

Minutes of the SCHSFLA Board of Trustees Meeting on October 21, 2024

The meeting was held at the Forest City Branch Library

Call to Order at 4:01 PM by President Steve Spero.

Board Members in attendance: Steve Spero, Rob Vermette, Cathy Harter, Jim O’Pecko, Kathy Matis, Craig Benson, William Squier, Lorraine Chidester, Fred Cicilioni

Staff Present: Kris Ely, Administrator/Librarian, Rita Cooley, Katherine Cruz, Forest City Branch Librarian

Excused Absent: Eileen Baessler, Joann Reimel, Vickie Calby

Phoned in: Dawn Augenti

Absent: Angela Zick

Steve welcomed guests: Susquehanna County Auditors-Rick Ainey and Stephanie Sojka-Reisch

Approval of Minutes: All in Favor-All 1. Fred Cicilioni

Opposed- None 2. Will Squier

Approval of written reports: All in favor-All 1. Kathy Matis

Opposed- None 2. Cathy Harter

Questions from Lorraine Chidester (Finance Committee):

- Is it possible to do Annual Meeting via Zoom and Prime?
- Can we check on a Free 45 minute Zoom session?
- Asks how the budget was progressing
- Asks how the United Way for summer reading works? Kris Ely explained that she has asked for \$6500.00 and that we have to use our own money and then report all the expenses to them to get the grant.

Dawn Augenti asked about the Retirement Fund and wants to make sure the Board is kept in the loop. Kris Ely said she will give all reports to the Board.

Snow plowing was asked about. Board members Lorraine & Dawn think we should bid again. It was noted that we had chosen the least expensive one last year.

Katherine Cruz- Forest City Branch Manager:

She introduced herself.

Katherine informed all that on October 22, 2024 at 10:00 am there will be plaque presented at the Forest City Branch in memory of Diana Junior. The Children's Section will be dedicated to her.

Update on Author's Luncheon: more than \$2000.00 was raised. They would like it to go for furniture needed following the expansion at their Branch.

Lions Club has been active in donations to the Library:

Donated a Toddler seating nook

Donated a Gaming/S.T.E.A.M. shelf

Will cover tinting decal/ tinting for the front window along with NEP Telephone Company

Katherine has started attending the Lions Club Meetings

She spoke of things happening at the Forest City Library:

- She started the Little Ones in the Library again- averaging 10-13 kids per group
- Trying out a Birding Club
- Doing an Adult 101- They have teens and young adults signed up. They will be teaching sewing, basic cooking, how to change a tire, etc.
- There will be Halloween on Main St.
- There will be an election at the Library between the Farmer and the Duck
- There will be a Board Game night, Nov. 15. The Lions Club helped in donations
- There will be Thanksgiving Story Time, Nov. 16.
- There will be Christmas on Main St. with story time and crafts.
- Looking to start up a Lego club
- Giving away coupons to the school to give a book away to promote coming into the library
- Looking to start Saturday Programs for kids
- **Next Year 2025**
- Will be starting up an Illustration club- sponsored by Lions Club. Will be an Art Project with an Art show
- Will have an On-Line Auction by Dunn & Madden- to benefit the FC Library. Looking for gift cards, handmade items, and big ticket items
- The Little Ones at the Library will continue in 2025
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Discussion of Finances: Rob Vermette

We will have a short fall of income for November/December. To cover this we will take funds from our two endowments (Lott & Post). Monies will not be taken from the McKeage account.

Rob asked for a motion for the approval to take \$100,000.00 from the Lott & Post Investment accounts to cover Nov. & Dec. finances. It was discussed and then motion was changed to \$75,000.00.

All in Favor: Yes

1. Rob Vermette

All oppose: None

2. Jim O'Pecko

Note: We will relook at finances at end of November and see if need to vote on taking more money from the endowments. We hope to have the County money, Support Drive income, etc. to make it through the year.

Steve explained that last year we took a total of \$135,000 from the endowments. This year to date we have taken \$59,000.

Rob said that we have opened a checking account at Visions. All restricted money will be deposited here for the main library in Montrose and all branches i.e., Forest City, Hallstead, Susquehanna.

Rob & Kris are getting the updated budget together for the balance of the year.

Credit Card issue is still being worked on.

We have not heard anything from the IRS about the abatement refund. Depending on that, we will go to Peretore to recoup any funds.

See Attachment A. FINANCE COMMITTEE NOTES- OCTOBER 2024

By Laws-Policy- Jim O'Pecko

Articles A, B & D are accepted as is – No changes required

Article 3- voting membership was tabled

Will Squier made a motion to remove paid membership as a requirement for voting. This motion did not receive a second.

The Committee agreed to recommend a draft changing Article 3 regarding Voting Membership

(Changes in bold)

“Individual voting Membership in the Association shall be gained by purchasing a Membership during the annual support drive October 1st through September 30th for the year after the start date of the support drive; purchase of family voting membership affords voting rights to all adult family members residing in the same household. Alternately, individual voting membership in the Association may be gained by purchase of an annual membership in the Historical Society, for the year in question. Use of library services is not dependent on or impacted by membership in the Association.”

A Motion was made to recommend a draft changing Article 3 regarding Voting Membership

All in Favor: All

1. Jim O'Pecko

All Oppose: None

2. Kathy Matis

William Squier has been working on the policy regarding parental rights for a year. He wants to make a motion to reinstate the old Parental Rights Policy. He will make a presentation on this and will present it at the next meeting of the By-Laws/Policy Committee meeting, Nov. 14th at 8:30 am at the main library.

See Attachment B – By-Laws Meeting 10-3-2024.

Strategic Planning: Rob Vermette

Rob explained that the Community Meetings at all branches and Main Library have now been completed. Now, this information will be compiled and put into a 5 year plan. Action plans will be made and the Committee will present a five year forecast.

He wants to have this all completed by end of year.

Historical Society topics:

As curator Bonnie Yuscavage noted in her report the Historical Society is considering revising its Collections Management Policy and substantial construction work to restore the windows in the museum. Eventually, the Board will have to act on both items. Craig Benson, Kris Ely, and Steve Spero will discuss. From Bonnie's report:

Policies

"The staff will be meeting with Brian Lione to draw up recommendations for the Policy Committee for a Collections Management Policy (CMP). This overall policy might include such categories as Scope of the Collection, Acquisition and disposal, Documentation, Collections access, Collections care and conservation, Loans, and Photography. The CMP will be in keeping with those policies already in place for the Association."

Facilities

"A group consisting of Brian Lione, Steve Spero, Craig Benson, George Connor, Jack Taylor and Bonnie will meet at 1 pm October 29th to begin the window restoration/building envelope project planning in conjunction with the \$100,000 PHMC matching grant. Topics to be considered will be selection of contractor, amount of work to be completed, publicity and fundraising."

In her report was that the contractor who is rebuilding the stairs of the courthouse has expressed interest in the stair project at the Historical Society Museum building on Monument St.

They will be meeting on Wednesday, Oct .23, at 3:00 PM

Initial Bid was for \$28,000.00 with excavation at \$6500.00

Follow up Questions:

Craig Benson asked the two visiting auditors (Rick Ainey & Stephanie Sojka-Reisch) if they could look at credit card statements of the library. They said they get some spreadsheet from their people at courthouse, so he asked if we could see that. The auditors will provide these to the Board.

The next Commissioners meeting is Wednesday, Oct. 23, at 9:00 AM

Katherine Cruz asked if there was a Fundraising Committee and Steve Spero gave her the update on that.

Motion was made to end regular Board meeting and go into Executive session at 5:50 PM.

Motion to adjourn: Time 5:50.

Motion was made by Rob Vermette and seconded by Lorraine Childester.

All in favor: Yes

Opposed: None

Minutes written by Rita Cooley, Library Staff.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joann Reimel". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Joann Reimel, Recording Secretary

Attachment A

FINANCE COMMITTEE NOTES- OCTOBER 2024

The finance committee met on October 17. All members except Lorraine Chidester were in attendance plus Kris Ely and Steve Spero.

Highlights from September financial statements: total YTD income \$849,955; total YTD expenses \$898,381; net YTD income \$-49,426; total assets as of 9/30/24 \$1,460,017; total endowments as of 9/30/24 \$1,212,433.

Christine Marrazzo from Janney, Montgomery, Scott (endowment management) attended the meeting and made a short presentation on how our endowments are working. Overall, we have a 50/50 equity/fixed ratio between the three endowments, but the McKeage fund is 100% fixed, while Lott and Post funds are 70/30. A suggestion was made to move some equity into the McKeage Fund ratio and reduce the equity exposure on the other two, still maintaining an overall 50/50 ratio. This will be taken into consideration in future meetings. Christine also shared some of Janney's insights into future financial markets. Basically, we should stay the course. They don't believe that the presidential election will sway the markets significantly.

The finance committee reviewed the January-September YTD financial statements. We are continuing to improve the format of the statements, and have added a comparison to budget statement. The treatment of endowment income is still in progress. We have stopped showing monthly changes in the endowments as income or loss.

The county auditors are continuing to review our books per the Commissioners. We will continue to do monthly internal reviews as well. We have received another list of information they need, and we will work to provide same. It appears that we need some additional policies to comply.

Letters were sent to Elan to remove two old accounts from the system. These defunct accounts were removed, but unfortunately, our existing credit card account was also removed, creating significant purchasing issues until it is fully reinstated.

Looking at year-end finances, it appears that there will be a shortfall of up to \$136,000 based on expected income/expenses for the last four months of the year. We will address the implications of this outlook in future meetings.

Other items discussed:

- 1) The non-payment of lottery tax withholdings is an ongoing issue. We are waiting for a response from the IRS as to our request for abatement of penalties and interest from 2022.
- 2) A new checking account has been opened at Visions FCU to handle all of the branch restricted funds, except for the Historical Society, which already has its own account. Existing restricted funds will be deposited into the new account to pay for individual branch expenditures. Donations/memorials will be deposited into the account as they are received.

Rob Vermette, Treasurer

Attachment B

By Laws Meeting 10.3.2024

By-laws/policy meeting, Thursday, October 3, 2024 at 8:30

Attendees: Jim O'Pecko, Steve Spero, Kris Ely, Eileen Baessler, George Conner, Chris Hall, Joann Reimel, Will Squier, Dawn Augenti and Loraine Chidester

Will Squier made a motion to remove paid membership as a requirement for voting membership on Article 3 of the bylaws. The motion did not receive a second and was tabled.

Article 3 – Voting Membership

“Individual voting Membership in the Association shall be gained by **purchasing a membership during the annual support drive October 1st through September 30th for the year after the start date of the support drive;** purchase of family voting membership affords voting rights to all adult family members residing in the same household. Alternately, individual voting membership in the Association may be gained by purchase of an annual membership in the Historical Society, for the year in question. Use of library services is not dependent on or impacted by membership in the Association.”

This amendment was voted on and accepted.

Article 4a, b and d are accepted as is, no change required.

It was noted that county auditors are looking for a policy/procedure on finances. It was decided that the finance committee review this.

Other items brought up for future discussion include hiring and firing of personnel and annual raise policies.

I would like to move the November, 2024 meeting to the second Thursday of the month (November 14th) as I will be out of town for the 7th of November.