



**Board of Directors
Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 12, 2024**

Present: President Dave Hempson, Vice President Erin McCormack, Secretary Kathryn Carlson **Trustees:** Katie Armijo, Kristin LaBeau, Stephen McClintic, Susanne Guske, Larry Palmieri, Stephen Thomas, Meghann Sandak

Staff: Library Director Nickie Marquis, Assistant Director and Adult Services Librarian Andrea Snyder

Absent: Treasurer Maura Molnar, Manny Arroyo, Karen Bedard, Ralph DeMasi, Bob Lotkowitz, Amy Rolleri

Members of the Public: Fran McCormack

Call to order: 6:30 p.m. by President Hempson.

Public Comment Period: No Comments.

Approval of the Minutes

- President Hempson called for corrections on the February meeting minutes. Hearing none, the minutes were approved.

President's Report

- The first item of business was to wish Director Marquis a happy birthday.
- President Hempson reported that Committee assignments were finalized and he thanked everyone for being willing to work on the committees. [Note: several members wished to be assigned to a specific committee as the meeting was ending.]
- President Hempson stated that we were required to review the Strategic Plan yearly and Director Marquis was prepared to lead the review at this meeting.
- President Hempson said that next month we would begin our required policy review. Member Manny Arroyo and Treasurer Maura Molnar would present a proposed policy on Investment management.

Library Director's Report

- Director Marquis stated that she had covered her items in her monthly report and had nothing additional to add. See the report on file.
- Director Marquis led the Board through an update of our progress on the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan. This plan is on our website. There are five goals, with one or two objectives per goal, and action items

for each objective. Director Marquis had developed a progress report dated March 2024. The Board was shown the report on the large monitor, and several hard copies were available. The point was made that there is still almost two years to go on the current plan. It was requested that the report be summarized for posting on the website.

- Goal 1 {Finalize a community-supported, flexible facility plan designed to serve the next generation} is almost completely accomplished through the thorough and complete work of the New Building subcommittee and other subcommittees.
 - Goal 2 {Implement an outreach and engagement plan for all neighborhoods and hamlets in the school district} is still in progress. A comprehensive needs assessment still needed to be done, Open houses in the hamlets still needed to be done, The staff had successfully been using electronic data collection to focus on who was using the library and more about patron use. This will likely be a focus of the next planning cycle.
 - Goal 3 {Build and curate collections that serve our local community} is almost completely accomplished through a thorough review of usage of the library's various resources and the training of staff in using digital technologies for such reviews and research.
 - Goal 4 {Raising the profile of the library as a forward-looking cultural and information hub} is still in progress. The COVID 19 pandemic interfered with some of the intended action items. Board members felt that the activities that did occur served to support the goal well, but the objective which was intended to measure progress was too ambitious and unrealistic. The action items under the objective probably belonged under Goal 2.
 - Goal 5 {Ensure the library's financial sustainability into the future} is largely accomplished through a combination of expert planning and analysis, the addition of tax revenues, increased book sale revenues, and grants that have paid for capital improvements. Still to be looked into would be additional fund-raising mechanisms and a Friends of the Library organization.
- It was noted that the library was recently awarded a \$20,000 grant from the office of John Lemondes. A motion was made by member Susanne Guske to use up to \$15,000 to upgrade technology and the remainder to be used in the new library project. The motion was seconded and it was approved unanimously.

Financials

- In the absence of treasurer Molnar, the operating report and financial reports (see the reports on file) were summarized by member Stephen McClintic. Highlights were:
 - The library has received 93% of its yearly income and expended 3% of budgeted operating expenses
 - Investments have done better and led to an increase in our total assets
 - There has been some movement both in and out of our money market accounts to maximize interest while providing for immediate operating needs

Fund Raising Committee

- Vice President McCormack gave the capital campaign updates.

- o She stated that the plan for engaging possible major donors through a series of events in Naples, Florida and here, hosted by supporters of the project, was progressing as expected. Three events were already lined up and one more was waiting in the wings. In April, Dave and Amy Allyn were hosting an event in Naples with 16 confirmed attendees already. Invitations had gone out through the mail and through emails. Some had indicated they were unavailable for this event but would attend a later event. President Hempson, Vice President McCormack, Campaign director Mary Kerwick, and fund-raising committee member Andrew Hagen will attend to provide information. Campaign director Kerwick and her assistant Jill Girzadas are organizing the events. New materials are being produced.
- o Vice President McCormack is working on a newsletter for previous donors as well as thank-you letters for them.
- o Vice President McCormack reviewed a draft letter to donors the Soderbergs thanking them for their support and donations.
- o The goal of achieving 60% of the estimated \$18.3 million cost of the project by June 30 was restated. If that goal is not reached, the Board will have to decide on next actions.
 - President Hempson reviewed the five sources of funding that we have:
 1. Major donors during the silent phase
 2. The public phase for donations
 3. Foundations, which usually wait until a majority of the funds are raised
 4. Grants from various government offices and agencies
 5. Bonding
 - A discussion on the various aspects of bonding was held. The costs of the possible amounts and loan periods has been presented by Treasurer Molnar at a previous meeting. Major donors appreciate this as an option that guarantees the project would be completed. The cost to homeowners is not overly burdensome. Since every year that goes by raises the cost by \$1 million, this may be the cheaper option. A decision may need to be made this fall. Good communication will be necessary.

Communication Committee

- In the absence of committee chair Bedard, Vice President McCormack reported for the committee.
 - o The committee and representatives from the Barrow Gallery are working on mutual talking points for the staff members, the board members and the community at large about the separation agreement and the sale of the Genesee Street building to the newly developed Barrow Board.
 - o Communication through articles in Stroll magazine have been effective in highlighting programs at the library, as well as collaborative ventures.
 - o Programming for the Eclipse on April 8 including the “Total Eclipse of the Park” branding has been effective.
 - o Edits to the donor kit are being made and the committee is working to support the fund-raising effort by providing any informational materials needed.
 - o The website was being updated.

- A new microsite for the campaign and new building was being developed together with Director Marquis and Assistant Director Snyder.

Barrow Art Gallery Updates

- In the absence of member Roller, Secretary Carlson relayed that the Barrow was on track to open in May as expected
- President Hempson reported that the revised draft of the separation agreement has been sent the Barrow representatives. The process would be that both entities would have to agree informally on the wording before the Library(/Barrow) Board takes a preliminary vote. The draft would then go to the attorneys for approval or recommended changes. Once the attorneys sign off the Board will take a final vote and the agreement will go to the Attorney General for final approval.

Fennell Street New Building Committee

- President Hempson summarized the recent cost developments. After finding that the “ the designed building” was priced at \$23.5 million, the committee went through an extensive reconciliation activity (smaller building, steel instead of wood beams, postponing some phases, etc.) They arrived at a cost of \$18.3 million.
- After discussion with the committee about needs for book sorting space, etc., the architects will design a basement for sorting and utilities. The costs for redesign will be rolled into the design/development stage.
- Updated designs and sketches will be made available by the April Naples event

49 East Genesee Street

- President Hempson reported that member DeMasi, former member David Lee and Director Marquis are working on a Building Operating Manual for the Genesee Street building to give guidance to the Barrow organization once they own the building.

President Hempson asked if there was any further business

- It was recommended that we spend the Lemondes grant and invite the Assemblyman to celebrate with a news story and photo.
- A question about the sale price of the Genesee Street building \$1,278,400 the amount of the gift to purchase it (\$1 million) was asked and answered.
- Hearing no further business, President Hempson declared the meeting closed at 7:54 p.m.

Public Comment period

- Fran McCormack commented that she felt the strategic plan was great and that communication would be critical.