



Skaneateles Library Association
Board of Directors
Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 16, 2024

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 Lotkowitz, Steve McClintic, Erin McCormack, Larry Palmieri, Amy Roller. **Staff:** Library Director Nickie Marquis, Assistant Director and Adult Services Librarian Andrea Snyder.

Absent: Stephen Thomas.

Members of the Public: None.

Call to order: 6:16 p.m. by President Guske.

Public Comment Period: None.

Approval of the Minutes

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

President's Report

As Ali summarized in the Barrow Quarterly Meeting, we continue to make good progress on the separation work and are hoping to turn everything over to the attorney soon. The Board will be sent the draft terms for consideration, which we will then need to approve at a future meeting. Those terms will then go to the attorneys to draft petitions and finally everything will be submitted to the Attorney General.

At our next meeting, we will focus on fundraising strategy. We have lots of good momentum going into 2024 and this will be a critical year for our capital campaign effort.

Library Director's Report

Nickie encouraged Trustees to register for the upcoming trustee training workshop offered through OCPL. Kathryn added that though a recording of the training can be viewed afterwards, there will be breakouts and discussion so participation would be an added benefit. Nickie will send registration information out to trustees tomorrow.

Financials

We are a quarter of the way through our fiscal year and our finances are in line with projections. We are seeing more monthly dividends than in past years due to the new accounts we've opened that offer more favorable interest rates. Our investments had a good month and continue to rise. There were not any large expenses for the Fennell Street project.

At the end of December, the Finance Committee met with Christina Crowley who assists nonprofits with issuance of debt and helps them determine what they might want to borrow. This was a fact-finding mission for us. We hope to raise the entire cost of the library, but we wanted to know what it would look like if we considered bond issuance. She helped guide us through what kinds of specific considerations we would need to make as an association library. As an example, we would need public approval to increase the levy so that we could cover the debt service and we would also need to have the rest of the fundraising complete to finish the project. She provided a few different scenarios to help us understand the financial implications of such a process.

Our tax levy currently is \$378,000. We are asking for an increase this spring that will put us just over \$400,000. As reference, when Marcellus built a new building, they more than doubled their levy and they bring in over \$500,000 per year. The additional amount we would need from the tax levy is comparable. Andrew also pointed out that the incremental cost per household is not particularly significant.

Fennell Street New Building Committee

Our building subcommittee met to review the cost estimate provided by LeChase. Representatives from LeChase were present at the meeting and the Oudens Ello team was on the phone. We went through a detailed rollup of the costs and considered recommendations from LeChase and Oudens Ello about how to mitigate those costs. We are considering a 16k or 18k square foot building instead of an 18k or 20k square foot building. If we go any smaller, we will have to significantly change the architectural plans. For reference, 49 E. Genesee is approximately 6,600 square feet. The committee will make some decisions regarding cost-saving options.

LeChase reiterated that every year that we wait to build the building will cost us an additional \$1M in construction costs. The committee is also discussing phasing the project to delay some expenses. As an example, while we may want to complete landscaping in the front of the building, we could put off landscaping in the back. We could also wire for the solar panels but not install them until we have the capital to do so.

Communications Committee

Karen shared the January Stroll article that Mary Beth and Andrea wrote about boredom busters at the library. We have submitted the article for February and are working on updating the content calendar for the next several months. We have our first committee meeting of the year tomorrow and will be welcoming some new members. Our focus this year will be on how to best support fundraising activity.

We hope to have a session for board members in the first quarter so everyone feels up to date on the best way to talk about the project using consistent messaging.

Fundraising

Erin shared the committee's objective to complete the silent phase of the campaign by June. The committee has worked tirelessly to identify individuals and foundations that would be instrumental in getting us to the amount we need. We are working to close every single one of those leads. Once that is achieved, we can begin the public phase with events and publicity. Andrew added that we have built a database with 500 constituents and that gifts have come from 200 unique donors. We have a lot of momentum, not all of which is visible and expect a lot of leads will come to fruition soon.

Public Comment: None.

Adjourn Regular Meeting – 7:01 p.m.

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

Submitted by Meghann Sandak, Secretary