

**Southeast Steuben County Library
Board of Trustees
Regular Monthly Meeting
May 18, 2023**

Trustees Attending:

President: Barbara A. McLean
Vice President: Julie E. Fromer
Treasurer: Jeffrey Scott
Secretary: Jamie Curtis
Lyndsie M. Guy
Nogaye Ka-Tandia
Kathryn C. Mack
Svetlana Short

Absent:

Gail Bardhan*
Barry W. Nicholson
Kate Paterson
Louise Richardson

Guests:

Pauline Emery, Library Director
Brad Turner, Assistant Library Director

Call to Order:

President Barbara A. McLean called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m.

Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

Consent Agenda:

**Minutes of the April 20, 2023 Regular Meeting
April 2023 Financial Reports**

On a motion by Secretary Jamie Curtis, seconded by Lyndsie M. Guy, trustees voted unanimously to accept all items on the Consent Agenda.

Director's Report:

(See Library Director's Report for April 2023.)

Library Director Pauline Emery noted that library visits continued on an upward trend in April, with 11,083 visitors for the month, and 41,972 year-to-date. Circulation of physical items was up in April and year-to-date. Digital Circulation was up for both periods as well. Young adult program attendance was down but still holding its own. Children's programming attendance was up for the month. Adult program attendance was up for the month and year.

*This trustee observed the meeting via Zoom.

Pauline Emery said she was happy to see more children picking up books all by themselves, encouraged by the new front-facing shelf design and by post-Dewey, user-friendly browsing improvements in the Children's Department. Children's books are now arranged by popular interest categories. Also on the "happy to see" list: Voters approved the requested library levy increase by an overwhelming margin: 74%-Yes to 26%-No. Local taxpayers will contribute \$911,119 to the library's 2024 Operations Budget, an increase of \$22,663.

Program highlights included the return of Happy Tales, with children reading aloud to trained canines in the Mary Lu Walker Children's Room. Saturday Family Movies resumed on a once-per-month schedule. The library will sponsor a Juneteenth reading by poet Akua Leslie Hope, via Zoom. The library will be closed on June 19 for the holiday. Patron PINs will be upgraded to passwords with new length and character requirements. Southern Tier Library System was initiating this change for security reasons. Patrons will need to change their passwords to access their account online. "We are doing whatever we can to make the implementation smooth." The library was seeking tween and teen volunteers to assist in Summer Reading activities. "All Together Now" is the national theme for the summer reading season

Pauline Emery said that the Friends of the Library Spring Book Sale, held at the Local 1000 Union Hall adjacent to the library, worked well. "The book sale was wonderful in the union hall. I liked the setup."

Julie Fromer is liaison to the Friends of the Library. She noted that plans were to hold future book sales there again when possible. The Spring Sale grossed about 32,000, the second highest take ever, she said. The eight-day sale, from May 6 to May 13, attracted new people, including tourists staying overnight locally.

Pauline Emery called attention to the library's collaboration with the Red Cross for a blood drive in the Laura Beer Community Room on May 25. "We will be doing that regularly. We are supporting public health."

Finance:

(See financial reports for April 2023.)

The Finance Committee did not meet this month.

Treasurer Jeffrey Scott reviewed the Library Operational Budget for the month. April income matched budgeted values and expenses were under budget substantially, due to late billing. He said, "Everything looks to be in order. Hopefully those utilities bills will come in and we will still be under budget." Pauline Emery noted that \$50,000 was added to the Library Endowment - administered by Fischer Investment Group - according to the Library Board's April 2023 resolution.

2022 Annual Report to the Community:

(See 2022 Report to the Community)

Barbara McLean called for a motion to accept the 2022 Report to the Community. Kathryn C. Mack made the motion, seconded by Svetlana Short. There was no discussion. Trustees voted unanimously to accept the report.

Strategic Plan:

(See SSCL Strategic Plan 2022-2024)

Barbara McLean presented the final draft of the Strategic Plan 2022-2024. The majority of the committees met to review the plan and its goals. "This is a living breathing document," she said, walking through the plan section by section.

Pauline Emery called attention to the new Southeast Steuben County Library Vision Statement, which includes strong wording opposing censorship:

The Southeast Steuben County Library is a community space in which everyone is welcome and provided an opportunity to explore their intellectual and creative curiosity.

By partnering with individuals and community organizations, we provide access to information and empower people of all ages to contribute to a more equitable community. We affirm the American Library Association's Bill of Rights, and denounce all forms of censorship.

Barbara McLean noted the plan merged Board Development and Nominating Committees into one. The committee will build a diversity plan for trustees to implement.

The Policy and Personnel Committee will, "Develop a policy statement regarding staff wages and incorporate it into salary matrix," among other goals.

Several minor editorial changes were included in the final document.

On the President's call for a motion to approve the 22-24 Strategic Plan, Kathryn Mack moved to do so and Nogaye Ka-Tandia seconded. Trustees voted unanimously to approve the plan.

Annual Meeting Planning:

Trustees finalized plans for the Annual Meeting of the Membership. It will be held in the library and via Zoom on June 15 at 5 p.m. following the regular meeting.

Committee Updates:

- **Facilities** – Pauline Emery related that after a limestone panel fell off Corning City Hall, situated directly across Nasser Civic Center Plaza, the City commissioned an engineering study. Now, the library needs its own engineering study, since we have similar limestone cladding. Looking toward this year's New York Construction Aid application round, the library will apply for funding for a generator. Solar Shade blinds will be installed in the library in June, funded by a previous NYS grant.
- **Scholarship** – Vice President and Committee Chair Julie Fromer said the Committee met last week and selected two scholarship awardees. Eight applications were submitted. Award letters were being created. Outreach efforts were ongoing.
- **Friends of the Library** – Liaison Julie Fromer affirmed that the sale grossed \$32,000. The Friends organization helps to facilitate the community's Bright Red Bookshelves program. "There was a bright red bookshelves revival after COVID, and the books are going."

Other business:

Circulation Supervisor Hannah Waschezyn will be leaving. Pauline Emery said that everyone will be "sad to see her go. But we wish her well. Hannah has been an amazing employee." Charlette Smith has been hired as the new Circulation Supervisor. Her start date will be May 30.

Adjournment:

Barbara McLean adjourned the meeting at 5:37 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Library Board of Trustees was scheduled for June 15, 2023 at 4:30 p.m. in the library.

The Annual Meeting of the Membership will be held in the library and via Zoom on June 15 at 5 p.m., following the regular meeting.