

Board Meeting Minutes Croton Free Library September 9, 2024

Minutes of the September 2024 Board Meeting of the Croton Free Library, held on Monday, June 17, 2024 at The Croton Free Library, Ottinger Room, 171 Cleveland Drive, Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520.

PRESENT

Library Board of Trustees:

Susan Ranis, *President* (29)
Justin Johnson, *Vice-President* (28)
Barry Feinberg, *Treasurer* (28)
Adam Decker (28)
Bethany Basile (27)
Leslie Ellis (29)
Kate Fabian (28)
Mayla Hsu (26)
Marianne Merola (27)
Laura Jaeger (26)
Margaret Mahoney (26)

Library Director: Jesse Bourdon

ABSENT

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm.

APPROVAL OF JUNE 2024 BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the [minutes of the June 2024 Board Meeting](#) held on June 17, 2024 having been distributed in advance of the meeting and their reading having been dispensed with, were unanimously approved.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Audit Status

Due to a family emergency of our auditor, our audit reporting was delayed. **The final draft will be sent to Jesse within a week or two; Jesse will share this with Barry and the Finance Committee for review.** Barry has suggested we bring in Sid Franks to consult on the audit. We have a goal of voting on the audit in November 2024.

Fire/Emergency Event (July 24, 2024)

One of the ballast light bulbs started to smoke at the library on July 24, 2024. The library closed early and called the fire department. We are unsure of what caused the smoke, but believe it may have been the wrong installation of a bulb. The library was only closed for a partial day to address the issue. The one affected light fixture is currently unused; if this creates a problem, Jesse will alert the board.

Annual Fire Inspection Update

After the fire/emergency event in July, the whole building was inspected by an electrician. Since then we have also had our annual sprinkler and backflow inspection.

First-Aid Training (October 14, 2024)

We previously received government funding to apply to safety and security measures at the library. Part of this funding was used for cameras for the building. The other funding is being used to facilitate a voluntary First Aid/CPR/AED and Opioid Overdose training for library staff and volunteers.

Library staff will be compensated for attending this training. **If board members would like to receive this training, please notify Jesse within a week.** The requirements are 3.5hrs of online training, and then 3.5hrs of training in person at the library.

Proposal for additional closed day in 2025 (Saturday, July 5, 2025)

The library will be closed Friday July 4, 2025 for the Independence Day holiday, and Sunday July 6, 2025 for the library's regular Sunday summer hours. Jesse will plan to close the library Saturday July 5, 2025. This closure does not break any NYS library laws.

Staff Changes

Faythe Flynn, previously on our sub list, has been promoted to Circ/Tech. Faythe will divide her time between Circulation and Technology.

Kyle Nolan resigned from the library in August 2024. We have offered this position to Chloe Guedalia. She will be working part-time reference over the weekends, every other Saturday/Sunday.

MOTION TO APPROVE CHLOE GUEDALIA AS A PART-TIME REFERENCE LIBRARIAN

A motion was made by Justin Johnson that Chloe Guedalia be hired as a part-time reference librarian as of September 28, 2024. Bethany Basile seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Collection Statistics and Patron Services

A big influx of people have attended events over the summer. The library hosting blood drives has added to the number of people coming through our doors.

Between June and August the library added 50 items to our catalog; as of this year, we have added 250 items.

TREASURER'S REPORT**Check Register Approval**

The Monthly Check Register for the summer (June, July, and August) was presented. At first glance there were several check numbers missing from the check register. Upon further review it was noted that checks paid over the summer were placed in the June check register so payments were in the same fiscal year (ending June). When comparing all three months of payments, all checks were accounted for.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE MONTHLY CHECK REGISTER

A motion was made by Barry Feinberg to Approve the Monthly Check Register. Adam Decker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Budget Performance

We finished the fiscal year in June in very good shape. While our total expenses for the year were at 103% of budgeted expenses, our income was 105% of what was expected. While everything was basically on budget, we had a net income for the year of approximately \$12k.

As of September we are two months into the fiscal year (17%). There is very little activity, as we have not yet received our tax money. We have received some state aid income, and are at 20% our budgeted expenditures - most of the expenditures are scheduled technology-related expenses.

COMMITTEE REPORTS**Finance Committee**

See Treasurer's Report for our check register and budget performance detail summary.

Renovation Advisory Committee (RAC) Report

The Renovation Advisory Committee met three times over the summer; the meeting minutes for the first two committee meetings have been emailed to the board for review. The third meeting was a meeting with Paul Mays, our architect.

The goals of the summer meetings were to create a project timeline, to figure out a proposal for a professional fundraiser, and to research spaces we could rent to move the library offsite if/when we need during the renovation.

Fall 2026 is our goal construction date, with groundbreaking happening Summer 2026. We are currently in a stalled place; we need to finalize the plans to move forward, which will help us understand our budgeting, write grants, and communicate our vision with our community.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED WORKING CONCEPTUAL DESIGN OF THE MASTER PLAN BUILDING LAYOUT 4-A BY BRMA

A motion was made by Adam Decker to approve the proposed working conceptual design of the Master Plan building layout 4-A by BRMA, so the architects may create an official drawing to use as the basis for our future conceptualized plans. Laura Jaeger seconded the motion.

All in favor: Adam Decker, Barry Feinberg, Leslie Ellis, Margaret Mahoney, Marianne Merola, Mayla Hsu, and Susan Ranis. Abstained: Kate Fabian and Bethany Basile. The motion passed.

Given we will be asking for seven times our operating budget for this project, we believe we need a professional fundraiser to guide us through raising these funds. We are aiming to start our professional fundraising efforts this Fall (2024). A large part of the fundraising efforts will be learning how to approach the campaign with our community.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE HIRING OF A CAPITAL CAMPAIGN CONSULTANT VIA ISSUING A REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP).

A motion was made by Bethany Basile to hire a capital campaign consultant via issuing an RFP. Leslie Ellis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Susan, Bethany, and Mayla have created an initial draft of the RFP (Request for Proposal) for the Capital Campaign consultant. [The RFP document will be emailed to the board for review/comments, with the goal of finalizing this request for proposal within the next few weeks, for approval at the October 2024 Board meeting.](#)

At the third summer RAC meeting, Paul Mays noted that it is important to understand what grants may conflict with one another. When looking at grant money, we must focus on the most effective/important grants. Bethany suggested that we apply for a large amount of grants, but do not need to accept all of them if they will conflict/restrict the funds that come in.

To move forward with our goals of connecting with our elected officials, getting their support, and reaching out for grants, Susan and Jesse will be meeting with Dana Levenberg and Brian Healy at the library September 10, 2024 to introduce the project.

The Renovation Advisory Committee will be meeting next Tuesday, September 17th via zoom, with the purpose of introducing our renovation process and plans to new library board members and renovation committee members who have not been part of our past meetings with the architects. All board members who are interested in participating are welcome to attend. [The meeting link will be posted on the board calendar.](#) It was confirmed that the number of participants who plan to attend do not constitute a quorum.

Marianne Merola made note that the Nanuet library is also using BRMA for their recent buildout; reference materials are available online for review that could help in our process moving forward with our renovation plans and communication of said plans with the community.

Fundraising

Annual Appeal Letter

Over the summer the Fundraising Committee created a draft of the 2024 Annual Appeal Letter. This was emailed to the board for review two weeks prior to the September board meeting.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE 2024 ANNUAL APPEAL LETTER

A motion was made by Kate Fabian to approve the Annual Appeal letter, if the letter date is adjusted to reflect the mailing date of November 11. Justin Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

[Laura Jaeger will update the mailing date on the letter to November 11, 2024 and the Fundraising Committee will show said letter to the board once the appeal art has been received.](#)

Leslie Ellis suggested that we draw attention to the various community groups that use the library as meeting space (given this year's appeal theme of connecting with our community). [The fundraising committee will plan to highlight our relationships with community groups that meet at the library via social media posts around the Appeal.](#)

Fall Book & Bake Sale

The dates of the November Book & Bake sale will be Saturday November 16, 2024 and Sunday November 17, 2024, with a one day set-up Friday, November 15, 2024. Thank you to Margaret Mahoney and artist Emily Bicht for adjusting Emily's artist reception at the library to accommodate this date change of the Book & Bake sale from November 23/24 to November 16/17, as the Fundraising Committee had multiple conflicts over the later weekend.

The November 2024 Book & Bake Sale may have less materials for sale than previous sales, given a temporary pause on collecting materials, as Art Almeida has been out on medical leave. As of September 4, we have begun accepting donations again. The November sale will move forward as planned; the Fundraising Committee will alert the board if any adjustments will be required.

Given the coinciding timing of the November Book & Bake Sale and the Annual Appeal mailing, Marianne Merola suggested we create a postcard with the appeal art to give out to patrons at Book & Bake Sale checkout.

Long-Range Planning Committee

The Long Range Planning Committee did not meet this summer. From September through June the committee plans to meet the 3rd Monday of each month at 7:00p via zoom. [These meetings will be added to the Google Board calendar.](#)

At prior board meetings, it was discussed that we remove the Croton Reads Committee from our Board committee lists, and thus remove the committee from our Bylaws.

MOTION TO APPROVE DISBANDING THE CROTON FREE LIBRARY CROTON READS COMMITTEE AND DELETE THE CROTON READS COMMITTEE FROM THE CROTON FREE LIBRARY BYLAWS COMMITTEE LIST.

A motion was made by Laura Jaeger to disband the Croton Free Library Croton Reads Committee and remove said committee from the Croton Free Library Bylaws committee list. Kate Fabian seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

There are a few (additional) adjustments the Long-Range Planning Committee is proposing for the Bylaws. [The committee will remove the Croton Reads Committee from the current Bylaws as part of the next wave of Bylaws adjustment this fall, and will send out that updated Bylaws document for review of the board, emailing it two weeks prior to an upcoming Board meeting. At the following Board meeting we will aim to vote on the adjustments to the Bylaws.](#)

Arts Committee

Over the summer there was an exhibit by local artist Kelly Schulze. We had a great turnout and believe that (Thursday) evenings may be well-received timing for art receptions going forward, as people are able to visit the library after returning home from their workday.

For September and October we have a new exhibit on display by artist Beth DeWit. We had a great turnout at the artists reception on Sunday, Sept 8th; the artist was very happy.

We have coordinated with the Fundraising Committee so the annual appeal artist Emily Bicht is exhibiting in November and December, which coincides with the timing of the Annual Appeal mailing and the November Book & Bake sale, for maximum overlap.

Building and Grounds Committee

There has been no meeting of this committee over the summer. The next scheduled meeting will take place in October 2024.

Safety committee

There has been no meeting of this committee over the summer.

A note was made that all board meeting committees should be listed on the Board meeting agendas going forward, so no committee is skipped as part of our monthly discussions.

OLD BUSINESS

Google Suite Training

The Google suite ad hoc committee met over the summer to build out our Google Suite and develop a training process to onboard the board.

The Google Suite ad hoc committee will grant permissions to the board to our new shared drives, and in-person training will be provided by Kate via two sessions. Kate will email the board the training date options; the goal is that all board members will have training before the October board meeting. Please reply directly to Kate with your availability.

A note was made regarding the new Google drive structure that the Safety Committee should be moved from the Ad Hoc Committee list to its own full time board committee category.

NEW BUSINESS

MOTION TO REMOVE EXECUTIVE SESSION FROM THE SEPTEMBER BOARD MEETING AGENDA

A motion was made by Leslie Ellis that Executive Session be removed from the September Board Meeting agenda (and agendas moving forward). Kate Fabian seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Jesse will remove the Executive Session from the September Board meeting agenda and repost the adjusted agenda to the library's website.

Annual Meeting 2025 (Date)

Setting the date for the Annual meeting in 2025 will be discussed at the October 2024 board meeting.

***PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Members of the public may address the Board of Trustees only during the Public Comment portion of the board meeting and must identify themselves by name when they begin to speak. Comments are limited to no more than three minutes per person. The number of public comments per board meeting may be limited due to time constraints.*

There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Barry Feinberg and seconded by Laura Jaeger to adjourn the meeting. This motion being unanimously approved, the Meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm

Respectfully submitted by Laura Jaeger, secretary