

**SUFFERN FREE LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
REGULAR MEETING/JUNE 22, 2021**

Meeting Called to Order:

President Craig H. Long called the Regular Meeting to order at 8:06 p.m. A quorum was present.

Trustees Present: Craig H. Long, Mario F. Pensa, Karen Bash-Romaner, Donalee Berard, Erb Cooper, James J. Galvin, Michael Minevich, Mark Murphy

Absent and Excused:

Delayed: Vice President Warren E. Berbit arrived at approximately 10:15 p.m.

Staff Present: Jennifer Smith, Acting Director

Review of the Minutes of May 25, 2021:

The Minutes of May 25, 2021 were amended as follows:

On page one of the Treasurer's Report, the second line, Total Operating Funds should be reported at **\$2,324,762**.

On page three under discussion of opening the use of the meeting rooms, the sentence should read:

"President Craig H. Long emphasized that the Board supports Jennifer Smith's recommendation **to open** the use of meeting rooms to the community".

**MOTION**

A motion was made by Mark Murphy, seconded by James J. Galvin to accept the May 25, 2021 minutes with the above corrections. Motion was approved by all those present.

Abstention: Donalee Berard

Treasurer's Report –Mario F. Pensa

Mario F. Pensa reported from the Treasurer's May 2021 Cash Balance Sheet and Financial Statement:

- Operating Funds decreased \$211,252.
- Total Operating Funds reported at \$2,113,510.
- NFS Investment Funds reported at \$2,257,191.
- Total Reserve Funds reported at \$2,666,601.
- Total Funds \$4,780,111.
- Income reported at \$2,089. Presently the total budgeted income is short \$23,180 or 99%.
- Monthly Expenses reported at \$214,010. Expense areas to monitor: NYS Disability, Electronic Resources, AV Computer Equipment, Custodial Supplies, Building Repairs, Capital Building Expenses, Insurance, Telephone, and ANSER are all above period average estimates.
- Overall, total expenses for this period are below estimates.

President Craig H. Long offered the opportunity for questions regarding the Financial Statement:

James J. Galvin raised concerns regarding telephone expenses. Jennifer Smith explained that the Library purchased a new phone system in April 2020.

Mario F. Pensa added that there were additional services and unforeseen costs that were not anticipated when the new phone system was installed.

Jennifer Smith added that there might be certain features that were added such as voicemail which affected the costs. Jennifer is going to contact MAGNA5, the Library's network provider, to inquire about future savings and ways to reduce costs.

Donalee Berard reported that overall the Library is running under budget. Donalee clarified the increase in the NYS Disability Insurance, noting that the premiums doubled this year and were paid in advance which may have caused budget overage in the Disability Budget. Donalee added that The Paid Family Leave is funded by employee payroll contributions and is reimbursed with each payroll.

## **MOTION**

A motion was made by Donalee Berard, seconded by Karen Bash-Romaner to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented. Motion approved unanimously.

### Library Acting Director's Report –Jennifer Smith

Acting Director Jennifer Smith referred to her written report. In addition, Jennifer announced that the Library will resume normal operating hours on July 6, 2021. Occupancy and time limits will be removed and furniture will be put back. In order to maintain social distancing, a limited number of computers will be available with an hour limit. Staffing issues have been taken care of.

Jennifer made the following recommendations:

- The Library updated the mask mandate for staff and patrons during operating hours in accordance with the CDC. Anyone who is fully vaccinated has the option of wearing a mask. Anyone who is unvaccinated must wear a mask when in the building.
- Elsa Atkins, the Library's part time custodian, work 4.5 hours on Tuesday/Thursday nights starting July 6<sup>th</sup>.
- Change the Library's Sick Policy to allow staff to take sick time in ½ hour increments instead of the required 1 –hour increments.

The Trustees discussed the Sick Leave Policy recommendation. It was decided that the policy will be amended.

## **MOTION**

James J. Galvin moved, seconded by Mark Murphy and carried, to amend the Sick Leave Policy to read:

**Sick Leave must be taken in half hour increments.** Motion approved.

Abstention: Mario F. Pensa.

Jennifer Smith reported that she and Mario F. Pensa reviewed Dave Mackenzie's outdoor repair quotes. It will be discussed under Committee Reports -Building and Grounds.

Jennifer Smith reported that the lawn sprinkler was repaired. The Library's alarm company, Logixs, fixed the problem that was triggering the burglar alarm to go off. The technician will be back sometime in July to fix the beeping problem in the panel.

Jennifer Smith discussed her meeting with the Book Sale Representatives regarding donations, lobby sales, indoor sales and outdoor sales.

President Craig H. Long announced that patron Jeanne Lum, in a letter addressed to the Library, praised Andrew Nico, Adult Reference Librarian. Andrew went above and beyond to provide excellent service for Ms. Lum.

#### Committee Reports:

~Building and Grounds –Mario F. Pensa

Mario F. Pensa presented and explained in detail Dave MacKenzie's written proposals for repairs outside the building that include: Fixing the cracked concrete by the front walk and stones, the drain by rock wall and the sidewalk along Route 59.

Mario assessed the damages in detail and suggested that if the Board is in agreement with the proposed work and quotes he would negotiate the costs. If not in agreement, Mario noted that he will go out for more bids.

A discussion followed.

President Craig H. Long addressed the Board noting that Mario's expertise and evaluation of each proposal is trustworthy and the Board should feel confident that Mario will make sure that expenses are reasonable. The President noted that Dave Mac Kenzie has done a lot of work for the Library and asked that the Board give Dave the latitude, as it has in the past, to proceed with the proposed work.

Erb Cooper asked if the costs are within the boundaries of the Library's Purchasing Policy and if there is an obligation to go out for other estimates.

Mario F. Pensa replied that each project is independent and therefore the costs are within the Library's Purchasing Policy. Mario added that these are not major repairs and will not be done all at the same time.

Donalee Berard confirmed that the Library is obligated to go out for bids if costs are over \$25,000, unless there is an emergency.

#### **MOTION**

A motion was made by Donalee Berard, seconded by Michael Minevich and carried to authorize Mario F. Pensa to work with Dave Mac Kenzie. Motion approved unanimously.

~Finance Committee –Warren E. Berbit, Mario F. Pensa, Donalee Berard  
Nothing to report.

~Personnel Committee –Warren E. Berbit, Karen Bash-Romaner, James J. Galvin, Michael Minevich  
Nothing to report.

Donnalee Berard informed the Board that in March of 2021 a new law was passed, the American Rescue Plan Act. Under this law, there is a provision regarding COBRA Premium Assistance for terminated employees. If an employee was involuntarily terminated the employer is obligated to cover the employee's health insurance premiums through September 30, 2021. Donalee noted that Carol Connell Cannon is eligible for COBRA assistance until the end of September. The premium will be reported in payroll and will be reimbursed directly to the Library through a COBRA premium assistance credit.

~Policy Committee –Karen Bash-Romaner, Erb Cooper, James J. Galvin

#### ***Telecommuting and Remote Work Policy***

James J. Galvin noted that the 'Liability and Workers Compensation' section of the *Telecommuting and Remote Work Policy* needs clarification.

A discussion followed whether telecommuters are covered under Workers Compensation and if an employer is liable if an employee is injured while working from home. The Board agreed that more information is needed.

The Acting Director was asked to contact the Library's insurance company to clarify the Workers Compensation Laws in NYS regarding telecommuters.

## ***Email Policy***

The Board reviewed the Library's Email Policy and made the following amendments:  
Amendments were requested by Erb Cooper, James J. Galvin and Mark Murphy.

On page one, sentence number four, the word "non" should be inserted before the word "trustees" to read "**non-trustees.**"

On page two, section 7A line two, strike the word "employee." The corrected sentence should read as follows: "Because a SFL email account may not be used to register for online personal use (for instance, for personal notifications), **users** must be required and should be trained to ignore, block, or direct unsolicited personal messages to another account."

Section 7C line five, strike the word "employees" and insert the word "email users". Line six, strike the words "other library employee" and insert the words "any RCLS email system user." The corrected sentence should read as follows: "**Users** who receive any emails with this type of content from **any RCLS email system user** should immediately report the matter to the Director."

### **MOTION**

A motion was made by James J. Galvin, seconded by Karen Bash-Romaner and carried to adopt the Library's *Email Policy* with the above corrections. Motion approved unanimously.

~Search Committee –Warren E. Berbit, Karen Bash-Romaner, Mark Murphy

Mark Murphy reported that the Library's Director Position was posted with the New Jersey Library Association and the American Library Association. The ad will close on July 16, 2021. The committee has received resumes from around the country and is in the process of reviewing them.

Acting Director Jennifer Smith announced that the two employees who accepted the search committee's request to participate in the interview process are Amy La Rocca and Madalen Klein.

President Craig H. Long announced that Grace Riario gave up two evenings to meet with the Committee to discuss the Board's expectations regarding the Director's position. The President acknowledged the "tremendous amount of homework" Grace did to put together a job description and the Ad. The President expressed his gratitude to RCLS and to Grace for helping the Committee through this process.

### **Unfinished Business:**

~Suffern Woman's Club – Outdoor Patio Project – Mario F. Pensa

Karen Bash-Romaner announced that NYS approved the State Aid for Library Construction. The Library may be eligible to receive funding for the outdoor patio project and some of the other projects such as the computer lab and carpeting that were put on hold. Karen asked that Jennifer reach out to Stephen Hoefler at RCLS regarding State Aid Construction application procedures.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

~RCLS Free Direct Access Plan 2022-2026

The Board discussed the RCLS Free Direct Access Plan and needed further clarification of how it would effect Suffern Free Library's current lending restrictions. Jennifer Smith stated that she would inquire from RCLS whether the lending restrictions currently in place still apply.

### **MOTION**

A motion was made by Mark Murphy, seconded by Karen Bash-Romaner to accept the RCLS Free Direct Access Plan 2022-2026.

Yea votes by Craig H. Long, Mario F. Pensa, Karen Bash-Romaner, Erb Cooper, James J. Galvin, Mark Murphy

Abstention: Donalee Berard, Michael Minevich

Opposed: Warren E. Berbit opposed for clarification of the lending restrictions.

~RCLS Library System Plan of Service 2022-2026

### **MOTION**

A motion was made by Mark Murphy, seconded by Mario F. Pensa and carried to approve the RCLS Library System Plan of Service 2022-2026. Motion approved.

## **Adjournment**

### **MOTION**

A motion was made by Mark Murphy to adjourn the meeting at 10:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Bash-Romaner  
Secretary



