

the Skaneateles Library

Skaneateles Library Association
Board of Directors
Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 9, 2023

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:** Katie Armijo, Karen Bedard, Kathryn Carlson, Ralph DeMasi, Andrew Hagen, Kristin LaBeau, Bob Lotkowictz, Erin McCormack, Steve McClintic, Larry Palmieri, Amy Rolleri. **Staff:** Library Director Nickie Marquis, Assistant Director and Adult Services Librarian Andrea Snyder.

Absent: Manny Arroyo, Paige Lynch, Stephen Thomas.

Member of the Public: Diane Fellerman.

Call to order: 6:31 p.m. by President Guske.

Approval of the Minutes

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

President's Report

The school district budget vote, which includes the Library's proposition for a tax levy, will be held on May 16th from 7 a.m. - 9 p.m. at the District Office. District residents should receive more information in the mail this week. Maura attended four budget meetings, and no one from the community attended any of them. Please encourage your friends and neighbors to get out and vote to help make sure the Library's proposal passes.

The annual summer used book sale will take place July 6-9th at its new location on the Fennell Street site.

On May 25th Conrad Ello from Oudens Ello will be in town. We will host a lunch with our New York State Senator Rachel May, her Chief of Staff, and the Executive Committee. We want to make sure she understands the impact of the new building on the community. We have also submitted a CREST grant through her office and will need her support to help that get approved. Later that evening there will be a fundraising event at the Skaneateles County Club. We will have some preliminary designs at that time, which will be sent to Trustees in advance. We hope to share a

potential timeline that would have us break ground in the summer of 2024 and open at the end of 2025. The only hindrance at this point is fundraising. We want to be able to share a design that we can rally people around who are influencers in the community.

We continue to hear from back from foundations about funding requests and the input is generally that they love the ideas and plans but want to see more progress in fundraising before they support.

Trustees were reminded to sign their Conflict-of-Interest forms if they haven't done so already.

Library Director's Report

We have two new sets of museum passes coming, one set to the Ithaca Science Center and the other to the Play Space in Auburn.

Andrea showed Trustees how to navigate the website to find [our current policies](#) including the Patron Code of Conduct, Internet and Computer Use Policy, etc. These policies, are available to the public. Approval dates and review dates are listed for each. Also included on ~~this~~ our site are the Freedom to Read Statement, Library Bill of Rights, and Freedom to View Statement. These were created by the American Library Association and are considered foundational. The documents outline the core belief that libraries provide equal access to all materials in the collection to all people. They are not policies but have been affirmed by the Board of Trustees. Our Library continually strives to meet the goals of these documents. Trustees were also shown the wealth of reference materials available for library boards' use in an OCPL shared drive that all trustees have access to.

Nickie gave an overview of the Collection Management Policy in preparation for trustees to consider approving a small addition. The policy covers how we build a collection, how we remove things from the collection, and who is responsible for what. The Board of Trustees designates the authority to the Library Director to carry out the policy and make those decisions. The policy discusses what the library buys and how we decide what to buy. It outlines the procedure by which a patron could request Reconsideration of Library Materials if they felt there was something in the collection that should not be there. These requests often reflect cultural tides and currently the books that people tend to be concerned about have to do with topics like race and gender identity, and especially those books whose target audiences are kids and teens. OCLP recently held a trustee training on Censorship attended by four (4) trustees. Katie Armijo shared that the training encouraged libraries to create tight policies and to prepare staff and trustees to refer to and know their policies, especially the board's role in the event of an issue. Staff are trained to point patrons to the policy to ensure the proper steps are taken. This process helps issues from escalating. As new books are considered for inclusion in the collection, the Library Director and/or staff designee looks at their popularity, reviews, and the demand for the items. Susanne recommended that the Governance Committee consider the issues discussed and those-related in greater detail by reviewing our current policies, including those in revision.

Dave Hempson made the motion to approve the addition of language to the policy specifying that patrons who submit a Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials must be residents of our school district or the Town of Skaneateles. Kathryn Carlson seconded the motion. All Trustees voted in favor of the motion with no opposition or abstentions. Additional considerations or requests will go to the governance committee for further discussion.

Financials

We are seven months into our fiscal year, and we continue to be right on budget with most things. There are no glaring outliers or concerns. This time of year we look at whether or not we should anticipate any notable increases in expenses or declines in revenue. We look carefully at cash accounts to make sure that we will comfortably cover our expenses. The cash on hand plus anticipated revenue for the book sale will more than cover us. We have set an ambitious goal for the book sale, but year-round online book sales and Dickens profits ~~will~~ are also ~~be~~ included in that goal. Investments went up again since last month so we seem to be trending in the right direction.

Communications Committee

Karen updated the Committee on the latest *Skaneateles Stroll* article that Andrea wrote about books the staff can't stop reading. We just submitted our latest article for early June in which we introduce Oudens Ello and reinforce messaging from the March press release.

We will engage with the web design company that developed the most recent website to create a micro-site that will house the *It Takes a Library* information. We aim for the site to be much more inspirational and engaging than the current site.

The Committee has sketched out the next six months of content including the articles that will appear in *Skaneateles Stroll*. We will continue to fill out that content calendar through the end of the year. We are supporting the fundraising events where we can.

Erin reached out to Skaneateles Drone who agreed to cover the book sale pro-bono. We will have drone shots and videos we can use for social media.

J.D. Barrow Art Gallery

Amy reminded Trustees that the gallery has officially reopened for the season. The Barrow kicked off its season with a performance by Katie North Peck. The recently restored *Dog in the Woods* painting was revealed at the event. Docents are in place and the first docent coffee will be this week. Mary Gardner will read poems by John Barrow and poems influenced by his paintings.

Fundraising

Interviews have been scheduled with three candidates for the Campaign Director position.

We recently received commitments from two longstanding community groups, the Monday Evening Club and the Leisure Club, to sponsor study rooms in the new building.

The Committee is working to invite and confirm guests for the May 25th event. Invitees have been assigned to committee members for follow up.

Amy inquired about a Friends of the Library group like the one at the Seymour Library in Auburn. Andrew responded that fundraising won't stop with the new building but will evolve into a true development program that is ongoing and indefinite. Growth in the library's volunteer program is planned for the future. A true Friends program is its own 501(c)3.

Fennell Street New Building Committee

The Committee has completed three design meetings with Oudens Ello. Nickie, Mary Beth, and Andrea had previously outlined, and continue to refine, the library's interior spatial needs, and from that space estimation we are considered different ways of organizing the building's interior. The fourth design meeting will start to look at the structural elements of the building. We continue to work to meld OEA's ideas with the fabric of the community.

We will be looking for a construction manager, whose first job will be to cost the building based off the designs provided by the architects. We will use the same process to select the construction manager as we did the architects. We have collected several examples of RFPs from the architect and from local firms and have drafted our own RFP. The committee has decided to pursue a construction manager at risk after much education about the process and how to carry it out most effectively.

We have also been preparing the Fennell St. site for the book sale as well as for a geotechnical survey to know what the material of the land beneath the site is. We have a few recommendations for a Clerk of the Works that we will be pursuing soon.

49 E. Genesee

We have decided not to submit any construction grant requests for 49 E. Genesee St. this year though we do have future projects in mind including renovation of the bathrooms. We want to put all emphasis on the Fennell St. property and will meet soon to draft an Intent to Apply.

The lighting project is now complete. *Conflicting Faiths* is at West Lake Conservators undergoing restoration. We have a grant to cover 90% of restoration costs. Once it is back from restoration, we want to promote that piece of art and the collaboration between the Library, West Lake Conservators, the Barrow Art Gallery, and the Skaneateles Historical Society.

Public Comment

Diane commended the building committee on the progress they've made. Diane also shared that there was once a Friends of the Library group, long ago, that wasn't particularly effective.

Diane shared some background on the gifts made by the two reading groups and discouraged creating a competition between them. The groups prefer to have their gifts be inspiration for the community and other groups who may want to do something similar. She also recommended that we consider including information about *It Takes a Library* in the library's newsletter.

Adjourn Regular Meeting – 8:05 p.m.

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

Submitted by Meghann Sandak, Secretary