



Skaneateles Library Association
Board of Directors
Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 14, 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, Bob Lotkowitz, Steve McClintic, Larry Palmieri, Amy Rolleri. **Staff:** Library Director Nickie Marquis.

Absent: Kristin LaBeau, Erin McCormack, Stephen Thomas, Assistant Director and Adult Services Librarian Andrea Snyder.

Members of the Public: Scott Elia. Barrow Gallery Staff – Alexandra Perry, Katrina Zepp, and Betsy Carter.

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

President's Report

We were part of a select audience that was invited to a town hall meeting with Onondaga County Executive Ryan McMahon and presented an overview of the new building project. It was very well received, and we were made to feel that our project is very much in line with McMahon's objectives for the County. Nickie and Andrea prepared additional materials including maps of nearby libraries and of where our cardholders reside. We are in the running for federal funds and have received state funds, so we are hopeful that we can obtain some funding from the County. Susanne felt an important takeaway from the County Executive's remarks is that the surrounding area is on track to experience significant growth and that we should consequently be careful to not reduce our new building's size to reduce costs so much that new building will not meet the needs of future generations.

Susanne also proposed a change to bylaws about the timing of our Annual Meeting, which is stated to take place on the fourth Thursday of January. To amend the bylaws, the Board needs to be notified in writing 10 days in advance of a vote. Such notice was included in the November board packet. Maura suggested that we consider moving it into the fall to be more consistent with the fiscal year. Nickie agreed it was worth a discussion and that perhaps the bylaws could be altered in a way that allowed more flexibility in the future.

Lastly, the Board was asked to consider a proposed edit to the resolution passed in September regarding the library's intent to sell the current building to the Barrow Gallery after the library moves to the new building. The donor requested that language allowing any kind of adjustment to the sale price of the current building for any reason be removed. The Executive team has discussed the implications of this change, including input and discussions with our attorney. The Board received notes on the pros and cons of either accepting or not accepting the change request in advance of the meeting.

The Executive Committee recommended that Trustees accept the proposed changes with an understanding of what potential consequences could be. The Board understands that the Attorney General could still reject the transfer of the property. Dave Hempson made a motion to accept resolution as edited. Trustees voted in favor of the resolution; one abstention.

Library Director's Report

Nickie highlighted one correction to the data regarding the number of programs verses attendance that was shared with Trustees in advance of the meeting. She also distributed updated NYS Trustee Handbooks for trustee review.

Financials

We are one month into our new fiscal year and are on track thus far. We typically have a lot of cash in the beginning of the year because of when we receive the levy. Professional services expenses look high because they come in infrequently. Our investments did go down a little last month. Expenses for the new building primarily consisted of architect's fees and general upkeep of the property.

Next month the Finance Committee will recommend that Trustees once again vote to override the tax levy limit. They will also likely ask trustees to approve a proposed increase in the tax levy.

Communications Committee

Karen pointed to the most recent *Stroll* article. We aim to have another external communications meeting in Q1 of next year when we have our strategic messaging updated.

Fundraising

The team successfully finalized two commitments of great significance in the last month. The Fundraising Committee feels that now we have some of the initial major gifts committed that we have some momentum to work with. The exact status of the capital campaign across all categories was passed out to trustees. The Campaign is now over \$3 Million with additional gifts in kind pledged and funding committed related to the future sale of the building after a new library is built.

Fennell Street New Building Committee

Doreen Simmons and Dave attended a recent planning board committee and provided updated renderings from the architects. They reviewed variances that would be required to move forward with the project. The planning board asked about the environmental condition of the site and were excited about the stated net-zero goal. They also commented that they loved the design of the building, especially the study rooms and the large conference room since there are no other venues for large public hearings in town. They liked the low roof on the entrance because it will not be overwhelming to Fennell Street and appreciated how the civic scale opens as you go toward the back of the building. They said these two preliminary meetings would really facilitate the process when it comes time for formal approval.

The Building Committee has finalized their hire for a Construction Manager who will oversee the construction, hire the subcontractors, and build the building. Eight responses were received from the initial RFP. The Committee developed a rubric and decided to cut the list down to four. Presentations from all four were exceptional. Costs were relatively consistent across the candidates. LeChase emerged as the first choice because of their expertise around sustainability, breadth of experience with library projects, excellent references, great safety record, and the detailed information they provided regarding pre-construction services. Maura noted that she was impressed by how community groups were brought in during their processes to be part of what was being created. They are already working daily with Oudens Ello to understand the complexity of the building and work on an initial cost estimate. Their proposal is on the shared drive for the Board. Dave made a motion to approve the selection of LeChase as Construction Manager and Susanne seconded Dave's motion. The Board is hiring LeChase as their Construction Manager at Risk, meaning we will have a cap on expenses and anything beyond that they will have to cover, while any savings will be passed along to the Library. All Trustees voted in favor of the motion with no objections or abstentions.

The Building Committee is working with Oudens Ello and LeChase to coordinate the timeline. If we had the financial capability, our target would be to complete the building late 2026.

Public Comment: Scott Elia commented that it is great to see high functioning board here doing this work and that he was very impressed by the conversations happening here.

Adjourn Regular Meeting – 8:07 p.m.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, December 12th at 6:30 p.m. (In Person – Library Hall).

Library Volunteer Appreciation Thursday, December 14th 4-6 p.m.

Submitted by Meghann Sandak, Secretary