmieri, Amy Roller, Meghann Sandak, Katrina Zepp. **Staff:** Library Director Nickie Marquis, Andrea Snyder, librarian.

Absent: Patti Carey, Laurie Spencer

Members of the Public: Diane Fellerman, Fran McCormack, Sharon O'Connell

Call to order: 6:31 PM

Public Comment Period: Diane Fellerman congratulated Director Marquis on winning the NY Library Association Mary Bobinski Innovative Library Director Award, which was reported in the Skaneateles Press. The library has received lots of feedback on the article recognizing Director Marquis.

Approval of the Minutes:

The November 9, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes were approved.

President's Report:

Fennell Street Site Update:

The Building Committee has decided to have two additional 10' test pits dug at the back of the property for environmental assessment. Pits dug earlier on other parts of the lot did not indicate any contamination which would cause concern. The committee is negotiating the price with Plumley Engineering and is also in discussion with the Town as to whether they would provide their backhoe for digging the pits as an in-kind service.

2022 Committee Assignments:

President Hempson had previously shared the 2022 committee assignments and the slate of officers. The annual meeting of the Skaneateles Library Association will be on Thursday January 27, 2022 at 6:30 PM via Zoom.

Nominating Committee:

We will have three trustee openings as Trustees Davis and Spencer will be going off the board and Trustee Lynn resigned earlier to accept an elected position with the Village. Please let President Hempson know of any trustee suggestions as the Nominating Committee is reviewing resumes and credentials.

Construction Grant update:

The last construction grant consisted of three parts. Trustee Lee served as the head contractor overseeing the front step work and the chimney repairs which are being completed. The third part is new lighting in the current library building.

We are anticipating work on the elevator, which will provide access to the second floor, to begin in early 2022. The estimated cost is \$98,609 and we anticipate receiving a grant in the amount of \$49,305. In addition, we have received a gift of \$15,000 from Dave Graham for the elevator.

Other news from the year: We were able to hold the annual book sale this summer, and our award-winning library director, Nickie Marquis, was able to navigate another year of Covid, providing library services and programs amid changing pandemic regulations. A new librarian has been hired and started work this week.

The Site Committee finalized a site for a new library and signed a purchase agreement. Three Needs Creative was hired to assist with materials for a capital campaign.

The John D. Barrow Gallery hired Ali Perry one year ago as the new director. Trustee Lee will be the lead contractor for construction of the new gallery entrance. The recent Open House was well-attended. It was the first visit to the art gallery for many visitors.

President Hempson thanked all trustees for the work done over the past year. We look forward to 2022 which will be a busy year as we work towards our goal of a new library.

Library Director's Report:

Assistant Director Introduction:

Director Marquis introduced Andrea Snyder, the new Adult Services Librarian/Assistant Director who started two days ago. Andrea greeted everyone over Zoom and explained that she has worked in many libraries over the past 18 years including in Buffalo, Baltimore, Long Island and most recently, Canandaigua.

Policy Review: Collection Management/Book Challenges:

Policies to be reviewed were emailed previously with the Director's report. Director Marquis explained that she strives for a diverse collection for a wide range of patrons in our community. Public libraries carry materials that offer different opinions and points of view and cover many areas of interest. Items are not restricted by age or geographic location.

The Book Challenges Policy recognizes that there will be some things in the collection that might offend someone. If there is a challenge, there is a process to address it. It begins with Director Marquis having a conversation with the person about their concern.

The policy was approved a year ago, so it is not up for re-approval yet, but Director Marquis wanted to review it since book challenges are getting in the news in some libraries.

Treasurer's Report:

Operating Report and Financials:

Financial statements were emailed last week to the board. There have been no unusual expenses so far.

Tax Levy Discussion: 4% increase recommendation:

The taxpayers approved \$350,000 in tax funding in 2016. The Finance Committee has been studying the need for an increase in funding. Trustee Molnar has done quite a bit of research and she sent detailed explanations to board members. As an association library we do need to follow the tax cap limit. We inform the State what increase we plan to ask for and then the State calculates the amount of the tax cap. We won't know the amount until mid-April. By asking for a 4% increase, we expect to be below the limit. But if it is over, 60% of the Board would need to approve an override. A 4% increase would be \$14,000, spread over the entire tax district.

President Hempson thanked Trustee Molnar and the Finance Committee for their research.

Trustee Elia asked when we would need to vote. Director Marquis responded that we would need to vote before we approve our next budget, but the vote could take place at any time. We will need to submit wording for the ballot before we receive the calculated amount from the State.

Vice President Guske stated that the School District puts out a budget newsletter three weeks before the vote. The deadline for submitting information is mid-April for the print newsletter. The Vice President recommends that the Board approve a 4% increase. If the 4% is over the tax cap, we also need a vote ahead of time to approve the override.

TAX CAP OVERRIDE:

Whereas, the adoption of the 2022-2023 budget for the Skaneateles Library Association may require a tax levy increase that exceeds the tax cap imposed by state law as outlined in General Municipal Law Section 3-c adopted in 2011; and

Whereas, General Municipal Law Section 3-c expressly permits the library board to override the tax levy limit by a resolution approved by a vote of sixty percent of qualified board members; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Skaneateles Library Association voted and approved to exceed the tax levy limit for 2022-2023 by at least the sixty percent of the board of trustees as required by state law on December 14, 2021.

So moved by Treasurer Andrew Hagen and seconded by Trustee Scott Elia.

15 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions

TAX LEVY INCREASE BALLOT PROPOSITION:

At a duly called meeting of the Board of the Trustees of the Skaneateles Library Association, upon a motion made by Treasurer Andrew Hagen, and seconded by Trustee Larry Palmieri, it was

RESOLVED that, pursuant to Section 259 of the Education Law, the Board of Trustees of the Skaneateles Library Association propose the submission of the following question to the voters of the Skaneateles Central School District at the annual meeting of the Skaneateles Central School District to be held in May 2022:

Shall the sum of \$364,000 be raised by annual levy of a tax upon the taxable real property within the Skaneateles Central School District for the purpose of funding the Skaneateles Library Association?

15 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions

Vice President Guske encouraged the Board to discuss with friends and neighbors that this \$14,000 increase is the first request the library has made for a tax funding increase although expenses have increased annually. We have informed the School District that we will most likely be requesting an increase on the ballot in the Spring.

Communication Committee:

Three Needs Creative progress report:

Vice President Guske said that Three Needs Creative are helping to develop materials for the capital campaign. The Communications and Fund-Raising committees will be working together closely. Trustee Bedard reported that Three Needs developed three different concepts and the Communications Committee selected one of these. Materials are being developed which will be ready to present to potential donors by mid-January.

Expanding the library's visibility in the community:

Vice President Guske said that Tara Lynn is still on the Communications Committee along with several community members. The committee is focused on expanding the library's visibility in the community. She is excited to have librarian Andrea Snyder on staff to assist with this.

Fund-Raising Committee:

Development Director Position:

President Hempson reported that the committee has held two interviews. One of the candidates has accepted another position at Syracuse University. We are planning on the position being a 2½ day per week position which will report to Treasurer Hagen as the chair of the Fund-Raising Committee and to the Executive Committee. Please contact President Hempson if you have suggestions of candidates for this position.

Collaterals being created:

A preliminary draft of a building layout and landscaping plan are being developed. Differences between the existing library and the new library, as well as a financial analysis of construction costs, ongoing operating expenses and continuing expenses for the current building are being put together. Plans for the Barrow Gallery expansion within the existing building are also being worked out.

Vice President Guske said that community member Jason Persse is a member of the Communications Committee who is assisting with an Instagram strategy and visual presentation of materials for the capital campaign.

49 East Genesee Street Committee:

Second Floor Lift status:

Vice President Guske reported that we have confirmed that a contractor will be available to start work the first quarter of 2022. The committee is examining how to cause the least disruption to library operations while the lift is being installed.

Lighting Plan Update:

We are waiting for the final proposal on the new lighting and hope to have this installed at the same time as the lift. Vice President Guske and Trustee Lee visited the new Jamesville Dewitt Library to look at their lighting. Based on what was learned, we will be adding more downstairs lighting into the plan.

Chimney Repairs:

Trustee Lee reported that chimney work was completed today. It is good that we had these repairs done as there was significant water damage on interior walls around the fireplaces. Trustee Lee said that the roof was put on in 2000 and we will examine it again in five years to evaluate its condition.

The Used Book Sale Committee:

Vice President Guske said that Secretary Davis and former trustee, Paula Conan, along with other community members, are on the committee. The committee is learning how the Cazenovia Library operates its used bookstore and its online book sales.

Barrow Gallery Update:

Board Separation:

President Hempson reported that The Barrow Management committee is researching the separation of the library board from the Barrow board. We are putting together the rationale and getting advice on the legal process.

Barrow Dickens Celebration:

The Barrow Gallery held a beautifully decorated open house with refreshments and piano music on December 3rd which was well attended. We hope to make this an annual event.

Public Comment Period:

Diane Fellerman asked about a sign identifying the site on Fennell St. as the location of the new library. President Hempson responded that we have received permission to install a sign.

She asked why we needed to dig two more test pits on the site if the previous pits indicated no problems. President Hempson said that these will be farther back on the site and are just an extra insurance that everything is clear.

Diane recommended an article in the newspaper to inform everyone of the many accomplishments of the library over the past year.

President Hempson thanked the Board, Director Marquis and staff, and our volunteers for a good year. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Adjourn Regular Meeting – 7:38 PM

Next Meeting: Annual Meeting on Thursday, January 27, 2022 – 6:30 PM (Zoom Meeting)

Submitted by Danette Davis, Secretary