

**MEETING OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**Pound Ridge Library District**  
**Location: 271 Westchester Ave, Pound Ridge, NY**  
**October 24, 2023**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by President Bonnie Schwartz.

**Present:** Anne Benefico, Michael Clark, John Cristiano, Valerie Nelson, Bonnie Schwartz, MaryEllen Walsh, Jennifer Savage, Selena Shen

**On Zoom:** Jenna Wise signed in at 7:52 PM for part of the meeting.

A quorum was present throughout the meeting.

Ms. Benefico made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 20, 2023, Board Meeting; Ms. Nelson seconded. All in favor.

The next Board of Trustees Meeting will take place at the library on Tuesday, November 21, 2023.

**Building and Grounds:** Facilities Manager, Ken Gilman

- Ken has collected 3 proposals for a new cedar roof and is trying to get a fourth. He will also circle back and ask the companies who are bidding to include a price for asphalt should we get approval from the Landmarks Commission. Ms. Schwartz will get the library on the Landmarks Commission agenda.
- Gutters will be cleaned after all the leaves have fallen.

**Barry Butlien, CFP, Westchester Financial Advisors**, introduced himself to the board. As the library's new financial planner, Mr. Butlien explained that our strategy had been extremely conservative in the past, and he is pursuing funds that will get us a better yield. We had three Schwab accounts made up of some cash, 2 CD's and taxable municipal bonds. Mr. Butlien is almost done with transferring our three accounts from Schwab to NFS (custodian), a Fidelity owned company. Ms. Nelson, Mr. Clark and Mr. Cristiano will be assigned individual log-ins for on-line viewing of our accounts on the NFS portal.

**Election of Officers:** Ms. Schwartz announced the current officers and polled the trustees for nominations and/or their own desire to run for office. Ballots were filled out and Ms. Coulter collected; Ms. Wise voted verbally on Zoom. Results will be announced later in the meeting.

**Financial Update Highlights:** Michael Lewis

**Balance Sheet Comparison through September 30, 2023**

- Total bank accounts are \$1,087,007.36, down \$-467,695.10 from same time period last year.
- Total endowment funds (liquid and market value of Schwab accounts) are \$753,227.50, a small increase over same time last year.
- Total liability and equities are \$1,843,625.88 down 19.89% for same time period in 2022.

**Profit and Loss Comparison January – January - September, 2023**

- Total Income for the library is \$644,560.49, up \$68,826, 06 (11.95%) from same time period in 2022.
- Library Services spending is up \$15,127.16 (19.41%) primarily due to programming.
- Office/GA Expenses are up \$8,706.95 (8.73%) mostly due to equipment purchases and publicity.
- Total expenses are \$762,464.41 and when you compare with revenue of \$644,560.49, it yields a net operating loss \$-117,903.92.

**Budget vs. Actuals**

- Mr. Lewis presented and explained a detailed and color-coded spreadsheet that contains the entire projection through December 31, 2023, as well as year to date actuals and total budget, and what remains.

Mr. Lewis proposed a budget amendment for trustees to review. This budget amendment is required to cover various operating expenditures through the quarter ending September 30, 2023. Mr. Clark made a motion to approve the proposed budgetary amendments as described by Mr. Lewis; Ms. Shen seconded; all in favor.

## Warrants

- Ms. Walsh made a motion to approve the warrants in the amount of \$22,706.82; Ms. Savage seconded; all in favor.

Mr. Lewis presented a “statement” on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. A discussion followed regarding the library’s policies and statements. Board members agreed that we need to review all our policies especially those that are outdated (some have not been updated since 2016). Mr. Lewis will be updating the library’s Investment Policy and the Electronic Banking Policy.

## COMMITTEES

**Finance:** John Cristiano. Update was provided earlier in the meeting, when Mr. Butlien, our new financial planner, made his presentation.

**Governance:** Michael Clark. Mr. Clark provided an update on the library’s bank accounts: **Key Bank** - \$240,000 with \$5000 in checking and \$235,000 in high interest savings. **Chase Bank** - \$69,780.10 in checking after \$50,000 transfer to cover the warrants; \$350,000 high interest CD, and \$410,127.85 in regular savings.

Regarding policies, Mr. Clark spoke about the Patron Conduct Policy and the Unattended Children Policy. These two policies are required by our insurer, Utica National. For each of these policies, Ms. Coulter provided the ALA version, the version she wrote and samples from other libraries. Also discussed was updating the Schaffner Room Policy. It was determined that Ms. Coulter and the Governance Committee need to submit final revisions before making a motion to approve which will take place at next month’s meeting. In addition, as policies get updated, the date they are approved should be included on the policy statement.

**Public Relations** – Jenna Wise – no longer present on Zoom so no update provided.

**Program Development** – Selena Shen. Ms. Shen mentioned that challenging situations continue with the parking lot for the popular programs.

**HR/Legal:** Valerie Nelson – Update will be provided in Executive Session.

**Long Range Planning:** John Cristiano – nothing to report this month

**Children’s Room Refresh:** Jennifer Savage. The committee met in the Children’s Room on Sept 29 to discuss ideas and themes and reviewed drawings/designs. Waiting for new pricing estimates from CLC.

**Parking Improvement:** Bonnie Schwartz. The library went in front of the Planning Board informally on September 28, 2023. The planning board members had previously been sent the Traffic Study, although Planning Board Chairperson, Michele Rudolph, stated they are not engineers and thus not equipped to analyze the results. Their suggestions are for the library to put in a formal application with schematics, consider hiring a new engineer, and then the town engineer will review the traffic study once the application is received.

A lengthy discussion followed among the trustees. The highlights:

- **Expenses and Funding**
  - Project could easily cost \$500,000.00+
  - Getting an engineer is approx. \$20,000 (that’s what it cost the first time). Schematics can cost \$7500. Every time we need an engineer at a planning board meeting it’s \$350.00 an hour. Each time we present at the planning board could run \$10-15K.
  - Money can come from multiple sources: Foundation, Library Funds, Fund Raising, Grants
  - Some trustees felt that funding of project should be established: we should price out the entire project and know what we are getting into financially, and where the funds are coming from. Some trustees felt we take this step by step. Do we start to spend money knowing we might lose initial investment, understanding that some costs we will never get back.
  - Perhaps the Foundation will approve up to \$50,000 for initial costs associated with the formal application.
- **Other Considerations**
  - We need to hire a new engineer – Ray Beeler had been hired by a previous board

- Safety of patrons will be essential: more lighting, sidewalks, left turn difficulty exiting the library, perhaps the N2N bus is safer, ADA compliance for handicapped spaces.
- **Outside Support**
  - Determining if the Foundation is on board with this project – feedback seems to be mixed
  - We need the community to step up – arrange a meeting and provide a history of the project to the community. Let the community know we are doing everything we can, and we welcome their support.

Rebecca Fay Walsh, a director of the Foundation, was present on Zoom. She said the Foundation has not discussed the parking lot, and she will summarize to her Board the conversation about the parking lot and try to get some resolution. She expressed concern as she and her small child had to walk on Route 137/Westchester Avenue from Conant Hall to the library.

- **What's Next**
  - The Parking Lot Committee and other interested trustees will have a separate meeting to discuss historical timeline of the parking lot project. Also will put a proposal together on what the initial application will cost and how we will fund it. Ms. Schwartz and trustees will present to the Foundation.

**Update on Grant Application from Foundation for Acoustic Panels for Schaffner Room.** Ms. Walsh had several questions about how the acoustic analysis was done, and how many quotes we got, what the panels look like and where they will be placed. Ms. Coulter answered her questions and will be attending the Foundation's Zoom meeting on Oct 30 to address any concerns. She will also invite the sound specialist who advised us.

**OEM:** Bonnie Schwartz - nothing new to report

**Technology:** Michael Clark. Ms. Coulter did research and provided vendor bids for the library to change our web hosting service. Ms. Schwartz made a motion to approve CyberOptik as our new web hosting provider; Ms. Shen seconded. All in favor.

**Vendor Contract Review:** Bonnie Schwartz – no update

#### **Director's Report/New Business:**

- Ms. Coulter reminded trustees to complete their required education and she provided links to courses in the dropbox.
- Google Drive will be used moving forward for board meeting materials. Google Drive is a free service.
- Mr. Clark will donate and install solar lights and see if that works for spotlighting the Ikebana sculpture.
- Plaques with names for benefactress paintings will be designed and ordered.
- The annual required visit to the Wood Memorial was completed by Ms. Schwartz and Ms. Benefico on October 11, 2023.
- Committee assignments and possible combining of committees will be discussed at next meeting.

**Election Results:** Current slate was elected unanimously.

**9:32 PM Public Remarks** – Ms. Nicole Schaffer thanked the board and commented the parking lot project is moving in the right direction, and stated it is difficult to be 100% funded before we move forward – she suggested to move forward so we know what to fund raise for. She also expressed agreement in keeping the public informed.

**9:34 PM** Public Meeting adjourned

**9:36 PM** Executive session commenced.

**10:00 PM** Executive session adjourned.