

Croton Free Library

Board Meeting Minutes

March 11, 2024

PRESENT: Trustees: Susan Ranis (24), Jane Beller (27), Leslie Ellis (24), Barry Feinberg (28), Mayla Hsu (26), Justin Johnson (28), Margaret Mahoney (26), Laura Stelman Jaeger (26)

Library Director: Jesse Bourdon

ABSENT: Adam Decker (28), Lynn Kauderer (28) *attended via zoom*, Marianne Merola (27)

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:34 pm.

APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 2024 MINUTES

February 2024 minutes were voted on and approved.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- **Collection Statistics and Patron Services**

Collection statistics for the month of February 2024 were presented. The Director highlighted the positive trend of event attendance. Despite hosting fewer children's programs in the month of February (due to the school vacation schedule), our special programming attendance has significantly increased, pushing overall attendance to high levels.

- **Budget Update**

The Library Annual report will be submitted by mid-March. The Library will be seeking a \$24,400 (2.6%) increase to the tax levy, bringing the total levy request for the 2024-25 FY to \$962,222. The vote for the budget and annual report review will be scheduled for the April's board meeting.

- **Fine-Free Policy**

The Croton Free Library has been operating unofficially on a fine-free basis since the pandemic, but we are currently waiving fines by hand. The income that would be lost by removing fines is estimated at under \$2k per year, and the positive impact for our community and library staff was discussed.

Operating Fine-free would mean there will no longer be overdue charges; people will only need to pay for lost items. An item is "lost" if it is overdue more than 30 days. If lost items are returned, money will be refunded.

Half of the libraries in Westchester (including Hendrick Hudson) are fine-free. There have been no noted issues of material availability even when not charging late fines.

Susan asked for a motion for the Croton Free Library to officially adopt a fine-free policy. Leslie seconded this motion, and it was unanimously passed by the board.

- **Summerfest (Sunday, June 2)**

The Board discussed the option to purchase a table at Summerfest this June. We will need to staff the table with volunteers and decide how we can best use this opportunity to liaise with the community. We are considering a children's book giveaway, a raffle, or using the opportunity to chat with the community about their thoughts on the possible building construction project.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Finance Committee continues to meet prior to the monthly Board meeting to review financial documents. Its recommendations and reports are presented to the Board as part of the Treasurer's report.

- **Check Register Approval**

The Monthly Check Register for February was presented. The Check Register was voted on and approved by the full Board following review by the Finance Committee.

- **Budget Performance Report**

We continue to be on budget, 8 months (67%) through the fiscal year. Expenditures are just shy of 70%

Library design services added \$18k in additional expenditures, but net income after fundraising is \$16k. Plans for remaining fundraising income will be determined at a future date.

Adult programming charges are currently under budget; by the end of the fiscal year the funds set aside for this programming will equal out, as they are carefully planned for use throughout the year.

We have now received the second half of our tax money, which will cover the remaining expected budget items through the rest of the fiscal year. The Funds will be held in our Vanguard account to gain interest in the coming months until specific payments need to be made.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Finance Committee**

See Treasurer's Report

- **Croton Reads**

We are looking forward to our Croton Reads event on Saturday, April 6. Julia Glass will be interviewed and will be interacting with our event participants. By The Dam Books will be selling copies of Vigil Harbor at the event for those who would like to purchase their own copy. Free tickets available for pickup as of March 15th, and are first come, first served.

- **Buildings and Grounds**

A survey has been created for the community regarding building usage and upgrades. The survey will be available online and in the library until March 20th. We will be compiling answers from our survey and will study them for our possible building project.

A subcommittee will be looking towards next steps in the possible building construction project, including the creation of a small volunteer committee composed of community members with relevant experience, which will advise the board in this upcoming project.

- **Arts Committee**

Our new art exhibit is by Stefano Luigi Guida. Artwork was installed Saturday, March 2, and will be in place until the end of April. The reception will occur Saturday April 20th from 1-3pm.

- **Fundraising Committee**

The fundraising committee will be meeting early in April to finalize arrangements for the May Book & Bake Sale. We have agreed to have the fill-a-bag sale all day Sunday May 19, for \$20 a bag. We will be having new bags created utilizing Dillon O'Keefe's annual appeal design.

- **Long-Range Planning**

The committee has been continuing to upgrade policies. Our most recent policies for approval will be the Unattended Children Policy and Patron code of conduct. These policies will be voted upon at the next board meeting

OLD BUSINESS

- **Library Trustee Search**

Our search for a replacement library trustee continues. The term of this appointment will be 3 years. The trustee application is currently active on the Library website. We will be voting on our new trustee at our next board meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

- **New Library Trustee Assignments**

At our May annual meeting we will be voting in the new Library trustee assignments.

Treasurer/Finance Officer

Barry would like to step down from the role of Treasurer, and therefore the Library Board is looking for a community member to fill the role of Treasurer/Finance Officer. The role of the Treasurer/Finance Officer is to monitor the internal financial controls of the organization, ensure that all Board members are provided with transparent, understandable financial reports, and to make themselves available to answer questions trustees may have about the library's finances. Said person would oversee the receipt and disbursement of library funds, and report to the Board. The appointed Treasurer/Finance Officer would not be required to be a full Board member. This role is a commitment of approximately 5 hours per month, including attendance at monthly finance committee meetings.

Vice-President

Marianne Merola will be stepping down as Vice-President, and Justin Johnson has volunteered to take over the role of Vice -President.

- **Eliminating the Tax Reserve**

The library has a reserve of budget funds (of \$42,400) since 2015. Barry asked for a motion to eliminate the tax reserve and move the total to the capital project reserve. Leslie seconded this motion, and it was unanimously passed by the Board.

MEETING CONCLUSION

Meeting concluded at 8:54p.

Respectfully submitted by Laura Jaeger
filling in secretarial duties in Lynn Kauderer's absence