

Croton Free Library
Board Meeting Minutes
September 11, 2023

PRESENT:

Trustees: Susan Ranis (24), Leslie Ellis (24), Lynn Kauderer (28), Barry Feinberg (28), Mayla Hsu (26), Margaret Mahoney (26), Marianne Merola (27), Justin Johnson (28), Adam Decker (28), Laura Stelman Jaeger (26)

Library Director: Jesse Bourdon

ABSENT:

Jane Beller (27)

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 pm.

APPROVAL OF JUNE 2023 MINUTES

June 2023 minutes were voted on and approved.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Patron Services

Statistics for the summer of 2023 were presented. Increases were reported in all categories except special event attendance, largely due to an unavoidable cancellation, and new library cards, which were still within normal range.

- New Fundraising Account

We have completed the first transfer of funds from Wells Fargo to Chase and the creation of a new account designated exclusively for Fundraising. \$115,000 is now available.

- State Assembly Grant Received

In response to our application, we have received a \$20,000 grant from NY State earmarked for use in enhancing our programs in the Maker's space. We received this grant with the assistance of Rep. Dana Levenberg's office. Ms. Levenberg will be visiting the Library on September 13 to officially announce the award.

This grant is similar to another grant we received last year earmarked for improving building security which was used to upgrade our security cameras. Unspent funds from this grant are being used to set up First Aid training courses for staff.

- Union Negotiations

Talks have been ongoing between the Director and CSEA representatives and attorneys for both sides to establish a new contract for Library employees. Once a draft is completed, it will be voted on by the union members.

- Resignation

Kaitlyn Effaldana will be leaving the library soon. This opens up a position for a parttime reference librarian.

- Fine Free System

We are considering moving to operating as fine free Library. Currently we are forgiving fines, but this is not the same as being fine free. Trustees are asked to consider where they stand on this issue and an official vote will be taken in the near future. Lost item charges will continue.

- Banned Book Week

Banned Book Week is recognized by many libraries throughout the country. This year we are pleased to kick off the week on Saturday, September 30 from 10:00 to 12:00. The Croton Harmon school district Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent as well as representatives from the Board of Education have volunteered to participate in reading from children's books that have been banned or challenged in the past decade. Volunteers are welcome.

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 Registers for July and August were presented. Transactions from both accounts were approved by the full Board following review by the Finance Committee.

- Budget Performance Reports

The Final Budget Performance Report for the Fiscal Year July 2022 through June 2023 was reviewed. A few items which were over budget can be explained by the differing billing cycles of some of our vendors as well as some lack of precision in the distinction between Adult Events and Special Events. We are pleased to see how closely the Director was able to manage the budgeting process so that at the end of the year our total expenses, while slightly higher than projected, were matched by slightly higher income than projected leaving us in the black at the

end of the year. Additionally, funds still remaining from Covid and PPP government grants left the library with an end of the year balance of approximately \$76,000.

The Monthly Budget Report for July and August was reviewed. This early in the fiscal year it is difficult to identify any budgeting problems, and items such as periodicals and the teen collection are often spent early in the year. Otherwise, things appear to be on track.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Finance Committee:

See Treasurer's Report

- Croton Reads

There was no report this month.

- Buildings and Grounds

Paul Mays, of Butler Rowland Mays, met with members of the Committee over the summer and presented a Library Concept Design which since has been shared with all members of the Board. He answered all questions, but since the meeting, many more questions have arisen. All members of the Board are encouraged to review the design and submit their questions to Jesse. These questions will be shared via the Google Workspace which will be explained during two upcoming training sessions. Another Buildings and Grounds meeting will be scheduled shortly for all Board members to discuss their concerns.

- Arts Committee

Our current display is a collection of 35 sketchbooks maintained by a variety of artists during the 2020-2021 year of the COVID pandemic. This collection has been curated by Carla Ray Johnson and will be up for the next two months.

- Fundraising Committee

The Annual Appeal letter is almost ready to go and was shared with the Board. We have decided to distribute the letter this year via direct mail after problems with last year's delivery to "postal patron" through the USPS. The appeal letter will go out after election day and as a kick-off to the fundraiser, people will be encouraged to make their donation when visiting the Book & Bake sale November 18 and 19. The initial mailing will be followed up by a postcard mailing in January to close the appeal (which officially ends January 31). One change to this year's letter is the addition of a QR code box which will direct users to the Library's Donation page. In addition, a new and improved Donation Button has also been added to the website.

The popular Free Museum Passes program is paid for with funds from the Fundraising Committee's account. The Director presented a list of the passes that are currently provided and asked the Board to weigh in on which passes should be continued, added, or dropped. It was

decided that, for now, we will keep/renew all existing passes and will add DIA Beacon and Stone Barns.

- Long-Range Planning

A new Employee Handbook has been developed by the LRP Committee and was presented to the entire Board for approval. The Chair notes that the Sexual Harassment Policy section of the Handbook will be taken directly from the official New York State policy.

A motion was made and unanimously approved to accept the Croton Free Library Employee Handbook as presented by the Committee.

A second motion was made and unanimously approved to adopt the NY State Sexual Harassment Policy as the Library's Sexual Harassment Policy.

Many thanks to all those who worked hard to create this document which will be available to all on the Library's website.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

It was proposed that we should begin consider new ways for the Library to support the teaching of Civics to people of all ages in the community.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 to continue to an executive session to discuss the Director's evaluation.

The executive session was adjourned at 9:27

Respectfully submitted by Lynn Kauderer
Secretary