

MINUTES OF  
THE PLAINEDGE PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

February 22, 2023

**Present**

Laura Oden-Bell, President  
Doreen Oliver, Vice President  
Ann Doxsey  
Rick Fiumara  
Michael Giris

Michele Lipson, Director  
Michael Dietz, Systems Integrator  
Diana Weir, Personnel Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM, by the President.

The President led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Library Correspondence**

**Guest**

Dotty Talmadge, a long time resident, was present. She told the Board that while she understands the need for a new library, she had some concerns. The Board gave her time to speak, then asked her to speak with the Director for a full conversation. They were happy to hear from a library user and want to hear her thoughts.

Al Coster, accountant, was present. He led a discussion about how to read financial reports. He spoke about each type of financial report that is generated for the Board and told us what to look for. The Board and administration were receptive, asked questions and discussed what they need to see to be sure that their fiduciary responsibilities were being met.

**Minutes**

A motion was made by Doreen Oliver and seconded by Michael Giris, to approve the Minutes of the January 18, 2023 meeting of the Board of Trustees. Motion passed unanimously.

## **Warrants**

A motion was made by Ann Doxsey, and seconded by Michael Giris, to approve February Bill Warrant #8-1 (\$70,641.04). Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Michael Giris, and seconded by Rick Fiumara, to approve the February Payroll Warrants #8-1-A, (\$42,769.47) #8-1-B, (\$824.08) #8-2-A, (\$46,137.70) and #8-2-B, (\$34,020.39) in the amount of \$123,751.64 Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Ann Doxsey and seconded by Doreen Oliver to approve January Capital Fund Warrant #8-1 (\$8,774.11). Motion passed unanimously.

## **Financials**

Discussion of the Financial Reports for January 2023 took place earlier, with Accountant Al Coster.

## **Staff Reports**

### 01) Children's Report

We're excited by the record number of children signed up for 1000 Books before Kindergarten and can't wait for the quail eggs!

### 02) Reference Monthly Report

There have been so many great book displays. Patrons love them and the books fly off the shelves. Reference made the decision to interfile the Reference books with circulating books. We feel that they will be more 'findable' and helpful this way.

### 03) Director's Report

As you know, the bond vote didn't pass. Many community members have called to ask what we will do now. The Board and administration are now tasked with what to do moving forward. We know that there are large building repairs that we've put off doing. We have no choice but to have some of these repairs done now. As far as what we will do next, we need time to process the result and reassess where we are and where we're going. We will continue to keep the community informed.

This is a very busy time of year on the administrative end of the library. We have put together a draft budget, and are presenting it to the Board this evening. We will submit the tax cap form to the state very soon. Our 2023-2024 budget will be below the tax cap. The Annual Report to the state is always a tremendous project that requires the input from many staff members. We are working together to get it all done before we submit it to the Nassau Library System. The Report is complicated, but our staff has worked hard in the past to make it easier to do each year. There will be a budget newsletter that will be mailed out in the spring, in advance of the budget vote.

As always, the Plainedge Library staff continues to do what they do best – serve the community. They go above and beyond to be helpful, kind and informative.

## **Incident Report**

1. We had an upset patron incident. This was handled kindly and competently by the Reference Librarians.

## **Unfinished Business**

1. Building Project
  - a. We have a persistent odor coming into our building. Due to the single pane windows and location of the fresh air intake, it is permeating our building frequently. We have had it checked out and are continuing to monitor it.
  - b. Thanks to a grant through New York State Archives, library staff has been working with a consultant on a records retention plan. We have over 50 boxes that we can dispose of at this time.
  - c. There was a mixup from the South Farmingdale Water District. They mistakenly installed monitoring equipment on 1060 Hicksville Rd. Seaford, rather than our address 1060 Hicksville Rd., N. Massapequa. We got a 'leak alert,' and we thought we had used hundreds of gallons of water, but the reading wasn't coming from our building. The water district located and fixed the problem.
  - d. A panel on the water cooling tower is rusted from the inside and needs to be replaced. The cost is around \$18,000. The cost of a new tower is around \$184,000. Sav-Mor estimates the life of the tower to be another year or two. The Director and Systems Integrator will look into alternatives to the water cooling tower and come back to the Board with information.
2. Bond Vote Recap

Vote Results: Yes 243 No 404

The Board discussed the result of the vote and what our options are moving forward. There were several factors in the results of the vote. We acknowledged that is a difficult economic climate. We felt that communication was a factor as the community didn't understand that the plan originated from a desire to be fiscally responsible, to make the building ADA compliant, up to safety standards, as well as to provide services and materials that are impossible in our current building. We talked about alternative ways to get the message out. We had community meetings, information was on our website, social media, and went out in emails and regular mailings. This combination approach didn't seem to be effective. The Board and administration will continue the discussion.

## **New Business**

1. Policies
  - a. AHA Participating Libraries Release Form (first reading)
  - b. AHA Patron Release Form (first reading)
  - c. Museum Pass Policy (first reading)
2. Investment

We continue to monitor our investments and are getting very good interest rates at this time.
3. 2023-2024 Budget Discussion

Although the Board and Director had hoped for a 1.85% increase, the Director explained that this was unrealistic. Expenses have gone up astronomically. The tax cap calculation has carryover from prior years. This will allow us to levy 3.5% increase without piercing the tax cap. The Board felt that this would be too much of a strain on the average taxpayer. It's difficult, given that there are so many things that we can't control. Health insurance has gone up 14%. This equals \$70,000 for us. A 2% increase would be about \$50,000. The other things that we can't control are retirement, Social Security, Medicare, contractual salary increases, etc. The only things we can control are materials and services and we obviously don't want to cut those.

The Director offered a first draft budget with a 2.39% increase. We will save money by earning interest. We are going to suspend mailing the newsletter (except for the budget mailing) in the interest of saving money and trees. We will begin charging for craft and cooking (we're already charging for exercise) programs soon. The Board understands the need for this budgetary increase.

#### 04) Checks

- a. Ecommerce
- b. Dorothy Strong Memorial Fund

A motion to accept a check for Ecommerce and the Dorothy Strong Memorial Fund was made by Laura Oden-Bell and seconded by Doreen Oliver. The motion passed unanimously. The Director will send a thank you note to Dorothy Strong's daughter.

#### **Library Statistics**

1. Board looked over internal Library statistics, Nassau Digital Doorway statistics, and the TechOps Report from NLS, for January 2023.

#### **Miscellaneous**

1. Public Library Budgets Are Being Slashed
2. Referenda Roundup
3. The Future of Libraries
4. Newsday, Long Island Libraries
5. A Love Letter to Libraries
6. Libraries Key Role in Community Health

A motion was made by Ann Doxsey to approve the contract with Lynch Appraisal to appraise the property next door at 5 Amherst Drive at a cost of \$2750. The motion was seconded by Laura Oden-Bell. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn was made by Doreen Oliver, and seconded by Laura Oden-Bell at 9:24 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

The date of the next Board of Trustees meeting is Monday, March 20, 2023.

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Secretary's Signature

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Date of Approval

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Secretary's Initials