

**Southeast Steuben County Library
Annual Meeting of the Membership
Via Zoom Interactive Platform
June 16, 2022**

Library Trustees Attending:

President: Barbara A. McLean
Vice President: Julie E. Fromer
Treasurer: Jeffrey Scott
Gail Bardhan
Nogaye Ka-Tandia
Kathryn C. Mack
Barry W. Nicholson
Kate Paterson
Louise Richardson
Svetlana Short
Geoffrey Steenberge

Absent:

Secretary: Jamie Curtis

Guests:

Pauline Emery, Library Director
Brad Turner, Assistant Library Director
Lori Reenan, Library Business Manager
Kathy Stickler - Mengel, Metzger, Barr & Co. LLP
Bev Stevens, President, Friends of the Library, SSC
Hannah Waschezyn, Library Circulation Supervisor
Jean Krebs
Mary Passage
Elizabeth Hysten
Anna Rice

Call to Order:

President Barbara A. McLean called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Welcome and Introduction of Association Members, Staff, Board Members and Director:

Barbara McLean welcomed everyone and introduced library trustees in attendance. On behalf of the library she gave "special thanks" to Christine Sharkey for her work as trustee and vice president. Christine Sharkey stepped down at the end of 2021. Library Director Pauline Emery, Assistant Director Brad Turner and Business Manager Lori Reenan were recognized for their work. Barbara McLean commended library staff members for excellent performance of duties during stressful times.

Board Officers/Vote:

Barbara McLean said it was time for the voting members (library trustees) to vote on the slate of board officers for 2022 recommended by the Nominating Committee:

President: Barbara A. McLean
 Vice President: Julie E. Fromer
 Jeffrey Scott: Treasurer
 Secretary: Jamie Curtis

Trustees present voted unanimously to approve the slate.

Library Director's Report:

(See Annual Meeting presentation slides and *2021 Report to the Community*)

Library Director Pauline Emery opened her remarks by referring to the library's Mission and Vision statements, noting that in keeping with these the library was evolving to meet the needs of an ever changing world.

In 2021, the second year of the pandemic, staff members found ways to serve the needs of a community still struggling with an altered reality. "We came to understand the power of virtual programming as an element of our services." As pandemic restriction eased and patrons were able to visit the library to check out materials, digital borrowing declined a bit but remained popular. Circulation of books, CDs, DVDs and other physical materials rose 55 percent over 2020 pandemic lows. Visits to the library increased nearly 50 percent compared to 2020.

Our newly enhanced 24/7 free Wi-Fi hotspot attracted 25,884 users. Visits to our website more than doubled in 2021. Subscription database resources including *JobNow*, *Mango Languages*, *HeritageQuest*, *Peterson's Test Prep*, *LinkedIn Learning* and many others were accessed by more and more users in 2021. Following the success of the library's fine-free policy for children and youth, the Library Board voted to eliminate library fines for all borrowers in 2021. Also, circulation policies were streamlined and simplified.

Children's programs attracted 22,420 participants and included 95 Summer Reading Program events with 5,057 attendees. The library collaborated with many regional organizations in *Imagine!*, an arts festival held Labor Day weekend in Nasser Civic Center Plaza, organized by Meghan O'Toole and the ARTS Council of the Southern Finger Lakes. The project, a celebration of culture and community, highlighted the plaza's potential as an arts park. In 2021, planning got underway for the renovation of the Children's Room, which will be named for Mary Lu Walker. The project has been funded in part by a generous gift from her family.

Objectives for 2022 include construction of the Mary Lu Walker Children's Room and completion of a new Long Range Strategic Plan. In 2022, the library launched its *Access-To-Go* laptop and Wi-Fi hotspot lending service, fully funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the federal CARES Act. Thanks in part to a grant from Southern Tier Library System and the Appalachian Regional Commission, the library will "take the public computers wireless in 2022."

Pauline Emery concluded by thanking the Library Board of Trustees, staff, volunteers, Friends of the Library and the community for their library support.

Audit Report:

(See 2021 Audited Financial Statements and Independent Auditor's Report)

Independent Auditor Kathy Stickler, audit partner at Mengel, Metzger, Barr & Co. LLP said her audit of library finances yielded a "clean, unmodified opinion."

She added, "This is the highest level of assurance on the financial statements that we can provide." In 2021, library assets - including property, equipment and investments - increased, while liabilities were reduced. At the end of 2021, the library's net assets totaled \$9,893,601.

Financial Report and Endowment Report:

(See 2021 Annual Financial Report slides)

Treasurer Jeffrey Scott said reported on the library's operational income and expenses for 2021. Total income for the year was \$1,379,346. The library levy made up 61% of operational income, Grants and Gifts accounted for 9% of income. The Annual Appeal and corporate matching funds contributed another 6%. A Paycheck Protection Plan loan brought in 12% of income. An annual drawdown from endowment earnings made up another 9%, with library service fees and miscellaneous revenue comprising the remaining 3% of total operational income.

Library expenses totaled \$1,283,033 in 2021. Library programming, services, materials and equipment accounted for 69% of actual expenses. Administrative and business costs accounted for 21%. Building expenses, maintenance and loan repayments accounted for the final 10% of operational expenditures for the year.

In June 2022, the library endowment, managed by Fischer Investment Group, was valued at \$6,569,250. The funds were down 7% for 2022, so far. However, the library endowment has been performing "admirably," with an average annual 7.5% return on investment since inception with Fischer Investment Group in 2009.

Friends of the Southeast Steuben County Library:

Friends of the Library, SSC President Bev Stevens, said the Friends organization was "proud to be part of an active, user friendly library system." She expressed thanks for the help of library staff and the Board of Trustees in preparation for the current book sale, which ends June 25. "We have had to start charging sales tax this year," she noted. The book sale has raised about \$15,000 so far.

Barbara McLean praised the Friends organization for its work in mounting book sales, which benefit the library, and for other Friends of the Library activities and programs throughout the year.

Closing Statement:

In closing, Barbara McLean pointed out, "We all have a lifetime of stories within us. Fortunately for us, we have a whole library that collects so many stories, real and imagined. I thought about what history might say of us during this time: that we are resilient, that we forged on. Even though these last years have been hard, I look at the future as being bright. We are stronger together, so let's continue on as we write these stories, together."

Adding that she was "excited to see how these stories turn out," President McLean thanked everyone for attending.

Adjournment:

Barbara McLean adjourned the Annual Meeting of the Membership at 6:06 p.m.