

Rensselaerville Library Board of Trustees
Minutes of the 21 September 2021 Meeting

The September meeting of the Rensselaerville Library Board of Trustees convened at Conkling Hall and virtually at 8:00 p.m. on 21 September 2021. Trustees and staff in attendance: Kostas (Gus) Anagnopoulos, Tracy Bensen, Judy Crilley, Jerry Finin, Donna Kropp, Robert Pondiscio, Ken Rypkema, Hans Soderquist, and Director Heidi Carle. Trustees who were excused: Joe Frisino, Annemarie Martinez, and Paul Ventura.

Opening

The meeting was called to order by President Robert Pondiscio. He thanked the board for their vote of confidence and noted that it is an honor to serve in this capacity. He further thanked outgoing Board members Diana Frangos, Tim Lippert, Jeanne Strausman, and Linda Styer for their years of dedicated service.

In outlining his vision for the year ahead President Pondiscio stated that the Board's goals will be articulated in the near future, guided by the strategic plan that is currently being formulated. He underscored his commitment to sustainable community organizations and inclusivity, as well as his desire to see the library get back to a normal footing as soon as possible. After some eighteen months of the COVID pandemic he indicated the need to safeguard and expand fundraising, draw on the many talented individuals residing in the Town of Rensselaerville for programming, and recruit younger talent to library activities.

Organizational Matters

It was noted that at this time the various library committees are vacant, as well as chairs for our fundraising activities. In anticipation of the Greenery Sale, wreaths and trees have been ordered. Trustee Tracy Bensen kindly agreed to chair the Greenery Sale with the help of volunteers. All trustees were encouraged to submit the annual conflict of interest form at their earliest convenience. Members of the Board of Trustees were also encouraged to participate in Anti-Sexual Harassment training, as well as the CORE Trustee training offered by the Upper Hudson Library System (UHLS).

Minutes of August Meeting

The minutes of the August 17, 2021 board meeting were reviewed. Vice President Soderquist moved to accept the minutes without modification. Trustee Bensen seconded the motion and it was passed by a unanimous vote.

Finance Committee

Vice President Soderquist reported that the 2021 budget preparation is ongoing. It was also reported that there is a projected \$1,200 surplus for FY2021. The annual financial review by our

accounting firm is currently underway. Trustee Ken Rypkema moved to accept the Finance Committee report. The motion was seconded by Trustee Judy Crilley and passed unanimously.

Building and Grounds Committee

Vice President Soderquist reported that numerous plans and projects related to the library's infrastructure are underway. More details will be forthcoming next month. Trustee Rypkema moved to accept the Finance Committee report. The motion was seconded by Trustee Kropp and passed unanimously.

Development Committee: 2021 Annual Appeal Letter

President Pondiscio reported on the progress that is being made to draft and distribute the library's annual appeal for financial support. The software that was used last year for addresses will be used for one more year. Trustee Kropp moved to accept the Development Committee report. The motion was seconded by Trustee Crilley and passed unanimously.

Strategic Planning Committee

Assistant Treasurer Finin reported that the Strategic Planning Committee is working hard and making good progress. Gordon Enk of Medusa and Seattle is serving as facilitator for the planning team. After much discussion and deliberation two provisional strategic initiatives have been drafted. A full strategic plan will be submitted for Board consideration in the months ahead. Trustee Bensen moved to accept the Strategic Planning Committee report. The motion was seconded by Trustee Rypkema and passed unanimously.

Director's Report

Director Carle provided an update related to the COVID-19 pandemic and how it is influencing library operations. The library added three evening hours last month and library visitor numbers are on the rise, although they are not yet back to pre-pandemic levels. The circulation numbers are also rising significantly, and the library continues to work closely with the UHLS on many matters as well as interlibrary loans.

The library facilities are consistently being reorganized and tidied, particularly the closets. Volunteer Susan Cunningham has been reorganizing the archive room. There are multiple estimates for removal of the dead Elm tree located behind the library but no firm date for the work to be accomplished. The key codes for library entrance doors are being updated. A construction grant in the amount of \$9,734 has been received for Phase II of the air conditioning project. When this installation is complete most of the collection will be climate-controlled.

Appreciation was conveyed to trustees Styer and Bensen for representing the library at the Medusa Fest held in August. There is a new library tee-shirt available for purchase. The poetry group is meeting virtually each month and it is anticipated that the writing group will restart in

the near future. A new StoryWalk has been installed in the Rensselaerville Town Park. Staffing updates were provided and the vacant youth coordinator position has been posted.

Discussion about the possibility of attracting student volunteers from the Greenville Central School and Middleburgh Central School ensued. Efforts will be made to investigate this option. In discussing COVID-related rules it was noted that the library attempts to follow the rules put in place for our nearby public schools.

Trustee Crilley moved to accept the Director's Report. The motion was seconded by Trustee Rypkema and passed unanimously.

Library Property Lines

Library meeting guest Jennifer Blum joined the meeting virtually to discuss matters relating to the Library's property line and her property line. Vice President Soderquist stated that the Board of Trustees is reviewing information and requesting guidance from our counsel. President Pondiscio indicated that he wishes to resolve this issue in an amicable and timely manner. No board action was taken.

New Business

President Pondiscio represented the library at last month's meeting of the Town Board. He provided an update to the Board and reported that information had been requested about the recent approval by Middleburgh Central School District voters to support the Rensselaerville Library.

Banking Matters

As a follow-up to the Annual Meeting, the Board turned its attention to updating the Bank of Greene County check signing signature cards.

In keeping with the requirements of the Bank of Greene County, the Board of Trustees affirms the following named persons are permitted to sign on all accounts held by the Rensselaerville Library at the Bank of Greene County:

- Board Treasurer: Annemarie Martinez
- Board Assistant Treasurer: Gerard Finin
- Board Member: Joe Frisino
- Board Member: Paul Ventura
- Library Director: Heidemarie Carle

Assistant Treasurer Finin moved to approve the above-named individuals as signers on all accounts held by the Rensselaerville Library at the Bank of Greene County. The motion was seconded by Trustee Bensen and passed unanimously.

Miscellaneous Matters

It was noted by Director Carle that the next “Core Training” by UHLS for library trustees will be held virtually.

Now that the Medusa Fire Company pancake breakfasts have returned, the Library may want to consider new ways in which to connect with those in attendance.

Library trustee representation at the Town Board meetings will be as follows:

October: Anne Marie Martinez

November: Hans Soderquist

December: Judy Crilley

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Trustee Rypkema. It was seconded Trustee Bensen and passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:12 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerry Finin
Acting Secretary