

SUFFERN FREE LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
REGULAR MEETING  
February 25, 2025

**Regular Meeting Called to Order:**

President Craig H. Long called the Regular Meeting to order at 8:28 p.m. A quorum was present.

Trustees Present: Craig H. Long, Warren E. Berbit, Donalee Berard, Karen Bash-Romaner, Erb Cooper, Pamela Hess, Michael Minevich, Mario F. Pensa

Absent and Excused: Mark Murphy

Staff Present: Darlene Alessi, Director

Public Present: Dr. Nancy Grosselfinger  
Tara Borden, Director of the West Nyack Free Library

**MINUTES**

*Review of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 28, 2025*

**MOTION**

A motion was made by Erb Cooper, seconded by Michael Minevich to accept the *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 28, 2025*. Motion carried.

**Financial Report –Donalee Berard**

Treasurer Donalee Berard reported from the Treasurer's January 2025 Financial Statement. (Statement attached).

- Checking account reported at \$478,300.
- CD maturing dates are as follows:
  - ~\$1,412,942 –4/25/25
  - ~\$600,000 –2/18/25
  - ~\$800,000 –6/17/25
  - ~\$600,000 –8/15/25
- Debt Service funds at \$385,078.
- Small funds at \$ 32,865.
- NFS account at \$ 2,915,555.
- Income YTD \$3,321,524 (includes 90% of tax revenues received in October).
- Expenses YTD 1,549,366.
- Interest & Investment Income YTD \$132,173.
- Most line items are within the 58% mark at this time.

**MOTION**

A motion was made by Warren E. Berbit, seconded by Karen Bash-Romaner, and carried to accept the financial report as presented. Motion carried.

## **Director's Report – Darlene Alessi**

The Director referred to her Annual FY2023-2024 written report. (Report attached).

The Director reiterated that all public and association libraries in New York State are required to have and share online Minimum Standards of service. Of the 14 Minimum Standards that are mandatory, RCLS will focus on Minimum Standard #1 and Minimum Standard #3 to assure consortium compliance.

- **Minimum Standard #1**  
is governed by written bylaws which define the structure and governing functions of the library board of trustees, and which shall be reviewed and re-approved by the board of trustees at least once every five years or earlier if required by law.
- **Minimum Standard #3**  
provides a board-approved written annual report to the community on the library's progress in meeting its mission, goals and objectives, as outlined in the library's long-range plan of service.

## **Committee Reports:**

### **~Building and Grounds –Mario F. Pensa**

Trustee Mario F. Pensa reported the following:

- The Building and Grounds Committee met with *OLA Consulting Engineers* to discuss HVAC design changes and estimates that would accommodate the environmentally friendly refrigerant type. The additional services will cost \$9,500.
- Potential disruption to Library operations for the electrical work required for the HVAC changes is unknown until some degree of investigation by *OLA*.

### **~Finance Committee –Warren E. Berbit, Mario F. Pensa, Donalee Berard**

- **Operating Budget FY2025-2026**

Treasurer Donalee Berard presented a quick overview of the Library's FY2025-2026 Operating Budget, noting there is no increase in taxes and \$9,435 increase in other revenue, primarily interest generated from a variety of investments over the last year, and a \$9,000 reduction in expenses in various categories. Since the Library will not be holding a Budget Vote, the \$7,500 that was budgeted for the cost of a Budget Vote will remain saved. The HVAC and Adult Reference Area projects will be paid by capital reserve funds and construction grants from NYS.

~**Personnel Committee** –Warren E. Berbit, Karen Bash-Romaner, Michael Minevich

Nothing to report.

~**Policy Committee** –Erb Cooper, Karen Bash-Romaner

Nothing to report.

~**LRP Committee** -Michael Minevich, Mark Murphy

Nothing to report.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

~ *OLA Consulting Engineers* Additional Services Request No. 1

- Refrigerant Upgrade Design Changes

### **MOTION**

A motion was made by Donalee Berard, seconded by Karen Bash-Romaner to authorize Director Darlene Alessi to sign *OLA's Additional Service Request No. 1* for \$9,500 to update the HVAC system with environmentally friendly refrigerant. Motion carried.

~Director Darlene Alessi's Annual Report FY2023-2024

President Craig H. Long asked that the Board of Trustees approve the Director's Annual Report which satisfies the New York State Minimum Standard Numbers 1 and 3 requirements as well as the report's importance in showcasing the Library's achievements and certainly worthy of being posted on the website. The President praised the Director for an excellent report.

### **MOTION**

A motion was made by Donalee Berard, seconded by Mario F. Pensa to accept the Director's Annual Report FY2023-2024 as presented. Motion carried.

~New York State Annual Report FY2023-2024

President Craig H. Long announced that the *New York State Annual Report* for Public and Association Libraries was prepared by the Director and presented for the Board's review and acceptance.

In addition, the President acknowledged the great amount of work involved in preparing the *NYS Annual Report* and thanked Director Darlene Alessi for her exceptional work on this yearly project.

## **MOTION**

Upon motion made by Donalee Berard, and seconded by Warren E. Berbit, it was:

*RESOLVED, that the Library operated under its plan of service in accordance with the provision of Education Law and Regulations of the Commissioner and assures that the Annual Report 2024 was reviewed and accepted by the Board of Trustees. Motion carried unanimously.*

~FY2025-2026 Operating Budget

## **MOTION**

A motion was made by Donalee Berard, seconded by Mario F. Pensa to accept the Library's FY2025-2026 Operating Budget as presented.

## **MOTION**

Donalee Berard moved to *Amend* the above motion by inserting the phrase "*to include a zero-tax revenue support increase for the year*" at the end of the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

~Appointment of Nominating Committee

President Craig H. Long appointed Secretary Karen-Bash Romaner to serve as Chair of the Nominating Committee.

~Conflict of Interest Annual Reaffirmation

President Craig H. Long asked the members of the Board of Trustees in attendance to sign the *Conflict-of-Interest Annual Reaffirmation*. Those present signed the affirmation.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

## **Closing Remarks**

President Craig H. Long welcomed new Trustee Pamela Hess to the Suffern Free Library Board of Trustees.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

## **MOTION**

A motion was made by Erb Cooper, seconded by Karen Bash-Romaner to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees at 8:59 p.m. Motion approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Bash-Romaner, Secretary