

Croton Free Library
Board Meeting Minutes
January 11, 2021

PRESENT

Trustees: Leslie Ellis (24), Adora Lam (21), Lynn Kauderer (23), Susan Ranis (24), Barry Feinberg (23), Jane Beller (22), Marianne Merola (22), Sharyse Eisinger (21), Mary McFerran (21)

Treasurer: Sid Franks

Library Director: Jesse Bourdon

Croton Free Library Association: Kate Fabian, President

CALL TO ORDER The meeting was held online via Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic and was called to order at 7:38 pm.

December 2020 minutes were approved

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- Patron Services

Patron Services statistics were presented and continue to reflect the effects of pandemic restrictions. Curbside pickups remain popular as well as digital content.

- Book Bundles

The newly-introduced Book Bundles service has received a very positive response from the public. More than 70 bundles of librarian-selected books have been distributed to clients who completed an online questionnaire describing their reading preferences.

- KnoxBox Installation

The Director discussed the incident at the Library on December 24-25 in which a storm resulted in damage to the HVAC system and triggered activation of the fire alarm. Subsequent damage by the Fire Department to a window in order to obtain entry to the building highlighted the necessity for improved communication between the Director and the Fire and Police Departments. In addition, the Library will be installing a KnoxBox which will contain access keys for use by Police and Fire in only.

- Construction Grant Update

Due to a slight excess in construction grant funds used for installation of new entry doors, the Library will also be able to install a small concrete ramp over the curb between the driveway and the sidewalk to the front door. This will improve handicap and stroller access and will close out the grant.

- New Phone System

Wiring for the new phone system has been completed by Altice and the final steps required to set up the automated answering system are underway.

- New Employee

The Director has selected Croton resident Kim Stucko to fill the position of part-time reference librarian. Her resume was distributed to the Board.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Finance Committee:

The Treasurer reports that the Library is continuing to do well financially and is operating within and often below budget projections. Books, AV and Periodicals are \$12,000 under budget, Operations/Maintenance \$9,000 under, Programs \$3,000 under and Salaries and related costs \$7,000 over. Salaries overage is explained by the January health insurance premium and retirement plan contributions being mailed out in late December so recorded earlier than “normal”. Other expenses in the Salary grouping are on budget except Building Maintenance salaries are somewhat higher than budget.

The monthly Check Register for December was reviewed by the Board, voted on, and approved.

- Buildings and Grounds

A presentation by Alex Cohen, a local library design consultant, on Wednesday, December 16, was well attended by the Board. The next step will be to arrange a presentation by a second consultant: Lothrop Associates.

The Board shared many questions regarding the process for moving forward with this project. It was agreed that an ad hoc Space Configuration Committee (SCC), open to all Board members, should be created. In addition, the Director will provide the Board with a list of the major problems he has identified with regard to its current configuration. This will include pre-pandemic problems, when the Library was open to the public, as well as problems he anticipates when the Library is reopened and new health and safety considerations will need to be addressed.

- Art Committee

The next online art exhibit will be a group show arranged by Mary because the artist previously scheduled backed out. Many artists are reluctant to show their art online either because of the quality of the image or because of lack of the technical skills required.

- Long-Range Planning

Marianne distributed to Board members the Croton Free Library 2020-2021 Long-Range Planning Report. This report is required annually by New York State. Long-range planning is particularly difficult due to the many unknown challenges the Library will be face in the future due to the pandemic. The Board expressed their gratitude for Marianne's work in preparing the report. The report was voted on and approved unanimously.

- Safety Committee

The committee has not met since the last meeting of the Board. The Library is still on lock-down to the public and is providing curbside pickup only. Fortunately, there have been no cases of COVID-19 among our staff.

LIBRARY ASSOCIATION REPORT:

The Annual Appeal has so far received donations totaling \$19,879 and it is anticipated that more contributions will be received. This is already ahead of last year's appeal which eventually raised \$18,200.

Work continues on creating a silent auction. The Association is looking for people to volunteer items, experiences, or services to be auctioned. Board members will be receiving a letter soon which is intended to be forwarded to friends and associates who might be interested in contributing.

There will be no food drive this year at the Library.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:57 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Lynn Kauderer