

SUFFERN FREE LIBRARY
ANNUAL ASSOCIATION MEETING/FEBRUARY 28, 2023

(Amended February 27, 2024):

The following Minutes were amended to correct an error on page 2 under President's Remarks, bellow the last bullet, noted by President Craig H. Long replacing the word "Central" with the word "Suffern".

The amended sentence should read as follows:

*"The President thanked the **Suffern** Planning Board and Rockland County Planning Department and the Woman's club of Suffern as well".*

Trustees Present: Craig H. Long, Warren E. Berbit, Mario F. Pensa, Karen Bash-Romaner, Donalee Berard, Erb Cooper, James J. Galvin, Michael Minevich, Mark Murphy

Absent and Excused: None.

Staff Present: Darlene Alessi, Library Director

Public Present: Jean R. Gould, Dr. Nancy Grosselfinger

Meeting Called to Order:

President Craig H. Long called the 97th Annual Association Meeting to order at 8:05 p.m. A quorum was established. The President welcomed the Board of Trustees and public attendees to the meeting.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The President asked the Board and guests to review the proposed Minutes of the Annual Association Meeting of the Board of Trustees of February 22, 2022.

MOTION

A motion was made by Dr. Nancy Grosselfinger, seconded by Donalee Berard, and carried to accept the Minutes of the Annual Association Meeting of the Board of Trustees of February 22, 2022. Motion approved.

President Craig H. Long changed the order of the agenda and turned the meeting over to "our esteemed" Treasurer of the Board, Mario F. Pensa.

Treasurer's Annual Report –Mario F. Pensa

Mario F. Pensa read the Treasurer's report for the fiscal year July 1, 2021 –June 30, 2022, and for the first half of the current fiscal year July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023. (Report Attached).

The Director suggested the following amendments to the Treasurer's Annual Report on page 2 under OUTLOOK second to last paragraph: replace the amount of "\$3,432,458" with the

amount of “\$3,350,562” replace the amount of “\$56,287” with the amount of “\$66,391” and add the words “*increase in tax revenue and 1% (\$20,900) of Library assets.*”

The amended section should read as follows:

The Board of Trustees has reviewed the Library Director’s budget for fiscal year 2023-2024 presented at \$3,350,562. The budget includes a 2% (\$66,391) increase in tax revenue and 1% (\$20,900) of Library assets. The budget will be presented to the Board for approval at the February 28, 2023 regular monthly meeting.

MOTION

A motion was made by President Emeritus Jean R. Gould, seconded by Donalee Berard to accept the Treasurer’s amended Annual Report as presented. Motion approved unanimously.

President’s Remarks

The President’s opening remarks “*What a difference a year can make is emblematic of what happened here at the Library*”, pertain to the following accomplishments by the Library Director, Darlene Alessi.

- By March the children’s room, YA room, sections of the adult reference area, including the study rooms, and café area get a fresh coat of paint. New furnishings replace old furnishings and additional furnishings are purchased for the café area.
- In May, new carpets are installed in the children’s area.
- In June, new carpets are installed in the new books and new media areas, circulation workroom and administrations offices.
- In September, the Library received a grant from PLA for digital literacy workshop incentive, supported by AT&T. Darlene purchased Chromebooks and tablets for public use and public classes.
- In October, the ribbon cutting for the new constructed outdoor patio, and gazebo, purchased by the Suffern Woman’s Club, takes place.
- In December, the café opened to the public.

The President thanked Trustee Karen-Bash Romaner for advising to apply for *RCLS* construction grants for the Library’s various building projects. The President thanked the *Suffern Planning Board* and *Rockland County Planning Department* and the *Woman’s Club of Suffern* as well.

Other Highlights:

- The President noted that the Library had a record-high number of events; 400 adults, with over 8,000 people attending both in-person, virtual and hybrid events.
- 718 patrons participated in-person in the Children’s, YA, and Adult Summer Reading Programs.
- The Library had over 42,000 digital downloads from Overdrive, Hoopla and Freading.
- Joyce Nencetti and the Library volunteers returned to indoor book sales raising \$13,600 for the Library.

- The Director's accomplishments include updating the fire alarm system, a new hot water heater, and boiler system, the self-checkout and outdoor lockers coming soon, the new gutters in the back of the building.
- Thank you to Mario F. Pensa for guiding the Director with the building and grounds projects.

Future:

- A new HVAC system.
- Updating the reference area.
- Makerspace in the reference area.
- Updating security cameras.

The President thanked the Director, the Board of Trustees, and staff for their continued support and dedication to the community.

Trustee Election:

President Craig H. Long 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 following candidates for 3-year terms of office:

- Craig H. Long
- Karen Bash-Romaner
- Mark Murphy

MOTION

A motion was made by Karen Bash-Romaner, seconded by James J. Galvin to declare the above Candidates for 3-year terms of office. Motion approved unanimously.

Budget Information:

The Director reported that the Suffern Free Library and Sloatsburg Public Library will hold their Budget vote on April 25, 2023.

Budget Report-Donalee Berard

Donalee Berard summarized the 2023-2024 Library Budget. Based on the Budget, the Library will need to ask for an increase of 2% real proper tax for 2023-2024 annual support. The total revenue will be \$3,329,662, overall increase from last year of \$104,991. The Library anticipates to receive about \$35,000 in construction grants. Interest income on investments budgeted at \$20,000 due to interest rates going up.

On the expense side, the major budget changes include increases in salaries by \$56,000 and health insurance benefits increases by \$17,000. Increases in equipment by \$4,000 to replace old PC's and purchase additional computers. Library materials decreased by \$21,000 due to infrequently used subscriptions and materials cancellations. Building repairs are budgeted at \$70,000, same as last fiscal year. Building contracts budgeted at \$50,000 an increase of \$6,000. Capital expenditures budgeted at \$168,000 for upcoming projects. Programs budgeted at \$43,000 an increase of \$7,000. Overall, Library operations decreased by \$13,900. It is anticipated that total expenses will exceed revenue by \$20,899 and reserve funds will be used to balance the budget.

President Craig H. Long entertained a motion to adjourn the Annual Association Meeting of the Board of Trustees of February 28, 2023.

MOTION

A motion was made by Mark Murphy, seconded by Donalee Berard, and carried to adjourn the Annual Association Meeting at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Bash-Romaner
Secretary