

**Southeast Steuben County Library  
Board of Trustees – Regular Meeting  
Via Zoom Interactive Platform  
November 19, 2020**

**Trustees Attending:**

President: Barbara A. McLean  
Vice President: Christine Sharkey  
Treasurer: Nancy Kirby Kurjakovic  
Secretary: Julie E. Fromer  
Gail Bardhan  
Jamie Curtis  
Barry W. Nicholson  
Kate Paterson  
Louise Richardson  
Jeffrey Scott  
Louise A. Sullivan-Blum

**Absent:**

Hatesh R. Radia

**Guests:**

Pauline Emery, Library Director  
Brad Turner, Assistant Library Director  
Lori Reenan, Library Business Manager/Notary Public

**Call to Order:**

President Barbara A. McLean called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m. She thanked Vice President Christine Sharkey "and everyone who helped with the Annual Meeting."

Barbara McLean welcomed newly appointed trustee Jamie Curtis. Trustees introduced themselves all around.

**Public Comment:**

There was no public comment.

**Oath of Office:**

Trustee Jamie Curtis recited the Oath of Office and was sworn in to an At Large term ending December 31, 2022 by Library Business Manager Lori Reenan.

**Consent Agenda:**

**Minutes of the October 15, 2020 Regular Meeting  
Minutes of the Annual Meeting  
October Financial Report**

Barbara McLean called for a motion on the Consent Agenda. On the motion by Treasurer Nancy Kirby, seconded by Kate Paterson, trustees voted unanimously to approve all items therein.

### **Director's Report:**

Library Director Pauline Emery said the library was averaging about 100 on-site visitors daily. Children's Librarian Sue McConnell and the Children's Department have had great success with virtual programs and storytimes in October, drawing hundreds of attendees. The library collaborated with Corning Community College for a presentation on *Rising Out of Hatred* by Eli Saslow. More diversity programming is in the works. Patrons visiting the library "have been really respectful and easygoing, for the most part," even with COVID-19 safety measures in place. The library, open for walk-ins and curbside service, has been promoting book bundles and curbside appointments in case our area becomes subject to further pandemic-related restrictions. Adult Services Director Michelle Wells gave a talk at the New York Library Association's 2020 Virtual Conference earlier this month. She did an "excellent program" on how to form a writers group. Pauline Emery was a panelist at another NYLA conference session entitled, "The Comeback Kids." The panel was composed of directors whose libraries lost a tax levy vote at first, but succeeded later on.

On October 9, library staff members attended a virtual workshop led by the library's EAP provider, Clinical Associates of the Southern Tier, PLLC, on "Coping with Change and Stress." Noting that, Pauline Emery commended library staff members for "doing a great job," while adapting to change.

Barbara McLean said she had "full faith that as things change the staff will pivot quickly."

### **2021 Budget:**

Treasurer Nancy Kirby introduced a working draft of the 2021 Library Budget. "We have a year when we expect our revenue to go down, so we have reduced our budget," she noted. With the tax levy flat in 2021 and with anticipated declines in other revenue sources including library fines and fees, income for 2021 was anticipated to fall by \$63,000, compared to 2020. The draft 2021 budget was \$1.274 million, down from \$1.337 million this year. Even with proposed spending cuts, including reductions in allocations to administration, programming and materials acquisition, the draft budget fell short of anticipated 2021 expenses by \$47,911 dollars.

The Finance Committee would make up some of the gap with operating reserve, still leaving a \$11,026 shortfall.

Trustees discussed various ways to make up the remaining gap, including drawing from a building account surplus or from the library endowment.

Barry W. Nicholson said, "We should look at the whole picture before we do anything."

Discussion ensued, workshop style. Nancy Kirby noted that new projections for endowment earnings needed to be worked out. She concluded, "It is worth talking some more time, looking at it in the larger universe and waiting to pass [the 2021 budget] in December. She said the Finance Committee would meet in early December.

Without dissent, Barbara McLean tabled consideration of the 2021 Budget until the next Library Board of Trustees meeting.

### **Tax Levy Vote:**

Barbara McLean introduced a resolution to ask voters of the Corning-Painted Post School District to approve a library levy of \$867,997, an allowable increase under New York's 2% Tax Cap. The amount would be voted on in May 2021 and if approved by voters, would apply to the library's 2022 budget. The current levy stands at \$837,719.

On the President's call for discussion, there was none.

On a motion by Louise A. Sullivan-Blum, seconded by Kate Paterson, trustees approved the following resolution unanimously:

WHEREAS, the Board wishes to raise funds pursuant to New York State Education Law Section 259(1); and

WHEREAS, the Board would like the following resolution to be placed upon the ballot at a special election of the Corning-Painted Post Area School District:

"Shall the sum of Eight Hundred and Sixty Seven Thousand and Nine Hundred and Ninety Seven Dollars (\$867,997) be raised by annual levy of a tax upon the taxable property within the Corning-Painted Post Area School District for the purpose of funding the Southeast Steuben County Library."

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board requests that the Corning-Painted Post Area School District place the following resolution before the voters of the District at a special election on May 18, 2021:

"Shall the sum of Eight Hundred and Sixty Seven Thousand and Nine Hundred and Ninety Seven Dollars (\$867,997) be raised by annual levy of a tax upon the taxable property within the Corning-Painted Post Area School District for the purpose of funding the Southeast Steuben County Library."

RESOLVED, FURTHER, that the Board authorizes and directs the Director of the Southeast Steuben County Library to complete the aforementioned resolution by providing a special election date at the time of submission to the District administration.

### **Facilities Update:**

Facilities Committee Chair Kate Paterson said committee members were beginning to see the "light at the end of the tunnel" as HVAC replacement and designated Health & Safety Improvements near completion. Most of the walkthroughs have been done and both building elevators are working, including emergency telephones.

A proposed 22k service contract with Postler & Jaeckle Corp. was still under review and subject to amendment.

Barry Nicholson noted the library put out an RFP for the HVAC maintenance and received only one viable proposal, from the same firm that installed the library's new state-of-the-art Variable Flow Heat Pump system. "So I don't know if we have any other choice but to move forward with this," he said.

The Board of Trustees will decide on the contract at its next meeting, after the Facilities Committee does further research.

**Committee Updates:**

- **Fund Development** –Following up on an idea from the most recent Committee meeting, Chair Louise Richardson composed a 4" by 9" insert for this year's Annual Appeal letters, with photos showing the library in action and text describing the library's programs and services during the pandemic. The inserts were printed locally and included in the appeal mailing. Louise Richardson urged all trustees to participate in the fund drive by "giving the support that you can." Barbara McLean agreed and encouraged everyone to donate.
- **Scholarship:** Chair Julie Fromer said one of this year's scholarship recipients discovered that the University he attends decreased his financial aid award by the library scholarship amount. Pauline Emery and others intervened and the student's college aid was restored.
- **Friends of the Library** – Friends of the Southeast Steuben County Library Liaison Julie Fromer said the friends were still hashing out possible ways to hold a sale safely under pandemic conditions.

**Other Business:**

There was no other business.

**Adjournment:**

Barbara McLean adjourned the regular meeting at 5:51 p.m. Trustees reassembled immediately thereafter for the trustees' annual Sexual Harassment Prevention Workshop. Library staff and volunteers, including library trustees, are required to participate in training annually.

Participating trustees were Barbara A. McLean, Christine Sharkey, Nancy Kirby Kurjakovic, Julie E. Fromer, Gail Bardhan, Jamie Curtis, Barry W. Nicholson, Kate Paterson, Louise Richardson, Jeffrey Scott and Louise A. Sullivan-Blum.

The next Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees will be held on December 17, 2020 at 4:30 pm via Zoom interactive platform.