

Croton Free Library
Board Meeting Minutes
March 14, 2022

PRESENT:

Trustees: Leslie Ellis (24), Lynn Kauderer (23), Susan Ranis (24), Barry Feinberg (23), Jane Beller (22), Marianne Merola (22), Mary McFerran (26), Laura Stelman Jaeger (26), Adora Lam (26), Mayla Hsu (26), Margaret Mahoney (26)

Library Director: Jesse Bourdon

Westchester Library System President: Karen Zevin

ABSENT: Treasurer: Sid Franks

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was held online via Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic and was called to order at 7:33 pm.

APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 2021 MINUTES

February 2022 minutes were voted on and approved.

ADDRESS FROM WLS PRESIDENT

Karen Zevin, current WLS President and former president of the Croton Library Association, addressed the Board. She explained the organizational structure of Library Systems within the State of New York and described a variety of services WLS provides to libraries in Westchester. In addition to the more well-known technical services and the interlibrary loan program, she identified a number of other social programs provided by WLS. Less than half of the funds received by WLS come from participating libraries' payments to WLS for these services. The rest comes from the county and state as well as a variety of grants. She also explained in more detail the current challenges WLS is facing to identify a new Central Library should it become necessary if the current designee loses that status.

The Board would like to thank Ms. Zevin for attending our meeting and sharing her knowledge with us.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Patron Services

Statistics for the month of February 2022 were presented and continue to reflect the effects of the COVID pandemic on Library functioning.

- Upgrades to staff terminals

WLS has updated all staff terminals to the Windows 10 environment.

- Rapid test received

The Library has received over 700 free COVID antigen rapid tests kits for distribution to patrons and staff.

- Reference Statistics

The procedure for determining the number of reference transactions conducted per day has been reevaluated. While some of the standards are more restrictive, we have started including responses to requests for help from the children's section also. It is expected that the two changes will balance out and reference transaction statistics will remain within past ranges.

- New Website Design

The Director has begun weekly meetings with Library Market to design the new website. There will be a major overhaul in how policies, Library and board-related documents are presented and all documents will be archived and searchable. In addition, art works from all past and present displays in the Ottinger room as well as Croton Reads materials will be saved and searchable. We expect to go live with the new website in June or July.

- Patio Upgrade

Payment has been received from a private donor in the amount of \$16,900 for the upgrade to the patio. Work will begin soon.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

In the absence of our Treasurer, the Monthly Budget Report for February was presented and reviewed by Barry Feinberg, Finance Committee chairman. We continue to be operating within expected budget projections. Income is currently over budget, and expenses, while a bit over budget, are not above expected levels. In addition to a private donation for expansion of the front patio, we have also received the second half of our tax distribution from the School Board in the amount of \$447,832.

The monthly Check Register for February 2022 was presented, voted on, and approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Finance Committee:

The Committee will be meeting soon to consider a number of projects.

- Buildings and Grounds

The Board voted to approve \$950 to contract with the firm of Butler Rowland Mays Architects, a group that specializes in library design. They will perform a site visit, and present their ideas on how our library building can potentially be modified to better serve the needs of patrons and the community in the future, incorporating lessons learned from the pandemic. They will present their findings and recommendations to the Board in a Zoom meeting and provide a written report of their summary.

The Director has set April 11 as the date for the site visit. Board members will be receiving emails with suggested dates for the follow-up Zoom meeting.

- Art Committee

Our current artist, Christine Knowlton, will continue to show her work in the Ottinger Room until the end of April. The Chairwoman, in curating the art works of upcoming artists, raised the question of the acceptability of displaying nudes in the Library. It was advised that, since the Ottinger Room is our only currently available display space, and since it has multiple uses including children's programming, it would not be advisable at this time to include nudes.

- Croton Reads

Planning for the events to be held on March 19 and 27 are nearing completion. It has been determined that a limited number of approximately 40 patrons can be seated at safe distances in the Ottinger Room. Masks will be required. The Director will be contacting those who have already signed up to see if they still want their tickets. Seats have been reserved for Board members who would like to attend. The programs will also be available through online streaming and the Director has been performing tests to prepare for all the technical challenges involved. Special thanks to him for all his hard work and for having the skills to produce this kind of event!

The Chair is again requesting that people send in their "Love Stories" and/or any suggested questions for Helen Simonson, our guest author of Major Pettigrew's Last Stand.

- Long-Range Planning

The Long-Range Planning committee was unable to meet this month.

- Safety Committee

NY State has lifted its mandatory masking requirement for public libraries. Starting tomorrow, Tuesday March 15, masks will no longer be required but will be strongly recommended. In addition, we are instituting "Masked Mondays", when masks will be required in order to

accommodate those who are more vulnerable to the virus or are more comfortable in a masked environment.

- Fundraising Committee

The next fundraising event will be the Spring Book & Bake sale scheduled for May 21st and 22nd, with a full day of set-up Friday May 20th. All Board members will soon be receiving requests for volunteer sign-up. We are coordinating with the Village's planned tribute to Lorraine Hansberry which will be held in the cemetery that afternoon.

- Publicity Committee

The Publicity Committee has continued working with the Croton Reads committee on publicity for their upcoming event.

OLD BUSINESS

Board members are encouraged to continue to attend the monthly Trustee Handbook Book Club meetings offered online by the NYS Library Sustainability Committee.

NEW BUSINESS

- Finance Committee Changes

We are investigating the necessity of making changes to our Bylaws in order to add past treasurers who are no longer Board members to our Finance Committee.

- Banking issues

The Director is working with Wells-Fargo Bank to resolve some recently-identified issues concerning the ownership of the Library's account. He will follow up with Chase Bank as well.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 pm

Respectfully submitted by Lynn Kauderer
Secretary