

The Community Library  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
February 9, 2023

**Call to Order:**

As a quorum was present, President Ken Hotopp called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Present: Fred Barnes, Harriet Berard, Linda Carpenter, Janice Clark, Jim Collins, Ken Hotopp, Leo McAllister, Becky Leggieri, Janet Sand, Julia Walter, Kim Zimmer. Excused: Virginia Downs

President Hotopp asks for additional agenda items.

Leo McAllister asks to address the Board of Trustees. Mr. McAllister states he respects the board and how everyone feels about The Community Library (TCL). He acknowledged library director and board president as great leaders. However, he submitted his resignation. Citing 49 years of experience on local boards at various levels, in his experience, sexual harassment training has changed. Mr. McAllister stated he did not agree with the training module suggested for meeting the requirement mandated by New York State, therefore, he resigns.

Harriet Berard made a motion to not accept Leo McAllister's resignation. Julia Walter seconds the motion.

President Hotopp suggested the board move into executive session at 1:12 p.m. Janet Sand made a motion, and it was seconded by Linda Carpenter.

At 1:40 p.m., Julia Walter made a motion to move out of executive session and it was seconded by Linda Carpenter.

Harriet Berard made a motion to withdraw her motion, seconded by Julia Walter.

President Hotopp states the board accepts Leo McAllister's resignation with regret. Mr. McAllister stays to attend the meeting as a public citizen.

**Minutes:**

Janet Sand moved to accept the corrected minutes. This was seconded by Fred Barnes and unanimously approved.

**Communications:**

The Community Library and Board of Trustees received a letter from the Schoharie Board of Elections. The letter was a thank you for the space used in the library during the 2022 election season and plan to return in 2023. The staff and trustees who assisted with opening and closing of the building were thanked as well.

**Director's Report:**

1. Kim Zimmer emphasized an email sent to the Board of Trustees and Friends of the Library about Library Advocacy Day 2023 on February 28, 2023. She explained the importance of large numbers attending the event in the New York State Capitol building, as well as when visiting our local representatives, State Assemblyman Tague and State Senator Oberacker.
2. The budget will be presented to the Board later in the meeting. The prior bond was fulfilled in 2022 and do not intend to ask for another this year.
3. Friends of the Library: The Friends are currently holding a "Love Your Library" book bundle sale in the entrance foyer. Next month on March 11<sup>th</sup> is the next quarterly meeting for the Friends. All are welcome to attend.

4. Battle of the Books:  
Courtney is the lead staffer for the Battle of the Books. If interested in volunteering, please contact her.  
The dates for the battles are:  
April 1 at Radez Elementary  
April 6 at Golden Middle School  
April 22 at Cobleskill-Richmondville High School  
There are three teams competing at the high school level: two from Cobleskill-Richmondville and one from Schoharie  
Board representation is needed at the High School battle as the Director is not available to attend.
5. Turkey Earthquake: The Middleburgh Library Director is organizing a donation drive for the victims of the earthquake. A flyer will be posted in The Community Library.
6. Staff news: Jackie notified the director she will be leaving The Community Library for a full-time, salaried position at the Ravena Library.
7. The Director is in the process of compiling the annual report to submit to the Board. However, she wanted to share the numbers compiled so far.  
All percentages are from calendar year 2021 to 2022.  
71% increase of library attendance  
115% increase of visits to website  
125% increase of reference questions  
110% increase of use of public computers  
19% increase of wi-fi  
18% increase of collection use  
23% increase of use of physical building  
60% increase of use of children's collection  
173% increase of helping patrons at public computers
8. Net Lender Status: The Community Library is officially designated a Net Lender with MVLS. This status is due to sharing more of the library collection than borrowed from other libraries in the system. As a result, this status results in a decrease in monetary dues to MVLS.  
Several Trustees praised Director Zimmer and her staff for the increases in statistics.
9. Trustee Education: The Director discussed trustee education and the low numbers of trustees meeting the two-hour requirement. A general discussion followed about education courses and sending course information to the development committee for documentation.

#### **Treasurer's Report:**

Linda Carpenter outlined the expenses and income for January 2023. The trustees reviewed the current bills. Ms. Carpenter made a motion, seconded by Ms. Sand, Motion carried to pay the bills.

#### **Committee Reports:**

##### Finance:

Ms. Carpenter discussed the apportionment for 2023 and answered trustee questions. Ms. Carpenter made a motion to accept reapportioned 2023 budget, seconded by Ms. Sand. Motion carried.

Ms. Carpenter presented the 2024 budget to the trustees. The budget is balanced with an increase of \$35,000 or 10.7%. Discussion followed about the budget and presenting the budget to the community.

Ms. Carpenter read the Budget Resolution to the Board as follows:

*Whereas, the adoption of this 2024 budget for The Community Library in Cobleskill, NY, may require a tax levy increase that exceeds the tax cap imposed by state law as outlined in General Municipal Law Section 3-c adopted in 2011; and*

*Whereas, General Municipal Law Section 3-c expressly permits the library board to override the tax levy limit by a resolution approved by a vote of sixty percent of qualified board members; now therefore be it*

*Resolved, that the Board of Trustees of The Community Library voted and approved to exceed the tax levy limit for 2024 if necessary, by at least the sixty percent of the board of trustees as required by state law on February 9, 2023.*

Ms. Carpenter made a motion to approve the 2024 budget and Julia Walter seconded the motion. The trustees voted unanimously to approve the budget resolution.

**Personnel Finance update:**

The Adult Services Librarian is now a salaried position and meets Department of Labor regulations.

Two staff bereavement days were added in 2023. Discussion followed about how “sick days” are accounted for with accountant to avoid additional fees. A discussion of sick leave followed. Maximum sick leave for full-time employees is 40 hours, and 20 hours for part-time. Sick leave is confined to a calendar year and cannot be “paid out” or bought back upon separation from the system.

The contract for the Board of Trustees Treasurer, Lynn Lawyer, for 2023 at an annual rate for \$2,820.00 was presented to the board. Discussion followed on duties of treasurer. Linda Carpenter made a motion for President Hotopp to sign the contract renewal, seconded by Jim Collins. The motion was unanimously approved. The president signed the contract.

**Building & Grounds:**

Fred Barnes provided an update on the negotiations on the front stairs. An amount was offered, and the general consensus of the board is the amount is not sufficient. Discussion followed about process and way ahead. Mr. Barnes will relay concerns to legal counsel and report back to board.

Annex:

**Upcoming Contracts:**

April: electric, plumbing and inside construction.

May: Windows and outside stonework.

July-August: Sprinkler

**General updates:**

Discussion on elevator continues with revisions to be viewed.

Handrails for stairs to be fixed on February 10, 2023

Roof shingle repair postponed to Spring when bucket lifter rentals are available.

**Personnel:**

Ms. Walter announced the Adult Services Librarian is now a salaried position with increased hours and meets Department of Labor regulations.

Courtney has applied for a master's in library science at SUNY Albany. Her hours have also increased to 32 hours a week for a 42-week period and 35 hours a week for ten weeks in the summer to coincide with summer reading programs.

Policy:

Janet Sand presented two policies:

1. Trustee Education Policy

Discussion about what regulatory body within the library system can approve activities for educational requirements. Director explained MVLS can determine activities or coursework for education, not individual libraries within the system. Janet Sand moved to adopt the policy and Fried Barnes seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2. Travel Reimbursement Policy

Janet Sand presented change to title of policy to include conferences, resulting in a new policy title of "Conference and Travel Reimbursement" as well as the removal of a 35 mile range determination for reimbursement.

Janice Clark made the motion to adopt the changes to the policy. Julia Walter seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Board Development:

Harriet Berard presented an amendment to the ByLaws entitled "Trustee Requirements" to reflect the 2023 education requirement and compliment the trustee education policy.

Mrs. Berard noted the prior discussion of the sexual harassment training requirement.

Mrs. Berard notified the Board of upcoming trustee positions for the 2023 ballot. There are two five-year terms open; the remainder of a one-year term open and a vacant three-year term.

Long Range Plan of Service:

Janice Clark presented The Community Library Plan of Service, 2021-2026 to the Board.

A discussion followed highlighting the changes to the plan with Ms. Clark highlighting 2023 changes, with an emphasis library sustainability "Triple Bottom Line" addition.

Janet Sand made the motion for The Community Library Plan of Service dated January 2023 be adopted. Fred Barnes seconded the motion and the board voted unanimously to adopt the plan.

**Unfinished Business:**

Refer to Buildings and Grounds discussion.

**New Business**

Tax Levy Advocacy: A discussion of advocating for successful passage of the 2024 budget on the ballot followed. The Director applied to MVLS for a Budget Vote Advocacy Grant for 2023. In past years, the full amount of the grant was received. This year, the amount was reduced this year due to the increased amount of applicants. Tax Levy dollars cannot be used for advocacy, so the difference in amounts would need to be funded another way. Julia Walter suggested using donations not expended for the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration in 2022. Other suggestions and activities were discussed such as using statistics about the library, and working with other county libraries to publish articles in local papers before vote.

**Schoharie County Tourism:**

The four library directors in Schoharie County towns will meet with the Schoharie County Tourism Director to discuss ways to involve libraries with tourism.

**DASNY:**

The Director reported to the Board about her discussion with DASNY, the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York. The authority can help with the design, finance and engineering of the annex project but The Community Library will need to be added to the DSNY charter. This involves further discussion as the addition can only take place through a legislative action by state legislators.

**Adjournment:**

Ms. Carpenter made a motion, seconded by Ms. Clark, and was unanimously approved to adjourn at 3:30 p.m.

**Submitted by Rebecca Leggieri**