

HENDRICK HUDSON FREE LIBRARY
Board of Trustees Meeting
October 25, 2021
Via Go To Meeting

Board members present: Mark Geisler, Philip Brandon, Gina Goodenow, Jeffrey Schwartz, Cindy Neff, Barbara Burck, Kevin Quigley, Tammi Trudel, Francoise LeGoues, Charles Smith

Also present: Jill Davis, Director

Mr. Brandon called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The minutes of the September 27, 2021 meeting were approved on a **motion** made by Ms. Legoues and seconded by Ms. Neff; motion carried (9-0) with one abstention.

FINANCES - Mrs. Davis

- **Budget-to-Date** - reviewed and accepted. Mrs. Davis discussed income and expense items for September.
- **Treasurer's Report** - reviewed and accepted. Mrs. Davis noted that the Schwab account had been opened and \$600,000 had been deposited, the majority represented by the Gedney funds.
- **Miscellaneous Income Report** - reviewed and accepted.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Investment of Gedney Funds**
Mr. Schwartz relayed to the board that Mr. Geisler, Mrs. Davis, and he had spoken with Rob Graham from Schwab and representatives from Beacon Trust, the fiduciaries who will be managing the Gedney investments. He was very pleased with their responses to his questions and everyone felt comfortable with their understanding of the library's investment strategy. Mr. Schwartz then explained that the library portfolio would be 70% equity and 30% fixed income and gave the board a general idea of what the asset allocations would look like.
- **Fine-Free Status**
Mrs. Davis reported that many libraries are eliminating charging fines on materials. The Queens, Brooklyn, and New York Public libraries, along with 55 Long Island libraries, and 10 Westchester County libraries have stopped charging late fees. Since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic Hendrick Hudson has not been collecting fines. Mrs. Davis would like this to be a permanent change to the policy. This change would not eliminate charges on lost materials, only fines. The library system is investigating shortening the time period after which materials go to lost status from 60 to 30 days, as more Westchester libraries adopt fine-free policies. There was a discussion of the pros and cons of this policy change. A **motion** to revise the currently policy to no longer charge late fees on adult or children's materials was made by Ms. Legoues and seconded by Mr. Quigley; motion carried unanimously (10-0).

- **StoryWalk®**

Mrs. Davis reported that the library's StoryWalk® is just about ready to be opened to the public. We are hoping to have a grand unveiling on December 11, 2021. This is the same day as our annual candy houses program. We are also considering honoring local children's author Jerry Pinkney, who recently passed away.

- **Electric Sign**

Mr. Brandon and Mrs. Davis have been gathering information regarding an electric display sign that could be used to publicize library events. The thought was that the best place for this type of sign would be at the intersection of Route 9A and Kings Ferry Road in the center of Montrose. The Town is aware that the library would like to investigate this option, but is hesitant to put anything permanent there at this time, as there are plans to redesign that section of Montrose. Mrs. Davis and Mr. Brandon will look into the cost of a portable sign that could be used both on the main road and in front of the library until such time that a more permanent sign might be put on the main corridor. Mr. Quigley noted that these types of signs are quite expensive. Mrs. Goodenow suggested that to offset the cost perhaps we could rent it out to other organizations at times when the library is not using it. Ms. Trudel knows the person in charge of this type of signage for Westchester County and will forward his information to Mrs. Davis.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Comedy Night Fundraiser**

Due to very poor response this fundraiser was not held. The organizer of Hard Headed Comedy has offered to apply 40% of our deposit towards an event date in the spring. There was discussion on why the event didn't work and what might be done to make it successful. A decision was made to move ahead with the spring event, partnering instead with a local restaurant or event space, which might make for a more successful effort. The consensus was that having a comedy event in the library is not as inviting as having it at an entertainment-friendly venue more conducive to serving food and drink. Board members will reach out to venues to see if there is anyone interested in partnering with the library. Mrs. Davis will contact the organizer and provide the board with open dates for the spring event.

- **Change to the Investment Policy**

Mr. Geisler presented a change to our current investment policy that the investment committee felt was necessary for policy clarification. It concerns how the board handles the investment of non-public monies the library receives. A **motion** to approve the change to the Investment Policy as presented was made by Ms. Neff and seconded by Mr. Quigley; motion carried unanimously (10-0).

- **Pergola-Outdoor Space**

Mrs. Davis contacted Bob Gabalski, Lothrop partner, to inquire about how the pergola project would be billed should we decide to stop it at a point prior to construction. He explained that we can stop the project at any point and will be billed 15% of the estimated cost (until we have an actual cost) and in accordance with how far along they are in the project. Project billing phases are 75% construction documents - 5% bidding - 20% construction. For example: 15% of

\$200,000 est. = \$30,000 - If we stop after bidding, fees payable would be 75% of \$30,000 (\$22,500) + 5% of \$30,000 (\$1500). The total due would be \$24,000. If we stopped at any point before the end of a phase we would be billed according to the percentage of phase completion. For example: 50% thru construction documents we would owe \$11,250.

Mrs. Davis signed the amendment to the contract allowing Lothrop to move forward. Mr. Geisler reviewed the amendment prior to its signing.

Then, Mrs. Davis contacted our insurance carrier to ask about the increase in our premium if we moved forward with the pergola construction. The increase would be based on the construction cost of the additional space.

- **Security Cameras Upgrade**

Mrs. Davis requested the addition of security cameras in the upstairs hallway and in the main portion of the library. The estimate was included in the board documents. She would like to use the FEMA reimbursement money to fund this project. A **motion** to approve the expenditure of \$8,480 for new security cameras to improve coverage of the second floor and main area downstairs was made by Ms. Neff and seconded by Mr. Schwartz; motion carried unanimously (10-0).

- **Changes to Open Meeting Law**

Mr. Geisler reviewed with the board the changes to the Open Meeting Law that will go into effect November 2021. There was an amendment to the law that requires us to make agency records available to the public under the Freedom of Information Law. Although we are not an agency under this law there was a change in statute that requires us to make any changes to policy (among other things) available to the public 24 hours before any public meeting. We will do this by posting on our website any documents that fit these criteria.

- **2022 Board Dates and Holidays**

The 2022 board meeting dates and holidays were included in the board documents. Mrs. Davis requested that the November meeting be moved to November 21st from November 28th since the week before is Thanksgiving and many might be busy with family obligations and not able to properly review the board materials. Beginning in 2022, board meetings will go back to being held at the library, in person, and will begin at 7 pm. Mrs. Davis also requested that the library be closed on Saturday, December 24, 2022 (normally open until 1pm) so that staff can have the entire holiday weekend off. A **motion** to accept the 2022 Board Meeting Dates and 2022 Holidays, as amended, was made by Ms. Legoues and seconded by Ms. Trudel; motion carried unanimously (10-0).

- **2022-2023 Budget and Beyond**

With the closing of Entergy in April 2021, the PILOT money that the library will receive will decrease greatly. Mrs. Davis reached out to Enrique Catalan, Assistant Superintendent of Business at the Hendrick Hudson School District, for any information he might have on the negotiations with Holtec (the decommissioning company) concerning the funding they might be providing the library moving forward. He informed her that the negotiations were just beginning, but if no agreement was reached the library would receive \$67,736 under the old PILOT agreement for 2022-2023. Mrs. Davis presented a five year look ahead, using a \$50,000 increase to the tax levy (approx. 4% per year) and

\$50,000 from reserve to project what monies the library would need to keep a flat budget through 2027.

She polled the board to see if she should present these figures to Mr. Catalan to use in the negotiations. There was discussion as to what was the best approach and it was decided that Mrs. Davis should reach out to Mr. Catalan, using dollar figures the library would need from Holtec without drawing from the library's reserve.

- **Sunday Hours**

Normally the library is closed on Sunday's during the months of July and August. In 2021, the board approved keeping the library open on Sundays because we had been closed or had limited hours during the COVID-19 pandemic. Remaining open was very successful, not only in items checked out, but with having concerts on the lawn twice monthly, traffic in the library increased too. Mrs. Davis reported that the cost to keep the library open was minimal and requested that this be a change to our hours of operation for 2022. A **motion** to remain open on Sundays for the summer of 2022 was made by Ms. Neff and seconded by Mr. Quigley; motion carried unanimously (10-0).

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- **Social Media Stats (October)**

The social media stats were distributed with the meeting documents. We have now been using The Shop for our social media for a year with success. Please send any questions or comments to Mrs. Davis.

- **Coffee and Conversation with Senator Harckham**

Mrs. Davis attended the event featuring Senator Harckham that was held at the library. There were 25 in attendance and the discussion varied from the closing of Entergy to the opioid crisis to the poor state of our roads. Senator Harckham offered assistance to the library in the form of a letter of support for any projects we might undertake.

- **Boiler Replacement**

The boiler replacement has begun. If all goes as planned we should have heat in the main part of the building and the second floor early next week. The children's library runs on a different system so there is currently heat in that area.

- **NYS Construction Grant - Sidewalks**

We received 90% of the construction grant funds (approximately \$50,000) from NYS for the sidewalk project. It will be deposited into the capital account that was used to fund the rest of the project. The electrician should be here in the next couple of weeks to connect the electric for the heating coils. The project will then be complete.

- **FEMA Reimbursement**

We received the first reimbursement check from FEMA (just over \$9,000). The second project is still under review and the third project will not be submitted until early 2022.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS - (January, May, September)

CORRESPONDENCE

OTHER

Meeting adjourned at 9:01 pm.