

**Southeast Steuben County Library
Board of Trustees – Regular Meeting
Via Zoom Interactive Platform
February 18, 2021**

Trustees Attending:

President: Barbara A. McLean
Vice President: Christine Sharkey
Treasurer: Jeffrey Scott
Secretary: Julie E. Fromer
Gail Bardhan
Jamie Curtis
Barry W. Nicholson
Kate Paterson
Louise Richardson
Svetlana Short

Absent:

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. and welcomed newly appointed Trustee Svetlana Short. Trustee Short is a City of Corning Resident and an employee of Corning, Incorporated.

Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

Oath of Office:

Library Business Manager and Notary Public Lori Reenan administered the Oath of Office to trustees Svetlana Short, Kate Paterson and Barry W. Nicholson.

The following Library Trustees were duly sworn in:

Barry W. Nicholson
Kate Paterson
Svetlana Short

Consent Agenda:

**Minutes of the January 21, 2021 Regular Meeting
January 2021 Financial Report**

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

Director's Report:

Library Director Pauline Emery reported on January 2021 library use statistics. With COVID restrictions still in effect, including a four day quarantine period for book returns, the library circulated 9,748 physical items and 4,298 digital items via the Overdrive and RB Digital platforms. As expected, library visits in January 2021 were down compared to the same period last year. Adult and Children's programming continued remotely, drawing 1,197 attendees in January 2021. Wi-Fi use was up compared to January 2020, with 1,519 users, including many who connected from outside the library building perimeter. Despite sharp drops in use compared to January 2020, before the Pandemic lock-down, "Our totals were still good compared to other libraries."

With many changes in New York's statistical reporting requirements for libraries, revisions to January statistics will be sent when available.

Highlights in January included Coffee, Tea and English (CTE) programming, which had 39 participants in 4 sessions concentrating on vocabulary. There were 37 participants in four English conversation sessions, and 10 participants in the CTE Book Club.

Planning for Black History Month, the library collaborated with various civic organizations including the Community Foundation and the Corning Museum of Glass to celebrate Black artists, with a virtual program on February 9 featuring glass artist Chris Day. Thanks to a donation in memory of W. Keith Vaughn, the library will offer an online guided tour of the Buffalo Soldiers Museum on March 1. The event has been organized by Adult Services Director Michelle Wells. Children's programming for February will focus on "The ABCs of Black History Month." A film screening of "Alice's Ordinary People," and a talk with filmmaker Craig Dudnik was also planned for February.

STLS Direct Access Plan and Agreement

(See Draft STLS 2022 – 2026 Free Direct Access Plan and STLS Member Use of Funds Certification Form.)

Pauline Emery said that trustees will be asked to vote on the Southern Tier Library System's proposed 2022 -2026 Free Direct Access Plan. She explained, "Every four years or so STLS renews its plan of service with its 48 libraries and reading rooms. The plan of service details our commitments to STLS and STLS's commitment to us. We agree to provide services to all residents of the STLS region. The library system, in turn, provides interlibrary loans, technical support and other services within the system."

Trustees will be asked to certify that funds received by the library from Steuben County will be directed to STLS as part of the library's cost-share to finance STLS services.

"If we were not in a larger system we would be really hard pressed to offer these services," the Director said.

Annual Report for Public and Association Libraries

Pauline Emery introduced another action item. She explained, every year the library is required to submit a large number of facts and figures to New York State for collection in a national database of library statistics. These include usage statistics, library financial disclosures and much more. The Library Board of Trustees must approve the report before submission, and the Treasurer must sign off on specified financial lines in the report. The approved report was due for submission March 5. Since this was the last scheduled meeting of the board prior to the due date, trustees were asked to approve the report in anticipation of Treasurer Jeffrey Scott's review and approval of the financials.

Approval Votes:

President Barbara McLean called for a motion to approve the Free Direct Access Plan and Agreement.

On a motion by Barry W. Nicholson, seconded by Louise Richardson, trustees voted unanimously to approve the STLS 2022 – 2026 Free Direct Access Plan and Agreement.

Barbara McLean called for a motion to approve the library's 2020 state report for submission, following the Treasurer's review.

On a motion by Vice President Christine Sharkey, seconded by Kate Paterson, trustees voted unanimously to approve the Southeast Steuben County Library Annual Report for Public and Association Libraries – 2020.

Financial Report:

(See January 2021 Financial Report)

Treasurer Jeffrey Scott said the Finance Committee met on February 10. "We reviewed the cost share, the budget ... everything looks pretty good." The Committee accepted the January Financial Report and also reviewed the EDC building management budget report. Also, the library's independent audit for 2020 was set in motion, with the audit expected to begin in April. The library's application for a COVID-19 Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) was denied.

Facilities Update:

Facilities Committee Chair Kate Paterson reported that Health & Safety Improvements covered by a NYS Construction Aid for Libraries grant [Project #386-20-8664] was nearing completion, with a new fire panel still lacking one part. The larger grant project, replacement of the library's HVAC system [Project #386-19-7989], was also nearing conclusion. The old boiler system has been replaced with an environmentally friendly Variable Flow Heat Pump system. The library hasn't signed off on the installation yet because the unit was "making a very loud squeaking sound." Repair attempts were underway. Once final reports on the two NYS grants are completed, NYS will release the final 10 percent of promised funds. Taitem Engineering has issued its commissioning report. The Facilities Committee will meet in March to look that report over. Building tenants have requested that the library install mailboxes in the common lobby.

Noting we were close to the end of these large grant projects, Barbara McLean expressed thanks to Kate Paterson and the Facilities Committee for their work.

Library Advocacy Day:

President Barbara McLean noted that Library Advocacy Day in New York [February 28] was approaching. "It is the time of year to send letters of advocacy to state representatives and to remind them of the importance of libraries," she said.

Trustee Louise Richardson serves also as a trustee on the STLS board. She noted that cuts to library aid were included in the Governor's proposed budget. Typically, the legislature restores those cuts during budget negotiations, she observed. The New York Library Association has been advocating for public-facing library workers to be eligible for COVID-19 vaccination.

Committee Updates:

- **Fund Development** – Chair Louise Richardson said the library's Annual Campaign had taken in more than \$70,000 with more than a month yet to go in the drive. There were 32 new donors so far, with donations averaging more than \$300. Corning Foundation matching donations were up as well. The drive ends March 31. A reminder letter will go out next week. Christine Sharkey, president of Corning Enterprises, noted that Corning Incorporated has made it easier for its employees to apply for matching grants. "People can donate to charities through Corning directly and the match will be processed automatically."
- **Nominating** – Barbara McLean said the Committee met recently "looking to expand the board and to increase diversity." Future meetings are planned.
- **Scholarship** –Secretary and Committee Chair Julie Fromer said the application form for the Nancy Douth and Friends of the Southeast Steuben County Library Honorary Scholarships was now live online. The deadline for applications is May 7.
- **Friends of the Library** – Friends of the Southeast Steuben County Library Liaison Julie Fromer said the Friends met last week and the organization now has four new board members. Judy Garrett is the new secretary on the Friends board. No date has been set for the return of the Book Sales. In other Friends of the Library news, Books Sandwiched In organizer Louise Richardson noted there were between 30 – 40 virtual attendees at each of the book talks. "We had a bunch of really good presenters." Recordings of the talks held in January and February will be made available on the library's YouTube channel.

Executive Session:

Barbara McLean called for a motion to go into executive session to discuss the Library Director's annual evaluation. On a motion by Kate Paterson, seconded by Christine Sharkey and approved unanimously, trustees adjourned into Executive Session at 5:30 p.m.

Resumption of Regular Session:

Trustees came out of Executive Session at 6 p.m. and resumed the public meeting.

On a motion by Jeffrey Scott, seconded by Barry Nicholson, trustees voted unanimously to approve an annual increase for the Library Director as recommended by the Finance Committee.

Other Business:

There was no other business.

Adjournment:

Barbara McLean adjourned the regular meeting at 6:04 p.m.

The next Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees will be held on March 18, 2021 at 4:30 p.m. via Zoom interactive platform.