

the Skaneateles Library

Skaneateles Library Association
Board of Directors
Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 13, 2022
Library Hall

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 Susanne Guske, Vice President Dave Hempson, Treasurer Maura Molnar, Secretary Meghann Sandak. **Trustees:** Manny Arroyo, Patti Carey, Kathryn Carlson, Ralph DeMasi, Scott Elia, Andrew Hagen, Dave Lee, Bob Lotkowitz, Paige Lynch, Erin McCormack, Larry Palmieri, Amy Rolleri. **Staff:** Library Director Nickie Marquis, Librarian Andrea Snyder.

Absent: Karen Bedard.

Members of the Public: None.

Call to order: 6:30 p.m. by President Guske.

Public Comment Period: None.

Approval of the Minutes

President Guske called for comments on the August meeting minutes. Hearing none, the minutes were approved.

President's Report

President Guske shared a testimonial from Carl and Anna Marie Gerst regarding their support for the new building campaign. We will include this statement in materials moving forward and plan to leverage it as much as we can. The fundraising campaign is building some traction.

The Gift Acceptance Policy is still in draft form, and we will plan to approve it at the next meeting. The policy will cover ground rules for accepting gifts both in general and for the capital campaign.

We are on track for the October closing on the Fennell Street property.

Trustee Erin McCormack and Librarian Andrea Snyder are asking trustees to sign up to have their photos taken for the website while attending one of several upcoming in-person meetings. This will give the Trustee page of our website a more cohesive look.

Library Director's Report

Monthly Report Highlights: This Friday we will restart showing movies after more than two years. The second floor lighting has been completed just in time. The first guitar concert will be on September 24th. We also look forward to the Manhattan Short Film Festival screening returns after a two-year hiatus on September 30th.

Nickie is applying for funding to restore *Conflicting Faiths* and has high hopes that, despite not being awarded this aid in the past, we will receive it based on the specific criteria outlined for this year's grant cycle. We will need to also plan for cleaning, storage, display and preservation of other paintings in our possession.

Andrea gave a demonstration of the library's new Tonie Boxes, which offer kids and families portable story times. Each Tonie Box is a speaker and also comes with headphones. We currently have five in circulation. They are very interactive and each comes with a kit of various Tonies that have different themes. They were very popular this summer and were almost never on the shelves.

Financials

As anticipated, we did not have a lot of income in August. As for expenses, wages look high compared to budget due to some staffing changes. The Buildings and Grounds expenses were significantly lower than budgeted for. Beyond the lift installation we did do a lot of painting and general upkeep, but still ended up not needing nearly what we had budgeted for. We have lowered the amount that we expect to spend in this category in the upcoming fiscal year's budget. Program expenses are still tracking behind as we continue to restart and reinvigorate programs since the onset of the pandemic. We hope to have a regular full slate of programs next year.

2022-23 Budget Review and Disposition: Overall we are looking at a 2% increase in the budget. One goal of this budget is to increase support for downloadable content, particularly for Overdrive. We will also allocate more money back into programs as we continue to see more activity in that area. Some program expenses, such as for the guitar concerts, are offset by attendee donations. Salary adjustments are also significant as we ended up hiring for a different position than we initially budgeted for. We don't currently put a lot of money into communications, but we will need to increase that to promote awareness of our programs and services as well as awareness of the capital campaign. In terms of income, our tax levy did increase by \$14,000 for a total of \$364,000. Used book sales should bring in more next year thanks to more consistent online book sales and the return of the Dickens used book sale.

Trustees discussed the tax levy, which currently covers 73% of total expenses for the year. This is low compared to other association and municipal libraries. We will need to think about how and if we can continue to increase the levy over time to better support library operations. Trustees discussed the role of the capital reserve account in our long term strategy to support sustainable operations.

President Guske called for a motion to approve the budget. Vice President Hempson made the motion and Trustee Kathryn Carlson seconded the motion. All trustees voted in favor of the motion with no objections or abstentions, and the motion carried.

Communication Committee

Skaneateles Stroll magazine just published an article featuring Nickie after having featured Andrea and Mary Beth in two prior issues. The articles have highlighted our library staff's many accomplishments and awards, and also highlighted what they were most looking forward to in the new building. The Library's 145th anniversary will be the cover story for the upcoming October issue.

Fundraising Committee

The Capital Campaign is still in the silent phase, though there has been much exciting activity. We have received a few commitments and continue to reach out to prospective donors. The Fundraising Committee met two weeks ago and went through a list of prospective donors. We are now organizing strategies for who is approaching donors. We will also be reaching out to non-committee Trustees for ideas and contacts.

As part of our readiness work for the capital campaign we are working on the gift acceptance policy and other documents that we would want to include in a donor packet. The committee is mindful of making sure the look, messaging and feel is consistent across all pieces. The donor kit continues to grow as we add in the 2021-2022 annual report and an insert about the leadership of the organization. We will supplement the kit with more information about the site as it becomes available.

Fennell Street New Building Committee

We will close on the new site on October 31 and are currently working with Dan Mannion at Hancock & Estabrook to update all necessary materials including abstracts, titles, and budget. Janet Aaron and Sue Murphy have concluded they will be off the site by the closing date so we do not have any issues with the Town needing additional space. Laker Limo is in the process of building a new building that will be done at the end of December. We will amend the town's lease with Laker Limo as necessary.

The Building Committee began the process by identifying seventeen architectural firms, thirteen of which responded with interest. Of those thirteen, two firms teamed up with two other firms to produce combined RFPs for a total of eleven submissions. There are fourteen people on the committee, including a number of skilled experts and two retired architects. Committee members used a matrix of criteria to evaluate the RFPs and paired their choices down to six. We then developed a second phase RFP that is due on September 23rd. The firms have all called Vice President Hempson several times for more information and all are very engaged in the process. We will invite the firms to come to Skaneateles to do a half hour presentation about the firm and we will also do a half hour presentation about our expectations. We have a set of questions we will use for each of those meetings. A team will then go visit a library that the architect has built and will talk to the library staff about their experience with the firm. The committee will make use of a rubric to inform a recommendation to the Board. Within six months from the decision we hope to have a preliminary design. We will then begin the RFP process for a construction company and construction manager.

We do plan to hold the annual book sale on the Fennell St. property in 2023 and will need help getting the site ready for such an event.

49 East Genesee Street Committee

The lighting has now been installed on the second floor, and the first floor lighting is on order. We anticipate installation to begin in early 2023, as we don't want installation to interfere with the Dickens used book sales.

At the last meeting the Board approved \$20,000 in matching funds for a 2022 New York State Construction Grant submission to renovate the bathrooms and make them accessible. This amount was based on initial project estimates of \$35,000-\$40,000. Further estimates have been coming in significantly higher, causing us to need to revisit our proposal and reduce the scope. Likely we will focus efforts only on the upstairs bathroom now that the second floor is accessible via the lift. We are trying to be fiscally conservative as to where we spend our money, and recognize the need to focus instead on staff and programming.

Public Comment Period: None.

Adjourn Regular Meeting – 7:38 p.m.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 11, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. (In Person – Library Hall)

Submitted by Meghann Sandak, Secretary