



## **Board of Directors**

### **Regular Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday, February 11, 2025**

**Officers Present:** President Dave Hempson, Vice President Katie Armijo, Secretary Kathryn Carlson, Treasurer Maura Molnar

**Trustees:** Karen Bedard, Jennifer Feeney, Kristin LaBeau, Bob Lotkowicz, Stephen McClintic, Larry Palmieri, Cristina Pietropaoli, Meghann Sandak, Paul Torrisi, Jr.

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

**Absent:** Manny Arroyo, Ralph DeMasi, Susanne Guske, Amy Roller, Jr.

**Members of the Public:** none

**Call to order at 6:30 pm**

**Public Comment Period** – no comments

**Approval of the Minutes** – Minutes were approved for the annual Library Board meeting and the regular board meeting, both held on January 14, 2025

### **President's Report**

President Hempson announced that the newly hired fundraising director Erin McCormick had gotten off to a fast start. At a meeting held at the Sherwood on February 6, the following had been recommended: 1) The Board members should submit video testimonials about the building project for the website, 2) Project management software to track assignments and progress will be implemented, and 3) Committee members will be assigned tasks for completion before the next meeting.

President Hempson also reported that the CREST grant that had been awarded by Rachel May for construction, specifically for the basement of the new project, is eligible to be used for construction documents, the next phase we are entering. We've requested the change and are waiting for approval.

The library's five-year strategic plan is in its last year, and a committee is needed to develop the next five-year plan. Please contact President Hempson if anyone is interested. Trustee Carlson volunteered.

## **Library Director's Report**

Director Marquis referred to the report she had previously submitted and asked for any questions or comments. There were none. She passed out conflict-of-interest forms that all board members need to sign, and requested they be filled out and returned before the end of the meeting.

She then went over the Annual Review of the Library for New York State, highlighting some of the areas of interest. The document reports on the size and scope of the library's collections, programs, online and social media activities. It also reports information on the staff and trustees, as well as financial information. A motion was made by Trustee McClintic to approve the New York State Annual Report. Trustee Molnar seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.

Assistant Director Snyder reported on her attendance at the Advocacy Day in Albany February 4-5. The first day consisted of training by Max Prime of the New York Library Association (NYLA) about the library funding process within the total New York State budget process. There is aid for operational expenses and construction aid for capital costs. Our library has used construction aid for new lights and the lift in the Genesee Street building. This aid is a grant with a matching fund requirement. We have applied for a grant of just under \$1M for the new building.

In the upcoming budget, NYLA has asked for \$176.8M for operating aid and Gov. Hochul has included \$104.6M in her budget proposal. NYLA has requested \$175M in construction aid and Gov. Hochul has included \$34M. Both houses of the legislature will in turn make their proposals in March. Reconciliation and a final budget is supposed to be ready April 1 but often is not ready by then. Legislative priorities are centered on the Freedom to Read Act and the Open Shelves Act. As a side note, a media literacy training guide had been produced by the Department of Homeland Security with no input from educators or librarians.

On Wednesday, the assembled attendees met with legislators to advocate for libraries. Sen. Lemondes is very supportive and asked for wording for letter he could send to Gov. Hochul on behalf of libraries. Rachel May is also very supportive, as evidenced by her previous financial help. Library trustees and friends are urged to contact legislators in support of aid to libraries. Assistant Director Snyder will send contact information out to the trustees and the Friends of the Library group.

## **Financial**

At four months into the fiscal year, the library is doing great. There is \$650K in the capital fund which is enough to pay for the construction documents. The investment accounts had gone up, then down, and now are back up to the September level. February is when NBT calculates the average balance over the last 12 quarters. After this number is reviewed by the finance committee, the library takes out 4% to add to the next year's budget. Last February's withdrawal is in this year's budget and we are only using \$72K out of the \$100K withdrawn.

The monthly income was \$6K from merchandise sales and contributions. The expenses were \$57K. The capital project had a monthly income of \$6600 from donors and interest, and expenses were minimal (maintenance of the property). To date we have had \$1.8M come in and \$1.15 go out on the project.

## **Fundraising**

Campaign director Erin McCormack sent a written report which details the work done so far from the meeting at the Sherwood on February 6. Priorities were set and duties were assigned. Activities are all recorded on the Monday.com project management platform. The sign for the new building site has been designed and it will go before the planning board for approval soon. There will then be a three day turn around for its installation.

Director McCormack sent an email update to 200+ donors, trustees, and other interested parties. There was a 90% delivery rate and an 80% opening rate. The goal is to keep donors and potential donors engaged. Informational meetings will be arranged for the Seniors of Skaneateles group, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Community Center. The fundraising committee identified three tiers of people to keep in contact with, and assigned people to those tasks. Director McCormack and Communications Chairperson Bedard will provide guidance and information for those contacts. Director McCormack will also coordinate the pictures and information about the trustees on the website.

## **Communications**

Director McCormack, Communications Chairperson Bedard and Trustee LaBeau have been in communication about repurposing the committee. Meanwhile, the February article in the Stroll magazine focuses on Library Lover's Month, featuring Trustee Sandak's children.

## **Governance**

In the absence of Trustee Arroyo, Director Marquis reported that the committee had reviewed the issues raised about the proposed by-laws changes from the December meeting. The revised by-laws as submitted for this meeting has limited the amount that the Executive Committee can spend in an emergency without prior board approval to the amount in the Genesee Capital emergency Fund. She also reported that the Education Law which governs libraries calls for a five-member executive committee so an additional trustee-at-large will need to be added. A motion was made by Trustee Bedard to approve the amended by-laws. Trustee Sandak seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.

## **Barrow Art Gallery**

In the absence of Barrow President Rolleri, Barrow Vice President Molnar reported that the separation document is still with the attorneys. President Rolleri and Director Perry met with the attorneys in person and were assured that the document would be sent to the Barrow attorney very soon. Then both the Barrow and the Library attorneys will review and possibly revise the document before sending it to "both" boards for approval. She also reported that this year the Barrow Gallery will be open daily from noon to 4:00pm beginning May 19. New docents are being trained now.

## **Fennell Street New Building Committee**

President Hempson reported that the committee met last night for two hours to take a virtual walk-through of the new building plans using a program called REVIT. Some minor issues were picked up during the walk-through that can be changed. President Hempson will put a history of the renderings and changes in a drop box for the trustees, and will also send a QR code for the virtual walk-through.

A discussion ensued about funding for the project. President Hempson explained the four funding streams (private donors, private grants, federal and state funding, public funding). The option of a bond issuance was discussed. Some grants and some private donors want most of the funding in place before they will contribute. It was emphasized that there is no question that this project will be completed and all involved should express confidence in that fact.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 7:48pm.

**The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday March 11, 2025 at 6:30pm at the library**