

the Skaneateles Library

Skaneateles Library Association
Board of Directors
Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 8, 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, and Secretary Meghann Sandak. **Trustees:** Karen Bedard, Patti Carey, Kathryn Carlson, Ralph DeMasi, Scott Elia, Andrew Hagen, Bob Lotkowitz, Paige Lynch, Erin McCormack, Larry Palmieri. **Staff:** Library Director Nickie Marquis, Librarian Andrea Snyder.

Absent: Manny Arroyo, Dave Lee, Amy Roller.

Members of the Public: Diane Fellerman, Fran McCormack.

Call to order: 6:38 p.m. by President Guske.

Public Comment Period: Diane Fellerman expressed gratitude on behalf of the community for completing the purchase of the Fennell Street property.

Approval of the Minutes

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

President's Report

President Susanne Guske shared that as of October 31, we officially own the Fennell Street property. Susanne thanked everyone who played a role in the process from beginning to end, including the site committee, Trustees and staff. Owning the property marks a huge milestone and we believe it will catalyze our fundraising. In the end, the process went according to the exact schedule we had planned out a year ago.

Susanne encouraged Trustees to be ambassadors for the project at all times. Please share plans with people who inquire about the project and direct them to the website. You can also connect them with member of the Executive Committee or Fundraising Committee if they want to hear more or if they have asked a question and you are unsure of the answer.

Nickie circulated the Patron Code of Conduct and we are working on a policy regarding meeting room use. We now have an attorney on retainer for upcoming legal considerations.

Library Director's Report

Nickie shared that the attorney on retainer is Stephanie Cole Adams. She is based in Buffalo and is very well versed in issues pertaining to libraries.

As an addition to the monthly board report that was circulated at the end of last week, Nickie shared that a middle school student approached the Library to be a collection site for Toys for Tots. We will accept donations until December 1.

Nickie gave an overview of the Patron Code of Conduct. She suggests adding a clause regarding unattended children. Some libraries have a separate policy on this topic. Trustees shared their opinions on the stipulations of the policy, and with no consensus reached agreed to revisit the topic at the next meeting. Trustees are asked to send any suggestions regarding the particulars of the policy to Nickie.

In a continued effort to clear items out of the Library that don't belong there, several framed pieces (artwork, photographs, copies of signatures or documents and even a napkin) have been proposed for deaccession. A team of volunteers from the Skaneateles Historical Society, including Gerylyn Huba, went through the various pieces and divided them into two categories. The first category contains items that can be sold, as they are not originals and/or do not have any local significance. The second category contains works by local artists for the most part and/or historical items with relevance to the area. The Skaneateles Historical Society would be interested in acquiring these items from the Library. Vice President Dave Hempson made a motion to follow the guidance of the Historical Society volunteers. Trustee Karen Bedard seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and all Trustees voted in favor. The motion carried.

Andrea Snyder gave an overview of some of the more unusual items that the library has in its possession for circulation. These include, but are not limited to, household items that someone may need every once in awhile. Examples include a pop-up tent and household gadgets like a circuit analyzer, laser level for hanging pictures, voltage tester, stud finder, etc. There is also an air quality testing kit, an external CD/DVD drive, hotspots and chromebooks, soil meter kits, etc. The Library also lends out passes to various parks, including those that are part of the Empire Pass and Onondaga County parks (the Zoo, Jamesville Beach, Beaver Lake, etc.), and museums such as the Everson Museum of Art, the Children's Museum of Oswego and the National Women's Hall of Fame. A comprehensive list of the items can be found on the Library's website (<https://www.skanlibrary.org/find/unusual-items/kits-and-stuff/>).

Lastly, Andrea shared that art kits for young children, kids and adults will be coming back for December, January and February.

Financials

We are one month into the new fiscal year and there is nothing unusual to report. We did get notice that the OCPL fees are higher than what we budgeted for by about \$2,800. Otherwise everything is in line with our budget projections. Investments showed improvement in October.

Communication Committee

Our fourth and most recent in a series of articles featured in *Skaneateles Stroll* celebrates the 145th anniversary of the Skaneateles Library Association and highlights plans for the future. A lot of time has been spent in the last month working on a press release regarding the closing of the property. Laurie Ruhlmann was very helpful in writing the press release, and Nickie and Karen Bedard helped edit the piece. In recent days we submitted another article to *Skaneateles Stroll*. Trustee bios and headshots are almost all up to date, and that portion of the website has been cleaned up.

We will need help with an event we are planning at the new site in a couple of months to celebrate this accomplishment and to show the public where things could be on the site. We are considering getting a food truck to come out and might host the event during Winterfest.

Fundraising Committee

Trustee Andrew Hagen shared that the Fundraising Committee continues to make progress during the silent phase of the campaign, and has dedicated time over the last month to brainstorming named gift opportunities that range from \$25,000 to \$6 million. Some of the named gift opportunities include features like the café, the children's space, the fireplace, landscaping, etc. The concept around the values assigned is based on the scope and popularity of the space/item, as well as what it could potentially cost to build out.

The Committee will increase the frequency of its meetings to maintain a high level of activity during this critical phase of the campaign. The intent is to have a more consistent pattern of meeting every other week to keep it in front of everyone and move it along at a high level.

Andrew reinforced to Trustees that they should connect members of the public who express curiosity in the project or have questions to him or a member of the Fundraising Committee.

Lastly, the Committee is working on developing standard elements for grant opportunities so we can process them more efficiently as they come in.

Fennell Street New Building Committee

Vice President Dave Hempson gave a high level overview of the process to purchase the parcel on Fennell Street, including site selection, the public hearing and environmental testing. We closed on the property last Monday. Our lawyer Doreen Simmons donated her fees as a gift to the library. If you know Doreen, please let her know how much we appreciate everything she has done for the library. She put so many hours into this process, and we are so grateful for her generous gift. We had done a walkthrough of the property with Sue Murphy a few days before the closing. Sue did an amazing job of having the site ready. There were a few small items discovered, and all were taken care of within that same day. Janet Aaron has also been incredibly supportive throughout the process and put in a lot of time and effort.

We narrowed the original list of potential architectural firms down to four, and three have presented to the committee so far. Tomorrow night is the final presentation. The building committee will meet this coming Monday and hope to narrow those four down to one or two finalists. The next step will be site visits to libraries the firms have built. We are hoping to make a recommendation to the Board by December and plan to have a sketch three months following approval of the firm.

49 East Genesee Street Committee

Susanne reported that the Committee has transitioned to bi-monthly meetings as the work on this building has slowed down. The downstairs lights are the last remaining item on the to-do list for this year, and they are starting to arrive. We plan to put those up after Dickens.

We will begin to use the new property in a few ways and have add that location to our insurance policy to extend our coverage to that site. First, we will transition used book sorting to take place in the existing buildings. Horses for the Dickens Festival will use the property for staging (that company is naming the library as an additional insured under their coverage for the horses).

Lastly, Susanne commended the staff for their work in cleaning up the silence room on the second floor.

Public Comment Period: Diane Fellerman shared that she was heartened to hear about the cooperation amongst the Library, the Town and the Village throughout the process to acquire the Fennell Street parcel. She also expressed her excitement about the decision on which architect to hire for the project, and asked if the website is currently the best place to send people who have questions and want more information. Andrew replied that we don't have a lot of specific information to share at this point, as the particular details of the new building haven't been developed yet. As an example, preliminary discussions have suggested that the new building will likely incur lower energy costs or even zero energy costs. He reinforced that anyone should direct such inquiries to a member of the Executive Team and/or Fundraising Committee.

Adjourn Regular Meeting – 7:34 p.m.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, December 13, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. (In Person – Library Hall)

Submitted by Meghann Sandak, Secretary