

Rensselaerville Library Board Meeting Minutes: July 20, 2021

Present: Linda Styer (President), Tim Lippert (Vice-President), Annemarie Martinez (Treasurer), Joe Frisino (Secretary), Tracy Bensen, Hans Soderquist, Jeanne Straussman, Robert Pondiscio, Jerry Finin, Diane Frangos, Heidi Carle (Director)

Excused: Paul Ventura

Absent:

Other: Susan Cunningham, Craig Miller, Will Singleton, Judith and Jon Matloff, Jennifer Blum (online), and Katherine Lanpher

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic this meeting was held both online and in-person at Conkling Hall. The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm.

Public Participation re: Rear Parking Proposal

Will S. lives at 8 Bennett Lane and asserted that Bennett Lane is on his land and that he has granted permission to residents with houses to drive to their homes. He does not believe that it is a public road. Use of the backyard for any purpose, including storing materials in the garage, is a burden on the neighbors. He is also concerned about the environmental impact on riparian habitat.

Judith M. said that she would like more details about what we propose to do with the backyard, what construction, the type and frequency of programming, expected traffic, etc.

Jennifer B. agreed with Will and Judith's concerns. She would like the Library to be more transparent about these kinds of plans. Her concern is noise and traffic and erosion of the road edges. She supports library programming and would like the Library to consider other under-used spaces in the hamlet.

Susan Cunningham spoke about the backyard cleanup this summer and the idea for adding more pull off areas to park in the back yard. The idea to add parking as a construction grant project came from a conversation between her and Heidi. The idea was not to pave the backyard but to add some stone to create better parking spaces and to level the backyard. Library wants to be able to use the backyard for children's programs and other outdoor programs. These would not be many hours each week.

Linda S. explained what the Construction Grants are about and how grant money was used to grade the hill, fix the stairs, and build the patio. Joe F. spoke about early use of the patio. Then Heidi explained the evolution of the current proposal to improve accessibility to the backyard for mobility-impaired persons, and the need for establishing access for people whose properties line the lane.

Diane F. spoke about her use of the lane to develop the backyard garden and that the drop from the lane to the creek across from the Library property makes parking and backing out treacherous. If the project goes forward, she would like it include building a barrier to prevent cars from sliding into the creek.

Joe proposed that we create a committee -- re: use of the back yard -- that included our neighbors.

Will suggested that maybe we should not go forward with establishing the precise legal status of the lane and rather we should look at the "culture" of the use of the lane

Judith added that she'd prefer not to have any noise-producing programming in the back.

Bottom line: The Library will not pursue the construction grant, clarify our legal access to the lane, and establish a mechanism for engaging the Library's neighbors regarding backyard programming and other library activities.

Linda made a motion to accept the Building Committee Report Part One. Diane seconded. Motion carried, with three abstentions.

Secretary's Report

Linda added town board representation as a correction to the June minutes: Tracy will attend on August 12th.

Tim made a motion to accept the April Board minutes. Linda seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

Annemarie went over the May financials. \$2100 income made from fundraising. Overall, we are in good financial shape.

Robert made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report. Jerry seconded. Motion carried.

Finance Committee

The Review of Financials Statements is underway. QuickBooks is in our system and the final installation will occur soon.

Jeanne made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report. Tim seconded. Motion carried.

Fundraising Committee

Currently we have 22 participants in the Centennial Challenge. So far, we've made \$982 in gross income minus the cost of tee-shirts. We are not participating in the Block Party this year. We will find ways to amp up the September Lawn Party. The Lawn Party is six weeks away, so we need to get on it soon. Jerry, who is in the Fire Department, suggested that a lack of communication contributed to the Block Party being downsized this year.

Lawn Party priorities: 1. Talk to Victor S. regarding using his lawn. 2. Obtain liquor permit 3. Contact Josh Carlson about tents. 4. Music. 5. Bill Benson about food.

Tim made a motion to accept the Fundraising Committee report. Annemarie seconded. Motion carried.

Building Committee

Paul has not received a response from Richard Platel regarding our proposal for regular maintenance. Paul also recommends we get a gardener to do urgently needed maintenance. Also retain a gardener/landscaper to do a low-maintenance design. Possibly contact the landscape/horticulture people at SUNY Cobleskill.

Several members of the Board volunteered to trim back the overgrown plants along terrace on Saturday 7/24 at 10am. Tracy will contact SUNY Cobleskill to see if students are interested in taking on our terraced backyard as a landscaping project.

Joe made a motion to accept the Building Committee report. Tracy seconded. Motion carried.

Development Committee

No report this month.

Strategic Planning Committee

Meetings with Gordon Enk as facilitator are ongoing. The committee includes two community representatives.

Annemarie made a motion to accept the Strategic Planning Committee report. Hans seconded. Motion carried.

Director's Report

The Library is following COVID rules for schools. Still no indoor programming. Heidi hopes to hire an adult page and then expand hours. Judy has resigned as of September 8th, so we need to hire a Youth Services staff person. She will continue to volunteer to provide some of the program she's currently doing. Heidi explained why the Library being a net lender of books is beneficial to the community.

Robert made a motion to accept the Director's Report. Jeanne seconded. Motion carried.

Old Business

There will be four board seats to fill in September. Paul Kelly is the chair of the nominating committee. We will also need to elect officers (President and Vice-President).

New Business

Tracy reported from the Town Board meeting. Hans reported on the Carey Institute Committee. There are two tracks: establishing deed restrictions and easements, and having the Institute continue to operate on the campus.

Adjourn

Joe made a motion to adjourn. Tracy seconded. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:22 PM.

The next meeting of the Rensselaerville Library Board of Trustees will be on Tuesday, August 17, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe Frisino