



Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting

Date: 02/20/2025

Location: Library Community Room

Trustees Attending in person:

Dani French (President), Jim Kelly (Secretary), Michael Grisham (Treasurer), Elizabeth Dickey (Vice President), Jessica Almeleh-Frazer, Miranda Barry, Wesley Brown, Joseph Ferris, Linda Friedner, Kellen Henry, Carol Pledger, Gary Sheffer, Sherry Jo Williams

Excused: Sean Gilleran, Ryan Kelly

Absent: none

Staff Attending: Emily Chameides (Director)

Others Attending: Lloyd Koedding, Aaron Able, Jared Muehlbauer, Annmarie Gundel, Kelley Robinson

Meeting was called to order by Dani French at 06:02 pm. She welcomed trustees.

A motion to approve the January minutes was made by Joseph Ferris and seconded by Wesley Brown. Vote to approve minutes was unanimous.

Reports

President's Report: Dani French

Next month is the annual board meeting where the board will vote in the new executive committee and new board members. We will also hear Emily's annual report. We have our regular board meeting and our annual meeting consecutively the same evening next month so be prepared to be here for a bit longer next month.

We had a great volunteer night this month! Successful with turnout and interested individuals! Thank you to everyone who contributed.

There is a public room use (not a library event) scheduled for this weekend that is a documentary screening and discussion. Some Columbia County residents have expressed concern over the event. The board discussed how we can more clearly signal to the community the difference between a library sponsored program that we promote and an event that is a public community room use.

The board discussed the potential value in adding a public room use disclaimer. We could require event hosts agree (in their application to use the room) to include a disclaimer that notes that the event is not a library sponsored event and is instead a public community room use. The board discussed working on drafting a disclaimer that notes that the library public community room usage does not mean the Library endorses the views of or info presented by the individuals/organizations hosting/sponsoring events in the community room.

Treasurer's Report: Michael Grisham

Month in Review - Through January, we collected 52% of our annual budgeted operating income and spent 5% of our budgeted operating expenses. Total Receipts - \$457,694 for the month and Total Expenses - \$49,761 for the month. Notable in Income for the Month - In Public Funds, City of Hudson funds, \$400,000; State Aid, \$40,000 from NYS Council on the Arts (Folk Arts programming); and State Aid, \$5,556 from NYS Special Legislative Aid via Assemblymember Didi Barrett.

The Finance Committee suggests, and the Board is considering, opening accounts for Certificates of Deposit at two local banking institutions - Greylock (a federal credit union) which has a 6 month 3.5% growth rate and Hudson Valley Credit Union (a state credit union) which has a 1 year 4% growth rate. The Board discussed reviewing these options during the time before our next meeting and then voting at the March meeting. The Finance Committee has discussed the need to develop a multi-year financial plan and will begin working on that this year. The Treasurer and/or the Library Director would administer the CD accounts.

The new budget report includes the preliminary 2025 budget that Board members have access to and can review before the March meeting and will be up for approval in next month's annual meeting.

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

A motion was made to approve the Profit & Loss Statement by Gary Sheffer and seconded by Wesley Brown. Vote to approve the report was unanimous.

Director's Report: Emily Chameides

Annual report was submitted last week to NY State. Sarah began working full time this week as the library's new Youth Services Manager. Emily will also be working on the Assistant Library Manager job posting, staff evaluations, and training plans for the year.

The Blind Date with a Book has been successful. There is another box of wrapped books and we can share more at venues that are running low on Blind Date with a Book books. Emily noted that next year we could make separate PayPal QR codes for each location selling Blind Date with a Book books so that we could see the locations the donations are coming through.

Thursday, March 6 at 6 pm is the Whaling exhibit opening reception event! Thanks to Brenda, Elaine, and the History Room crew for their hard work bringing this exhibit to fruition. Sunday, March 9 at 2 pm will be an event in partnership with the African American Archives of Columbia County on Claverack's Jan Van Hoesen house. The Friends of the Hudson Area Library has partnered to bring drop-in game nights in March (Tuesdays, 3/11-25, 4-6pm). The Columbia County Libraries Association's Community Read is starting soon, focused on Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Wall Kimmerer. Tracy is planning an ash bark basket-making workshop.

Update on Hoopla resource and concerns raised by the library system and others in the library world re: hosting unreviewed AI generated content - Hoopla responded by removing "poor quality" AI generated content and expressed openness to library systems feedback about tailoring/improving their content.

Library Advocacy Day was February 5 in Albany. Emily attended and met with Assemblymember Didi Barrett and Michelle Hinchey's staff. Governor Hochul's Executive Budget proposal included a significant cut in Library Construction Aid and Operating Aid that while better than past year proposals doesn't account for the

years of underfunding and inflation. Emily has sent an email to the Board with information about advocating for New York libraries and how to easily send an email to your representatives.

Board Development: Dani French on behalf of Sean Gilleran

We have 6 candidates currently for 5 board spots - and all will have space for volunteer opportunities - there is great interest and we are very excited! Once the interviews are complete, Sean will schedule a session with everyone involved in interviews and the Board Development committee to discuss the process related to new Board members for the March annual board meeting. If you would like to be included in that meeting please let Sean know.

Dani noted that typically in the meeting the month after the annual meeting, Board members note their interests in participating in a particular committee or committees - something to think about for the coming year!

A working group will be put together to work with Emily to discuss long term planning.

History Room: Gary Sheffer

The History room has been focused on the whaling exhibit! During the meeting Board members agreed to volunteer their assistance on March 6, prior to the event, to help retrieve the food and set up the space before the event. There will be a discussion, a preview of a film about why whaling happened in Hudson, and a panel with Library, DAR, and Columbia County Historical Society representatives with food and drinks and the exhibition available to view. Sherry Jo is working on providing free temporary whale tattoos for children and adults at the event/exhibit and with a local tattoo artist about potential whaling related tattoo collaboration.

Sponsorship and Fundraising: Miranda Barry

Library fundraising initiatives - we have two committees that organize fundraising currently (the Gala and Ghostly Gallop committees) and those will continue to be committees to organize fundraising for those events. We have identified that there is a need for further coordination and organization of the overall fundraising approach. Gary and Miranda are discussing the potential for a retreat for the board in April about the long range planning and fundraising.

Board members have a fiduciary responsibility and approve the budget and participate in the funding of the library. We would like to develop our strategy in terms of public outreach and communication and best practices with the funding currently. We would like to best communicate to the public what we offer to the community and learn from community members how we can best serve their needs.

Board members explored the possibility of obtaining access to Board member fundraising training materials and discussed potential online training materials. Board members also discussed the potential benefit of having an advisory group assist and advise the library. The Board will continue to explore ways we can enhance the events and relationships we have with library patrons and in raising funds for the library.

Gala: Jessica Almeleh-Frazer

Monday at 5 pm on Zoom the Gala committee will be meeting - if anyone is interested in joining welcome please reach out to Jess. We are giving the venue a security deposit to reserve the venue for this year's Gala.

Ghostly Gallop: from Ryan Kelly, presented by Dani French

Ryan is working on banners and reminds us Sunday, October 26 is the race date.

Programming: Kellen Henry

Meeting next Friday at 1pm at Supernatural if anyone would like to join and discuss what the year will look like

with long term projects (surveying and program attendance feedback gathering practices). Programming has been reviewing other libraries' newsletters and ways to best market programs in our newsletters.

We are looking at and preparing for the busy summer season and planning. Two programs to highlight upcoming are the Fix It Picnic - a pop-up program with 3 sessions of sewing machine learning - and the Spanish conversation nights, an in-person casual meetup open to the general public and also attended by students in the ongoing, online Adult Spanish Language Classes.

414: Joseph Ferris

The 414 committee will not have a campaign this year and is looking at how to do public engagement and community outreach in a way that overlaps with programming and the other committees - we are brainstorming and open to all ways to do public engagement and outreach.

Friends of the Hudson Area Library Report: Joe Ferris

The Friends of the Library meeting was cancelled due to lack of quorum - next Book and Bake Sale will be held March 14-16 and they are looking for volunteers and bakers.

Public Comments:

Lloyd noted the 10am library opening hour and the 3 hour limitation on computer use being allowed and that these policies should be revisited and wondered what the library's role is as an outlet for/defender of the public and their viewpoints and freedom of thought and expression. The Board thanked Lloyd for his comments.

Motion to adjourn was made at 07:15 pm by Michael and seconded bySJ . Vote to adjourn was passed unanimously.

Jim Kelly, 02 20 2025
Recording Secretary

03.27.25
Date of approval