



Skaneateles Library Association
Board of Directors
Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 12, 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, Secretary Meghann Sandak, Treasurer Maura Molnar. **Trustees:** Katie Armijo, Manny Arroyo, Karen Bedard, Kathryn Carlson, Ralph DeMasi, Andrew Hagen, Kristin LaBeau, Bob Lotkowictz, Larry Palmieri, Amy Rolleri. **Staff:** Library Director Nickie Marquis, Assistant Director and Adult Services Librarian Andrea Snyder. **Absent:** Paige Lynch, Steve McClintic, Erin McCormack, Stephen Thomas.

Members of the Public: Dave Lee, Diane Fellerman.

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 regular meeting minutes. Hearing none, the minutes were approved.

President's Report

Susanne reiterated that the focus of our activities now and in the coming months will be fundraising for the new building. Nickie researched other local library projects such as the Manlius Library and found that most projects had been bonded with costs passed on to taxpayers. In comparing capital campaign timelines of those libraries, we have already accomplished more with our fundraising to date as a percentage of the overall total. We may need to consider bonding as an option.

The Board will vote tonight on the budget that was put together by Nickie and Maura. The budget attempts to rein in costs where appropriate.

Susanne offered up a resolution to the Board regarding the gift offer made by Peter and Elsa Soderberg. The agreement outlines the terms of accepting this gift, which will help both the Library and Barrow Library achieve their goals.

Andrew presented the following resolution:

As it is the intent of the Library Board to provide for the continuity of the Barrow Gallery; and after full consideration of the best interests of both entities, the Library Board resolves that subject to a judicial approval of board separation and the Barrow Gallery receipt of the proposed \$1 million donation earmarked for purchase of the current Library building; along with all required statutory actions and approvals required under the New York State Not For Profit Corporation Law including Section §510; that it is the intent of the Library Board to sell the property at 49 East Genesee Street to the Barrow Gallery at a sale price utilizing fair market appraised value; such transfer to be made contingent upon the relocation of the Library to its new facility, with a purchase price currently determined to be \$1,278,400 or as may be adjusted by unforeseen circumstances to the agreement of the parties at the time of transfer.

Manny suggested one edit to the language (reflected above). Andrew made the motion to approve the resolution, which was seconded by Dave. All present trustees voted in favor of the motion with no one opposing or abstaining. The motion to adopt the resolution was passed.

Susanne acknowledged that Paige Lynch has decided to leave the Board but will be joining the Nominating Committee. She will continue assisting the new library project by furthering her research into a similarly situated library campaign as well as her research into the feasibility of a café in the new space.

Library Director's Report

In addition to the report that Nickie circulated by email, she reminded trustees about a reception at the Creamery on Thursday, September 19th from 3-4 p.m. The reception will precede a lecture in Library Hall by Larry Cook about U.S. Presidents and their connections to New York State. He is an avid collector of historical items and will have pieces on display. This program is a collaboration between the Creamery and the Library.

Nickie made a recommendation regarding hundreds of photographs that are Library property. The Creamery has been in possession of the photos for quite some time, and historical society volunteers have been researching the families featured. Dave made a motion to deaccess the photographs from our archives and gift them to the Creamery. Kathryn seconded the motion and all trustees voted in favor of the motion.

Andrea did a demonstration of Demographics Now, a database that is available through the library website. The database features consumer and market information and enables users to run reports. As an example, Andrea shared a demographic study for our zip code which also includes projections.

Financials

Our fiscal year ends on September 30th. As we had projected, this month we had to dip into the monies that we've been holding in reserve that came out of investments last year. Our investments dipped slightly last month. The income statement does not show a lot of activity, as most was

captured in July after the book sale. Expenses this month were a little higher because we pay our insurance once per year.

Maura credited Nickie with putting together the budget, which has been vetted by Maura and the Finance Committee. Wages will be going up 4% to keep our salaries competitive. We also plan to pay more wages to part-time employees at the circulation desk in the coming year. We increased our legal budget to cover expenses for finalizing the separation agreement with the Barrow. We are right sizing the communications budget, most of which has to do with the new building and the capital campaign and therefore is not included in this operating budget. We are looking closely at the use of our digital materials, which should result in a reduction in cost but will not decrease access to materials. We had anticipated the 25% increase in the cost of Polaris, which is reflected in the budget.

The tax levy provides 73% of our income, and this year the levy will increase by 4%. The book sale revenue budget was increased to reflect a very successful summer book sale this year and increasing year-round book sales. Kristin and others are working to make the year-round sale an even better income generator.

Operating income budgeted for the year is less than our budgeted expenses. We anticipate using \$71,000 from our investment income as has traditionally been done. In 2022, we had \$82,000 in investment income. In February we pulled out \$99,000 and we intend to use \$76,000. Dave made a motion to approve the 2023-2024 budget. Susanne seconded the motion. All trustees voted to approve the budget as presented with no objections or abstentions.

Communications Committee

Erin and Karen have been working closely with the fundraising committee. Next week we will reassess how we engage the committee to focus all efforts on fundraising. We may need to recruit some additional members for specific roles.

This month's *Skaneateles Stroll* featured an article on Mary Kerwick written by Erin. The article has helped create some excitement and Mary has gotten some new leads because of it and even an unsolicited check for \$25,000. We just submitted the October article written by Karen about ways that libraries sustain healthy communities. This article is an effort to emphasize that libraries are more than books. We want to help the community better understand what 21st century libraries can be.

J.D. Barrow Art Gallery

Amy reported that the Barrow will be selling candles at the Sherwood during the Dickens Festival. The candles have a wrap of a Barrow painting.

The next quarterly meeting will be on November 14th at 6 p.m. preceding the SLA Board meeting. We will vote on the budget.

The Mezzalingua family is hosting a cocktail party fundraiser for the Barrow at their home later this month. We will work to reinforce the message that both organizations are working together to achieve their goals.

There will also be a fundraiser for the Library at the Barrow before the guitar series to again demonstrate the partnership of these two institutions.

Fundraising

Susanne reported that we are looking to streamline the fundraising process. There is a meeting on Thursday to go through that process. We continue to have positive donor meetings.

Dave has recently met with Senator Gillibrand as well as Governor Hochul and Attorney General James. Dave also met with John Mannion, who is working on securing \$15,000 for the project. As we know, Rachel May has already come through with \$500,000 in funding. We have a meeting with Schumer's office being set up and are working to make progress with the County.

Fennell Street New Building Committee

Oudens Ello is completing the schematic design which will close out the first phase. They will present updated designs on Monday 9/18 from 4:30-6 p.m. We met last week with the landscape architects. Oudens Ello has been consolidating these designs into joint views, both interior and exterior. If we had the funding, we would then go into Design Development phase starting October 1st. This phase will cost \$360,000 and takes four months. At the end of this process, we would get the construction documents. We will likely pause to continue fundraising before entering the Design Development phase. It will take them a month to get started again once we are ready. We have also been working to narrow down the candidates for a Construction Manager. So far both Pike and VIP Structures have presented to the committee. The feedback was very positive. The committee will next hear from The Hayner Hoyt Corporation and LeChase.

To close, Dave shared some images of the exterior design with some of the landscaping incorporated.

Public Comment: Diane noted that she appreciated the approach of the two organizations working jointly to lift each other up. She asked about the status of the separation agreement. Susanne responded that the resolution approved at this meeting simplifies that agreement tremendously.

Adjourn Meeting: 7:51 p.m.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 10th at 6:30 p.m. (In Person – Library Hall)

Submitted by Meghann Sandak, Secretary