



Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting

Date: 11/21/2024

Location: Library Community Room

Trustees Attending in person:

Dani French (President), Elizabeth Dickey (Vice President), Michael Grisham (Treasurer), Jim Kelly (Secretary), Jessica Almeleh-Frazer, Wesley Brown, Joseph Ferris, Sean Gilleran, Crystal Jeffs, Ryan Kelly, Maddie Meehan, Gary Sheffer, Sherry Jo Williams.

Excused: Miranda Barry, Linda Friedner, Kellen Henry, Carol Pledger

Absent: none

Staff Attending: Emily Chameides (Director)

Others Attending: none

Meeting was called to order by Dani French at 06:04 pm. She welcomed trustees.

A motion to approve the October minutes was made by Michael Grisham and seconded by Joseph Ferris. Vote to approve minutes was unanimous.

Reports

President's Report: Dani French

Ghostly Gallop was awesome! Thank you Crystal, Ryan, and all involved! 414 ballot initiatives were successful. Thank you Joe, 414 committee, and all involved!

Emily and Dani attended the MHLS annual meeting and it was informative and awesome! We received an Outstanding Achievement Award for our 2023 414 success in Greenport.

In the Spring, Dani will step down from her role as Board president - she loves the role but will step down from being president and remain an active member of the Board and committees. Dani asked Gary to step in as president starting in March and he has accepted.

Treasurer's Report: Michael Grisham

Month in Review: Through November, we collected 91% of our annual budgeted operating income and spent 72% of our budgeted operating expenses.

Total Receipts were \$30,308 for the month. Total Expenses were \$71,871 for the month.

Notable in Income for the Month: In Restricted Foundation Grants, \$3,000 from the Eutopia Foundation for

Community Care Clinic and \$6,000 from the Hover Foundation for Tween/Teen Advisory Council.

In Fundraising Events, \$4,271 this month in Annual Benefit, for a total of \$56,335. In Fundraising Events, \$4,475 last month and \$8,905 this month in Ghostly Gallop, for a total of \$13,380.

Notable in Expenses for the Month: In Fundraising Expense, \$14,062 in July, \$971 in August, in \$16,957 this month in Annual Benefit, for a total of \$31,990. In Fundraising Expense, \$971 in July, \$215 in August, \$6,103 last month, and \$16,957 this month in Ghostly Gallop, for a total of \$23,275

A motion was made to approve the Treasurer's Report by Sherry Jo Williams and seconded by Wesley Brown. Vote to approve the report was unanimous.

A motion was made to approve the Profit & Loss Statement by Maddie Meehan and seconded by Joseph Ferris. Vote to approve the report was unanimous.

Director's Report: Emily Chameides

Personnel: We have been gathering applications for the Youth Services and Programs Assistant position and plan to start interviewing soon.

Mandy is leaving their position at the end of the month. They have been working with us as a Library and Programs Assistant for over six years and have contributed greatly to our library; they will be missed and we wish them well. We will begin the search for a replacement soon. We are considering hiring for a full time Assistant Library Manager who could provide main floor leadership and help with sustainability projects.

Grants and Fundraising: Living Trust distribution: We received \$50,000 from Donald J. Marshall Living Trust, a partial distribution of a bequest of \$100,000 made to our library.

NYSCA Grant: We received award notification from NYSCA (New York State Council for the Arts) for a grant of \$40,000 for FY2025; we applied under the Folk Arts category. The funds will support staffing costs, contract artists fees for programming, workshop supplies, and marketing expenses.

PLA Grant: We received award notification from the 2024–2025 PLA (Public Libraries Association) Digital Navigator Workshop Incentive grant program - a pilot program that will have Digital Navigators at 35 libraries utilizing DigitalLearn materials to reach learners in their community with basic computer and technology skills. We will receive \$4,000 which will largely cover the cost of new laptops to be used in the computer classes. Paul is our library's trained Digital Navigator and worked with Emily on this grant.

The History Room Committee completed their GoFundMe campaign to support the 2025 Whaling Exhibit, raising just over their goal. Thanks to Brenda and the team working on this fundraising effort and exhibit.

Dani and Emily will be drafting the year-end appeal letter over the next couple of weeks with hopes to send by mid-December.

Programming highlight: Mondays, December 2 & 9, 5:30pm (in person, Community Room): Cooking Up Community with library staff members Sonia Cintron and Shi Wen "Wendy" Kanel.

Spanish/Bilingual Collection: We are in the process of developing our adult and children's Spanish-language book collections with support from a Mid-Hudson Library System grant. We look forward to introducing new patrons to this collection.

Library Futures, a national advocacy organization, conducted focus groups this year with libraries from across the country and the discussions revealed that there are widespread concerns about “junk content” in the Hoopla collection that libraries have little control over. Complaints included large quantities of self-published books and AI-generated content that are unvetted by libraries or reviewers, as well as books with links that led to spam sites. At the November Directors Association meeting, the MHLS Directors Association approved MHLS staff to reach out to Midwest Tape (vendor for Hoopla) on behalf of the member libraries to inquire what Hoopla’s stance on the Library Futures’ findings is, what their collection development policy is, and what they plan to do in the future to address our concerns.

In light of this news, and also recognizing the rising popularity of and costs (via Hoopla and Libby) for providing access to audiobooks the Columbia County Libraries Association is considering an alternative audiobook service through Blackstone Audio that is a set fee rather than pay-per-use cost model for audiobook content access and will discuss that in their December meeting.

The Columbia County Libraries Association is also reviewing a new system for our museum pass program. There had been significant issues with our current system - Tixkeeper - in recent months and we just learned that they plan to cease operations at year end. We have an alternative that we are considering transitioning to.

Mid-Hudson Library System (MHLS), Trustee Education and Library Advocacy:

Dani and Emily attended the 65th Annual MHLS Annual Membership Meeting on Friday, October 24 at The Wallace Center at the FDR Presidential Library & Museum in Hyde Park.

2025 Library Advocacy Day: Save the date for Wednesday, February 5 in Albany. Meeting and event times TBA. It is anticipated that 2025 will be a tight budget year in New York, with agencies told to anticipate flat funding. NYLA plans to continue to advocate for increased funding. You can sign up for the New York Library Association's Online Advocacy Center so you don't miss any upcoming calls to action.

Trustee Education (two hours required annually - annual deadline 12/31): Please enter your 2024 activities in the Trustee Education Activities Records spreadsheet as you complete your hours this year. If you believe you have completed your hours and are not in this list, please add your information to the spreadsheet or let Emily know. If you have not completed your hours, please make sure to make time for that before year end.

The Executive Committee will consider bonuses for the library staff before the end of the year, and raises for the coming year as part of the 2025 budgeting process.

Board Development: Sean Gilleran

Thank you to Dani for her leadership this year and for Gary stepping in next year. Thank you to Ryan for agreeing to step in as Treasurer next year. Crystal and Maddie will be leaving the board after this year. Thank you to Crystal and Maddie for their valuable contributions.

We will have 4 board seats to fill if nothing else changes. Monday evening 11/25 at 5pm a group will discuss board recruitment for this next year. We have some potentially interested members of the public in board activities.

History Room: Gary Sheffer

The committee is beginning to specify programming supporting the whaling exhibit, which will be a nearly year long discussion in the city about whaling and its impacts. Joe and Gary’s Lafayette in Hudson discussion went really well and was well attended, thank you Joe (and Gary).

We are decommissioning some history room books (items outside of the purview of the History Room and extra copies) with some books going to auction in an effort to make room for new acquisitions as more members of the public are donating historical material to the history room.

The GoFundMe successful drive will allow procuring whaling related documents from Nantucket and elsewhere to support the whaling exhibit and programming.

Gala: Jessica Almeleh

We moved the 2025 Gala date to the following Friday 9/12/25 (at the Caboose again, save the date!) and will start meeting in February to get plans together early.

Ghostly Gallop: Crystal Jeffs, Ryan Kelly

The committee will do a retrospective in December and collect information into a google drive to help future Gallop organizers and committee members. There were 381 total registrants, 91 days of registrants, and we are still working on tallying total expenses and donations.

414: Joseph Ferris

414 ballot initiatives passed with 77% voter support in Hudson and 60% voter support in Greenport. We suspect that mailed postcards were helpful. Thank you to everyone involved. We will have a retrospective and consider potential election cycle changes and how we can find the right balance in our strategy and ensure equitable contribution requests from Hudson and Greenport community members.

Friends of the Hudson Area Library Report: Ryan Kelly

The Friends next meeting is December 18th and Ryan will fill us in after that. Thank you to the Friends for their support of the 414 initiative.

New Business/Public Comments. None.

Motion to adjourn was made at 07:06 pm by Sean Gilleran and seconded by Welsey Brown. Vote to adjourn was passed unanimously.

Jim Kelly, 11 21 2024
Recording Secretary

12/19/2024
Date of approval