SUFFERN FREE LIBRARY ANNUAL ASSOCIATION MEETING/FEBRUARY 22, 2022

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: Warren E. Berbit

Staff Present: Darlene Alessi, Library Director

Public Present: Jean R. Gould, Joyce A. Nencetti

Meeting Called to Order:

President Craig H. Long called the 96th Annual Board Meeting to order at 7:39 p.m. A quorum was established. The President welcomed the Board of Trustees and guests. The *Pledge of Allegiance* was recited.

Review of the of the Minutes of February 23, 2021.

MOTION

A motion was made by Mark Murphy, seconded by Donalee Berard, and carried to accept the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Board of Trustees of February 23, 2021. Motion approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Annual Report - Mario F. Pensa

Mario F. Pensa read the Treasurer's report for the fiscal year July 1, 2020 –June 30, 2021, and for the first half of the current fiscal year July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022. (Report attached)

President Craig H. Long offered the opportunity for questions regarding the Treasurer's Annual Report.

Jean Gould inquired about what kind of critical asset replacement projects Mario anticipates the capital funds will finance based on the Treasurer's capital fund budget increase.

Mario F. Pensa noted that according to his calculations, some equipment has reached its average lifespan. It might include the HVAC system, the outside sewer pumps, possibly the fire alarm system.

President Craig H. Long noted that as an engineer, Mario F. Pensa has put a tremendous amount of time foreseeing every piece of mechanical equipment in the building and informing the Board of what needs to be repaired, replaced, and what it would cost.

MOTION

A motion was made by Erb Cooper, seconded by Karen Bash-Romaner, and carried to accept the Treasurer's Annual Report as presented. Motion approved unanimously.

President Craig H. Long thanked Mario F. Pensa for monitoring and providing the monthly financial reports to the Board as well as the detailed Annual reports.

Mario F. Pensa expressed his gratitude to Donalee Berard stating that she is the 'foundation' of a considerable amount of work and financial information that goes into preparing the Treasurer's Annual Report.

President's Report - Craig H. Long

The President's opening statement noted that last year, for the first time in 95 years, the annual meeting was not held in the Library due to the COVID Pandemic. At the beginning of the year the Library had limited hours, curbside pickup, online programming, and remote Board meetings in order to comply with state mandates. When things were at their worst, the shutdowns of workplaces and public places, the staff was still coming in here day after day, doing their job. The custodian and maintenance staff kept the building clean and safe and when the doors finally opened, patrons were welcomed back.

The Library prevailed because of the staff's 'Herculean' effort, and as a Board, was able to give them the support they needed to continue providing service to the community during difficult times.

On May 20, 2021, the Board appointed Jennifer May Smith, Head of Children's Services, to serve as the Acting Director.

Summer reading was a great success with 521 children, teens, and adults participating in the Summer Reading Program. A record number of adults (72) participated. Adult programs were offered both in person and virtually and were attended by 7,361 people.

The Board of Trustees established a Search Committee under the direction of Mark Murphy, along with Vice President Warren E. Berbit and Karen Bash Romaner to conduct the nationwide search for a Library Director. Two staff members were also invited to share their input. The Committee worked long and hard in terms of searching and reviewing resumes and conducting interviews. Grace Riario, Executive Director of RCLS assisted in the search. The search ended in November of 2021, with a unanimous choice of Darlene Alessi, to be the Library Director.

Darlene Alessi has been tasked with taking the Library in a new direction. Darlene is reviewing and taking a detailed look at the budget. She has begun updating policies, revamping the Library building with fresh paint and new furniture; she is working on getting construction grants for replacing the carpets; and she is working with the Woman's Club and Mario F. Pensa on creating an inviting outdoor space as well.

The Board of Trustees created the position of Assistant Director, and on November 15, 2021, that position was given to Jennifer Mae Smith.

The President thanked the Board of Trustees for their dedication and commitment to the Library and support of the staff. Thank you to the staff for their hard work and dedication.

Budget Information –Donalee Berard

Donalee Berard reviewed in detail the Library's FY 2022-2023 Budget. Based on the Budget, the Library will need to ask for an increase of 2% real property tax for 2022-2023 annual support of the Library plus use reserve funds to balance the budget.

President Craig H. Long noted that the Library had been constrained for two years, not going out for a budget vote, acknowledging some of the financial hardships the community faced during difficult times. The President mentioned that Donalee Berard was able to find out that the Library was eligible to apply for the CARES ACT, and as a result, the Library received funds.

Trustee Election:

President Craig H. Long announced that the three current Board members running for re-elections are:

- Donalee Berard
- Erb Cooper
- James J. Galvin

The President noted that legal notices of the meeting and Trustee election were published in both the *Journal News* and *Rockland County Times*. There were no petitions submitted from any other individual candidates.

Secretary Karen Bash-Romaner moved and cast one vote to accept and declare the above candidates for 3-year terms of office.

Public Comment: Joyce A. Nencetti, Trustee Emeritus

Joyce A. Nencetti announced that the book sale volunteers and herself, are pleased with the way the public is excited now that the books are for sale in the downstairs lobby. Joyce noted she met with Darlene Alessi and the volunteers to discuss the possibility of a spring book sale. Book donations are now being accepted at the back entrance of the Library.

Joyce Nencetti thanked Darlene Alessi for her patience, good ideas, and suggestions.

President Craig H. Long remarked that on behalf of the Board of Trustees, thank you to Joyce Nencetti and the book sale volunteers for their hard work.

MOTION

A motion was made by Mark Murphy, seconded by James J. Galvin, and carried to adjourn the Annual Association meeting at 8:20 p.m.

Karen/Bash-Romaner

Secretary