

**Southeast Steuben County Library  
Board of Trustees  
Regular Monthly Meeting  
February 15, 2024**

**Trustees Attending:**

President: Barbara A. McLean  
Vice President: Lyndsie M. Guy  
Secretary: Jamie Curtis  
Treasurer: Jeffrey Scott  
Gail Bardhan\*  
Julie E. Fromer  
Kathryn C. Mack  
Kate Paterson  
Louise Richardson

**Absent:**

Nogaye Ka-Tandia  
Barry W. Nicholson  
Svetlana Short

**Guests:**

Pauline Emery, Library Director  
Brad Turner, Assistant Library Director

**Call to Order:**

President Barbara A. McLean called the meeting to order at 4:43 p.m.

**Public Comment:**

There was no public comment.

**Consent Agenda:**

**Minutes of the January 18, 2024 Regular Meeting  
January 2024 Financial Reports**

Barbara McLean noted there was a correction made to the January draft Minutes. The expenses for the area on the second floor of the building now used by the library for its own programs will be reflected in the Library Operating Budget.

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

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\*Attended the meeting via Zoom.

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

Library Director Pauline Emery reported an increase of more than 2,000 library visitors in January 2024, compared to January 2023. Circulation showed a comparable increase. There were also increases in overall program attendance and in Wi-Fi use, maker space use and in Digital Literacy. "It's a good start to the year." Coming soon, on March 7, patrons are invited to spend an evening with Bebe Gambetta, featuring music and talk related to *Declarations of Love*, a post Valentine's Day program. Other in-house programs include *Family Bingo & Dinner* on February 22, *Garden Planning* with Beth Hondale on March 2, and *Crafting with Kimberly*, exploring jewelry basics, on March 11. A Red Cross Blood Drive will be held in the library on March 20. Noting the library was grateful for program help from the Friends of the Library organization, Pauline Emery cited Louise Richardson for leading the Friends' committee organizing Books Sandwiched In, the annual series of book talks given by local notables. The series received rave reviews from attendees and went very well. *Bring your Child to the Library Day* received media coverage on WETM and Joan Rosen took photos.

Southeast Steuben County was well-represented on Library Advocacy Day, February 7, in Albany. Library advocates from across New York met at the Capitol. Advocates included Pauline Emery, Louise Richardson and two library staff members, Kayla Crane and Erik House. The group joined other Southern Tier Library System members to meet with state representatives Senator Tom O'Mara and Assemblymember Phil Palmesano, urging them to support increased library aid. Louise Richardson assessed, "A long day, but a lot of fun and I think very successful." Louise Richardson urged trustees and all other library supporters to telephone their state representatives. Postcards will be sent shortly.

Library Director Pauline Emery presented the library's levy proposition to the Corning-Painted Post school board on February 14.

### **Finance:**

(See Financial Reports for January 2024.)

The Finance Committee met on February 8, 2024.

Treasurer Jeffrey Scott said the Finance Committee reviewed and recommended the 2024 budget. January income topped expectations by \$7,781, but expenses outpaced projections due in part to an early cost share payment, leaving the library temporarily under budget by \$101,073, but still in the black. Expenses will soon swing back in line with earlier budget projections, he said. The annual independent audit process has begun. MMB + CO, formerly Mengel Metzger Barr & Co., is the auditing firm.

### **Transfer Resolution**

Barbara McLean noted the Finance Committee recommends approval of the following funds transfer resolution:

The Southeast Steuben County Library's Board of Trustees, upon the recommendation of the SSCL Finance committee, approves the transfer of the following funds.

\$13,800 be transferred from the Grant Account held at Community Bank, Corning, NY. to the Capital Reserve Account held at Community Bank, Corning NY. These funds are

the last 10% of the New York Construction Grant for the Mary Lu Walker Children's Room.

Trustees voted unanimously to approve the resolution above.

### **Nomination:**

Barbara McLean said the Nominating Committee recommends electing Harry A. Merritt, a Corning resident. Harry Merritt served previously on the Library Board of Trustees (2012 – 2015). Nominating Committee members Barbara McLean, Louise Richardson, Nogaye Ka-Tandia and Pauline Emery met with the candidate. "Harry has returned to Corning and was looking to get involved again." Barbara Mclean indicated that he was interested in returning to the Finance Committee, chaired by Jeffrey Scott. If elected, Harry will fill a vacant At Large term ending December 31, 2026.

Lyndsie M. Guy asked for context in regard to vacancies. Harry Merritt will fill the remaining At Large vacancy on the board. Two additional vacancies exist, one representing the Town of Lindley and the other, Campbell. Each of these vacant terms expires at the end of 2025.

On the Committee recommendation and in an up-or-down vote, trustees elected Harry Merritt to the vacant At Large seat, unanimously. [9 yes – 0 no]

### **Committee Updates:**

- **Facilities** –Pauline Emery described a plumbing problem that forced an early close on February 14. The problem, a major drain obstruction, was resolved earlier today. Barbara McLean and others met with HUNT E|A|S, which has held meetings with middle schoolers to get their ideas and preferences for teen space design. HUNT will deliver 3D models of its two evolving design alternatives in "about three weeks."
- **PR/Advocacy** –Barbara McLean said that Committee was almost ready with its RFP for the new library website. The Committee helped Pauline Emery prepare for a February 14 presentation to the Corning-Painted Post school board. Also, the Committee met with videographer Dave Rochelle in connection with the upcoming library levy vote. Kate Paterson suggested that the library use its digital resources to bolster community support.
- **Fund Development** – Chair Louise Richardson asked for update on the Annual Campaign. Assistant Director Brad Turner said the campaign had raised \$72,000 so far. The campaign ends March 31.
- **Scholarship** – Chair Julie E. Fromer said that library scholarship forms had been updated and were available on the library website. She suggested that navigation to the scholarship page be simplified.
- **Friends of the Library** –Friends of the Library Liaison Julie Fromer asked Pauline Emery to report on the February Friends board meeting. Pauline

Emery said the Friends board members were “very positive” in regard to helping with the levy Vote Yes effort.

**Other business:**

There was no other business.

**Executive Session:**

Trustees adjourned into Executive Session at 5:35 p.m. to discuss the Director’s Annual Evaluation. Trustees adjourned the Executive Session and reconvened in Regular Session at 5:49 p.m.

On the president’s call for a vote, trustees voted unanimously to accept the Executive Director’s compensation package, as recommended by the Finance Committee.

**Adjournment:**

Barbara McLean adjourned the meeting at 5:50 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Library Board of Trustees was scheduled for March 21, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. in the library.