

**Southeast Steuben County Library
Board of Trustees – Regular Meeting
Via Zoom Interactive Platform
May 20, 2021**

Trustees Attending:

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

Absent:

Gail Bardhan

Guests:

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

Call to Order:

President Barbara A. McLean called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m.

Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

Consent Agenda:

**Minutes of the April 15, 2021 Regular Meeting
April 2021 Financial Report**

Barbara McLean called for a motion on the Consent Agenda. On a motion by Kate Paterson, seconded by Secretary Julie E. Fromer, trustees voted unanimously to approve all items therein.

Director's Report:

(See April 2021 Library Director's Report)

Library Director Pauline Emery reported increased library use, including 4,214 visitors in April and 9,861 items circulated. It was a big jump in use compared to April 2020 during New York Pause, when only 24 items circulated. "Program attendance has been great," with 2,890 participants overall.

"All departments, especially Children's, haven't missed a beat from the beginning of the pandemic," Pauline Emery said. Wi-Fi use has been about the same for the last couple of months, and digital circulation was significantly higher, with 3517 digital checkouts recorded.

In April, Outreach Coordinator Erica Unterman trained four Guthrie Occupational Therapy staff members in 3D printing and how to implement the process in their organization. The library has acquired a *3-in-1 Snapmaker*, an advanced 3D printer. With that addition, 3D printing requests have increased.

The Friends of the Library Book Sale is approaching. The sale will be held in the Laura Beer Community Room and will be open during library hours from June 5 through June 26. The Friends organization will require masking and social distancing.

With state COVID safety rules loosening, libraries plan to move forward together on mask wearing, social distancing and related policies. A committee of library system directors will provide guidance. New York Library Association and other organizations will provide legal advice. Due to New York State privacy laws, libraries will not ask people if they have been vaccinated. At this time, Southeast Steuben County Library continues to require masking and social distancing.

Fine Free:

Library trustees continued their deliberations on a proposal made last month to end library fines for adults. Children's books have been fine exempt since October 2018. Pauline Emery, responding to a question posed by Jamie Curtis last month, said Libraries in New York that have gone fine-free have been seeing more returns, not less. Trustees discussed possible ways to fund the budget gap if the library goes fine-free for all patrons. One possibility would be reallocation of a portion of the funds donated each year by the Friends of the Library. The Friends Board of Directors will be consulted. When discussion ended, Barbara McLean said, "It sounds like we want to wait until we hear back from the Friends next month." Consideration of the proposal was tabled. Trustees anticipate taking action on the proposal next month.

Financial:

(See April 2021 Budget Report)

Treasurer Jeffrey Scott said the Finance Committee met on May 13. With respect to library operations and budget goals, "Everything is trending in the right direction," he said.

The library will ask the Small Business Administration to reconsider its rejection of the library's EIDL request. The Finance Committee recommends that the library take its annual endowment earnings drawdown in May, rather than later in the year, "because it will allow us to take advantage of capital gains," Jeffrey Scott said. The Finance Committee reviewed a Facilities Committee proposal to notify Southern Tier Library System that Southeast Steuben County Library intends to apply for NYS Construction Aid this year. "We are looking at asking for \$150,000 for building improvements."

Library Business Manager Lori Reenan noted that the EDC building management budget will be incorporated into the library's operating budget starting next month.

Endowment Drawdown Resolution

On a Finance Committee motion pursuant to its endowment earnings drawdown recommendation, trustees voted unanimously in favor of adopting the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Southeast Steuben County Library will draw from its endowment \$285,619 in May 2021. These funds are a 2021 budgeted draw and will be used to cover operational expenses. It is recommended that \$160,000 of the drawdown be allocated to pay towards the Chemung Canal HVAC Loan before the August lock-in deadline. The funds will be held at the Corning Credit Union in the library's Operational Reserve account until a future date when the Finance committee will recommend reallocation of these funds.

NYS Construction Aid:

Pauline Emery said that in consultation with the Facilities Committee and the Finance Committee, and after reviewing several project proposals, the community would be best served by pursuing a project in line with the recently completed HVAC project. The library will replace exterior window framing throughout the building, replace window glazing on the second floor and install window shades on the first floor. In 2014, windows on the first floor were replaced with energy efficient, argon filled double paned glass thanks to a NYS grant. The existing aluminum window frames were not replaced at the time and are original to the building. Also, windows on the second floor were not replaced in 2014. The deficiencies and proposed improvements stem from a 2017 Building Conditions Survey report by Hunt Engineering.

On a motion by Barry W. Nicholson, seconded by Facilities Committee Chair Kate Paterson, trustees resolved to submit a *Notice of Intent to Apply* for the grant to Southern Tier Library System, the initial step in the application process.

Committee Updates:

- **Facilities** – Chair Kate Paterson said the Committee met on May 6 to work on the NYS Construction Aid proposal and to review the electrical panel situation. Replacement of the old main circuit breaker was attempted on April 29. When installed, the replacement panel failed. The old panel was reinstalled, and the library was now looking to schedule a second replacement attempt with a working panel.
- **Scholarship** – Chair Julie Fromer said committee met recently to evaluate the 11 completed applications received. Two \$1,500 scholarships for college bound high school seniors will be awarded this year. "We felt we've been successful in highlighting financial need [as a scholarship criterion]." Scholarship winners will be invited to a meeting of the Friends of the Library.
- **Friends of the Library** – Friends of the Library Liaison Julie Fromer said the Friends organization moved forward on its plan for a memorial for singer/songwriter Mary Lu Walker, a long time library volunteer. The Friends and the library Children's Department were working with a graphic designer on the memorial.

Other Business:

The library's Annual Meeting of the Membership will be held this fall. A specific date for the meeting was not determined. Trustees expect the meeting to be held virtually, via Zoom interactive platform, as in 2020.

Adjournment:

Barbara McLean adjourned the regular meeting at 5:34 p.m.

The next Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees will be held via Zoom on June 17, 2021 at 4:30 p.m.