

**Croton Free Library**  
Board Meeting Minutes  
September 12, 2022

**PRESENT:**

Trustees: Leslie Ellis (24), Lynn Kauderer (23), Susan Ranis (24), Jane Beller (27), Marianne Merola (27), Laura Stelman Jaeger (26), Adora Lam (26), Mayla Hsu (26), Margaret Mahoney (26), Mary McFerran (26), Barry Feinberg (23)

Library Director: Jesse Bourdon

**ABSENT:** Lynn Kauderer

Attended via Zoom recording after the actual meeting.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was held online via Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic and was called to order at 7:32 pm.

**APPROVAL OF JUNE 2022 MINUTES**

June 2022 minutes were voted on and approved.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- Patron Services

Statistics for the summer months of June, July, and August 2022 were presented.

WLS is still working to correct issues with their digital reporting procedures which is why statistics for Hoopla checkouts are not available as of today's meeting.

The exciting news for Croton is that physical checkouts reached an all-time high of 10,835 in August. Also new Library Cards issued, at 185, is well above our average of less than 100; and we saw a nice increase in adult event attendance.

- Building Security Upgrades

The Director has continued work this summer on evaluating and improving the building's security. He met with Sgt. Leonard from the Croton Police Department and received a few minor suggestions. The officer also provided the name of the security company consulted by the school district for their security operations and Jesse plans to consult with them as well. We already have estimates for installation of new fire alarms, sprinklers and security camera system. The money is available in the budget due to our receipt of \$25,000 from NY State through representative Sandy Galef.

A discussion followed regarding the importance of coordinating plans with the school district in case of an emergency school evacuation and the possibility of students being directed to the Library. The Director will follow up with the School Superintendent.

- More COVID tests

After recently running out of free COVID tests for distribution to patrons, the Library has recently received notice that new tests are on the way from both the government and WLS.

- Small Program Room reopened

The SPR, which was closed due to COVID, has just been reopened and can be used again for children's programs and other groups. In addition, the next meeting of the Board will finally be held in person in the Ottinger room following directives from the Governor.

- Baker and Taylor outage

Baker and Taylor, the primary provider of books for the Library as well as libraries throughout the country, recently suffered a major ransomware attack and was shut down for several weeks. The result is that we are now experiencing significant delays in receiving books we have ordered.

- Audit process for 2022 has begun

Our accountant has started the audit process and we hope to have a completed audit available for Board approval by the October or November meeting.

- Bank account changes

Discussions have continued regarding the possible move of our checking accounts from Wells Fargo to Chase Bank. At this point we anticipate that this action will be taken.

- Staff education

In acknowledging Banned Book Week, Danielle Silver from the ACLU will be speaking with staff about the ACLU's current work defending the right to read and learn. We have setup a display in the Library and included the topic in our recent Newsletter.

- CHHS Community Service Fair

The High School is instituting a new Community Service Fair for students. We will participate by setting up a table for the Library but will emphasize that, as of now, we are only looking for occasional volunteers to help with special events such as the Book and Bake sale and Croton Reads.

- Staffing Shortages

Like the rest of the country, we have recently experienced problems scheduling the optimal number of employees. The problem is not that we do not have enough staff on payroll but rather that leaves of absence, vacations, last minutes cancellations etc., have led to situations where either our Reference and Circulation Manager and/or the Director have been required to fill in.

Using school volunteers (see above) is not a realistic option for a variety of legal and operational reasons. The Director states that, at a minimum, he must have two or three staff members on site in order to open. It has never been necessary to close due to lack of staffing, but the Director is warning that the possibility has increased.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT:**

The monthly Check Details report for June, July, and August 2022 were reviewed first by the Finance Committee and then by the Board. All were approved.

The June 2022 end-of-the-year Profit and Loss Performance report was presented and approved. We are pleased to report that budget projections were very accurate and final expenses were within \$3,000 of projections and that actual income was \$30,000 larger than projected due to unanticipated grants. The extra funds will be deposited in a money market account and will be available for use as we go forward.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- Finance Committee:

A Budget Changes Comparison report was presented highlighting a few changes to budget plans for fiscal year 2022-2023. One key change to income projections stems from the possible elimination of overdue fines. On the expense side changes include a new budget line for digital content now separate from adult collections, new WLS charges, an increase in salaries for our professional staff, increase in adult programming funds, a reduction in special events funds, and a separate line for Croton Reads.

- Buildings and Grounds

The Committee will be meeting on Wednesday, September 14 at 7:00 pm to develop a list of questions for other Library Directors as to their experiences working with either Lothrop Associates or Butler Rowland Mays Architects. We will also be discussing arrangements for visits and/or calls to selected libraries.

We are still awaiting a requested written report from the firm of Paul Mays as a follow up to his site visit and meeting with the Board.

- Arts

For the first time we have had a cancellation by a scheduled artist, David Fox, due to his concern about our lack of insurance. It was agreed that insuring art works at the Library is not something we plan to pursue. Fortunately, the presenters of the current show have agreed to continue their exhibition.

- Croton Reads

We have selected a book and are considering several exciting satellite events in conjunction with the book's theme. More details will follow.

- Long-Range Planning

The Long-Range Planning committee met over the summer and members have updated many of the Library's documents. The Chair is continuing her review and editing process.

- Fundraising Committee

We are working on our annual appeal letter and Judy Scheck has agreed to provide the art work. As soon as it is completed, we will be submitting it to the printer. We will also be publishing a letter in the Gazette which lists the many ways in which the Library has contributed to the community this past year. Planning for the Fall Book & Bake sale is underway. The signup link is almost ready and will be sent out soon.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- New York Times internet application discussion

The New York Times is now offering libraries a special subscription which allows patrons, when physically in the library, to view the paper's online content, including archived material. However, it requires those patrons to first set up a user account and password. The cost of \$3000/year to the Library compares well with other data bases. No decision has yet been reached as to the advisability of purchasing this resource.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public comments.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Lynn Kauderer  
Secretary