

# **TOWN OF ESOPUS LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES August 23, 2022**

**Board Members Present:** Reggie Heffernan, Nancy Beranek, Susan Barbarisi, Elaine Rylance, Susan Leiching and Don Carragher (arrived at 6:30 pm)

**Board Members Excused:** Laura Lauria

**Board Members Absent:**

**Staff Present:** Brooke Dittmar, Mary Garraty

## **I. CALL TO ORDER –**

The meeting of the Town of Esopus Library Board of Trustees was called to order by Vice -President Nancy Beranek at 6:10 p.m.

## **II. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

Written minutes for the July monthly Board meeting held on July 26, 2022 was submitted and open for review.

- A motion to accept the minutes of the July monthly Board meeting held on July 26, 2022 was made by Elaine Rylance and seconded by Reggie Heffernan.  
AYE: 4; NO: 0; ABSTAIN: 1  
Board Members Excused: Laura Lauria, Don Carragher  
Board Members Absent:

## **III. Presidents Word - None**

## **IV. Public Comment - None**

## **V. TREASURER'S REPORT/FINANCE – Reggie Heffernan**

Written report was submitted. The Finance Committee reviewed the claims for the past month. The Finance Committee is considering using Sickler, Torchia, Allen and Churchill, CPAs to do an audit for the Library in the near future. The Finance Committee also noted that the overtime policy is currently not compliant and passed this information onto the G&P Committee.

- **Resolution #37 of 2022 (Payment of July Claims):** The Board of Trustees of the Town of Esopus Library accepts and approves the payment of claims from July 1, 2022 to July 31, 2022 for items in the amount of \$15,347.35. A motion

to accept the resolution was made by Susan Leiching and seconded by Susan Barbarisi.

AYES: 5; NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0

Board Members Excused: Laura Lauria, Don Carragher

Board Members Absent

- **Resolution #38 of 2022 (Acceptance of LLSA Monies from MHLS):** The Board of Trustees of the Town of Esopus Library accepts the Local Library Services Aid (LLSA) monies from MHLS for the 2022 Operating Budget. A motion to accept the resolution was made by Nancy Beranek and seconded by Elaine Rylance.

AYES: 5; NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0

Board Members Excused: Laura Lauria, Don Carragher

Board Members Absent:

- **Resolution #40 of 2022 (Acceptance of monies from Digital Navigators of the Hudson Valley):**

The Board of Trustees of the Town of Esopus Library accepts this Digital Navigators of the Hudson Valley monies into the 2022 Operating Budget. A motion to accept the resolution was made by Elaine Rylance and seconded by Susan Barbarisi.

AYES: 5; NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0

Board Members Excused: Laura Lauria, Don Carragher

Board Members Absent:

- **Resolution #42 of 2022 (Accept Friends Donation)** The Board of Trustees of the Town of Esopus Library accepts this monetary donation of \$8,000.00 with its restrictions from the Friends for the 2022 Operating Budget. A motion to accept the resolution was made by Susan Leiching and seconded by Susan Barbarisi.

AYES: 5; NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0

Board Members Excused: Laura Lauria, Don Carragher

Board Members Absent:

## **VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT** – Brooke Dittmar, Director

Written report submitted. Brooke reviewed the Director's report. Friends is having a book sale on September 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. They are looking for assistance that day if anyone is interested. Friends is also looking for folks to help do book sorting. We did hire an Adult and Teen Programmer. Her name is Lee Gough. Two programs will be up and running again soon. The programs are repair café and chair yoga. We are interviewing for the Library Assistant position. We have started working on the Ecological Restoration grant.

## VII. FRIENDS --Susan Leiching

Just a reminder that the book sale is on 9/24 and 9/25 from 9am to 4pm and they are looking for volunteers to help with that day.

## VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Buildings and Grounds** – Don Carragher  
Written report submitted. Don reviewed the committee meeting minutes. There have been current updates since the meeting minutes went out. A few items need to be done around the library: They need to clean the accumulation of dust on the sprinklers; Markers are needed to mark where the fire hose hydrant is; the back flow valve needs to be replaced.
  
- **Governance and Personnel** – Nancy Beranek  
Written report submitted. Nancy reviewed the committee meeting minutes. The committee reviewed the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy and made updates. They are planning to look at the overtime policy next month. Susan Leiching has joined the Governance and Personnel Committee.
  - **Resolution #39 of 2022 (Workplace Violence Prevention Policy Update):** The Board of Trustees of the Town of Esopus Library accepts the changes to the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy. A motion to accept the resolution was made by Reggie Heffernan and seconded by Elaine Rylance.  
AYES: 5; NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0  
Board Members Excused: Laura Lauria, Don Carragher  
Board Members Absent:
  
  - **Resolution #41 of 2022 (Personnel Actions - L. Gough):** The Board of Trustees of the Town of Esopus Library agrees to the Personnel Actions Resolution. A motion to accept the resolution was made by Reggie Heffernan and seconded by Nancy Beranek.  
AYES: 5; NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0  
Board Members Excused: Laura Lauria, Don Carragher  
Board Members Absent:
  
- **Sustainability, Research and Development** - Don Carragher  
Written report submitted. Don reviewed the meeting minutes. There are two grants that are currently in process. The Construction Grant which is a done deal and the Ecological Restoration grant is ongoing. We have collected a lot of info on the pollinator garden. There is a list of plants that are recommended and not recommended for the area. Xeriscape is a garden that you never need to touch and it has another list of species that will proliferate themselves over

time. Lee has been very helpful with this project. They hope to remove the invasive plants and extend a pollinator garden there as well as extending the community garden. Don also read the paperwork on the previous pollinator grant application that was denied. There is a spring underneath the entrance of the library which we believe is still active. Don would like to access that spring for watering the garden if possible. They also want to get the pond working correctly.

**IX. Trustee Training:** Nancy reminded everyone that Trustee Essentials Training will be held at the library on 9/13/22 at 5:30 pm. Susan Barbarisi, Elaine Rylance, Don Carragher and Nancy Beranek plan to attend. The following week there is also Core Value Training available.

#### **X. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business or discussion, Don Carragher made a motion to adjourn and it was seconded by Elaine Rylance. The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

AYES: 6; NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0

Board Members Excused: Laura Lauria

Board Members Absent:

Prepared by Mary Garraty, Secretary to the Town of Esopus Library Board of Trustees

Town of Esopus Library  
September Board of Trustees Meeting  
Tuesday, September 27, 2022

**Agenda**

Call to order	Don Carragher
Approval of July Board Meeting Minutes	
President's Word	Don Carragher
Voting on Potential New Trustee	Nancy Beranek & Don Carragher
Public Comment	Public
Treasurer's Report/Finance Committee	Reggie Heffernan
Director's Report	Brooke Dittmar
Friends	Susan Leiching

Committees

1. Buildings and Grounds – Don Carragher
2. Governance and Personnel / Trustee Training – Nancy Beranek
3. Sustainability, Research and Development – Don Carragher

Adjournment

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Resolutions:

2022-43 – Payment of August Claims

2022-44 – Claims Audit Policy Update

2022-45 – Personnel Actions – L.Salgarolo-J.Wiggin-J.LaPolt

2022-46 – Creation of Pandemic/Epidemic Sick Leave and Addition of Section in Personnel Policy Manual

2022-47 – Fine Free Library

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2022-47 – Fine Free Library

2022-48 -- Library Parking Area Sealcoating and Striping

Attending: Brooke Dittmar, Laura Lauria, Nancy Beranek, Don Carragher.

Don reported recent events:

- Material for patio pavers resetting purchased. Contractor to start next week.
- Old steel desk removed from storage room.
- Kitchen floor was stripped and waxed, community room to follow.

Brooke reported the security/alarm system still reports an error. The current camera system is in discussion to be replaced; three vendors are being considered. Fire alarm system must also be updated.

The committee will discuss a building expansion construction project and is gathering ideas for addressing improvements in programming.

Landscaping work for 2023 is referred to Sustainability, R&D committee for preparing the Ecological Restoration Grant.

Submitted, Don Carragher.

Next meeting is scheduled for October 10, 2022

**Director's Report to the Board**  
**September 27, 2022**  
**Brooke Dittmar**

Currently we are working on applying for an ecological restoration grant, and planning pollination gardens of native plant species in areas that have 'not-well-loved' plants growing. This has entailed a lot of communication between the staff, Trustees, and contractors. This grant application is due at the end of September.

I have had many discussions with Trustees, staff and patrons over the years, about what is wanted at the library. We have been able to accommodate collection, as well as programming requests, but the addition to the library building has not yet come to fruition. It occurred to me that some of our newer Trustees might like to hear my vision for the physical plant. First off, I would like to accommodate the community's need for varying sizes of spaces in which to meet, and to create different permanent maker spaces with specific, and/or changeable focuses. The community would like a separate quiet space(s), a local history room, and a larger children's room. We need additional space for staff offices, and we would like to ("pie in the sky") incorporate a cafe as a community gathering place (always one of my dedicated goals is to provide spaces and programs in which Seniors can increase their personal network, as inevitably this network diminishes over time). We have discussed incorporating spaces for housing non-traditional items to loan out, such as gardening and carpentry tools, sewing machines, themed cake pans, and other tools/items that a person may want to use occasionally, but does not need to own. We already offer fishing poles, for instance. Outside, I would like to see other gathering places, even "garden rooms" for community members to use, and an area in which to incorporate a learning center for gardening classes/programs, since food scarcity and expense may continue to be an issue. There has been enthusiasm for a walking trail around the property, which would be maintained in all seasons, to provide a safe and varied place to get exercise. We would want to, of course, continue the green construction that was invested in from the beginning of our library building's planning and construction.

At this point, the lion's share of our available capital funds are encumbered, with the construction grant application. Once we hear the result of our application, it may be possible to engage our chosen architectural firm for discussions and planning. That is, if this Board, as a whole, is now ready to embark on such a large project. Although we would potentially have the funds to cover the architect, there would have to be a bond, additional fundraising and grant applications, to accumulate the funds to cover the building of the addition.

We have been considering going "fine free", and this month discussion with both the Governance and Personnel and Finance Committees has resulted in approval for a vote of the whole Board. This has been an active discussion in the Mid-Hudson Library System, and 42 of the 66 libraries in the Mid-Hudson Library System have gone fine free. An additional 6 libraries collect no fines for children's books. I think going fine free is an important step toward equity in our community. It fits right in with the policy I enacted here over 8 years ago, which is that all programs and classes are to be free to the public. This allows anybody, no matter their financial status, to participate. We want to be as welcoming as possible to the community, and it has been shown that when a library goes fine free, library usage increases. People that previously owed large fines, and have stayed away from a library because of it, start using



the library again. The second sizable result of going fine free, is that overdue books from years past, are being returned to the library. To me, that translates into buying fewer replacement books, as they will be returned closer to their time of check-out. When you think about it critically, how was the exchange of money deemed an appropriate consequence when a book is returned late? It seems like an excessive punishment. You will find in your meeting packet a resolution doing away with collecting fines for late books. Replacement fees for lost items, however, will continue to be collected. Here is a link to more information on fine free libraries: <https://midhudson.org/fine-free-libraries/>

In January 2019, the American Library Association passed a resolution on Monetary Library Fines as a Form of Social Inequity and established that *“The American Library Association asserts that imposition of monetary library fines creates a barrier to the provision of library and information services.”*

The Ulster County Library Association Annual Dinner usually occurs in September, but problems with the coordination of schedules has resulted in the dinner being held in October this year. Instead of having it at a restaurant, it will be at Elting Library in New Paltz. It will be catered, and AnnaLee Dragon, the Director of the New York Library Association, will be the speaker. It is scheduled for October 11<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM. All Trustees are invited, and the library will cover the cost of a ticket for any Trustee that would like to attend. In the past, various legislators have attended at our invitation.

Just a heads up for the New York State Library Advocacy Day 2023. It is scheduled for Tuesday, February 28<sup>th</sup>. It will take place in Albany. A bus (or two) is usually available for the trip north. In the past our Friends of the Library Group has donated funds to help offset the cost. It is an interesting day of meeting our legislators in Albany, telling them about the issues that are important to us, and meeting fellow library advocates.

**Town of Esopus Library  
Finance Committee Minutes  
September 8, 2022**

**Attendance:** Susan Leiching, Reggie Heffernan, Susan Barbarisi, Elaine Rylance, Don Carragher

**Excused: Brooke Dtitmar** (Brooke texted in and was available for questions)

The payment of claims for \$9,000.28 was reviewed by the Finance committee and a resolution for approval by the Board of Trustees will be presented to the Board at the September meeting.

It was noted that our system of paying bills does not easily accommodate the use of small businesses that do not have sophisticated billing systems. We are grateful to Don for prepaying our subcontractor for the bridge and other small jobs and allowing us to pay him back using the system that is in place.

A discussion ensued about the need to have an audit completed in a timely manner in order to prepare for the possible acceptance of grant proposals next year. It would be best if we put out the request for bids in the next month and have an audit completed by the end of the year.

The committee was asked our thoughts about no longer collecting late fees on books. We agree that it makes sense, but the topic needs to go to the G&P Committee in order to make the Lending Rules policy changes.

Finally the committee reviewed the current Claims Audit policy and will submit the updates at the September board meeting for approval.

Respectfully submitted,

Reggie Heffernan, Treasurer

**Next Meeting  
Thursday, October 13, 2022  
4 pm**

Governance and Personnel Committee  
September 13, 2022

Attendance: Nancy Beranek, Don Carragher, Susan Leiching, Laura Lauria, Elaine Rylance, Susan Barbarisi, Brooke Dittmar, Ben Gocker

Guest: Larry Decker

- We discussed a potential appointee to a vacant position on the Board of Trustees. Will present to the Board for a vote.
- We agreed that any staff who has used sick leave instead of Covid-19 leave for a pandemic related absence should be reimbursed.
- We worked on an addition to the Personnel Manual, i.e., leave for absence related to the pandemic.
- We discussed an update to the overtime section of the Personnel Manual.
- We began a discussion of an update to the Pandemic/Epidemic Policy.

Next Meeting scheduled for October 11, 2022.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Nancy Beranek

Town of Esopus Library

Sustainability, R&D Committee

9.14.22 4:00 pm

Attending: Brooke Dittmar, Ben Gocker, Susan Barbarisi, Reggie Heffernan, Elaine Rylance, Don Carragher

Don prepared an ariel view photo of the library property with proposed pollinator gardens in the parking lot, front sidewalk and removal of burning bush planting. An expansion of the Community Garden and the main building were discussed. The committee agreed to apply for the pollinator gardens and bush removal to the Ecological Restoration Grant.

We are still sourcing the native plants. Estimates for the labor and soil will be submitted next week. The Master Gardener program will be asked to consult.

Ben suggested the Wallkill Valley Land Trust as a resource and offered to contact them.

Submitted, Don Carragher

Next meeting is scheduled for October 12, 2022 at 4:00 pm

Town Of Esopus Library  
Trustee Training Committee     September 2022

#### Trustee Essentials Training

The following trustees participated in the MHLS Zoom presentation on 9/13/22:

Nancy Beranek and Donald Carragher are repeating the course.

Elaine Rylance, Susan Barbarisi, Laura Lauria and Larry Decker, a new members to the board are taking the course for the first time.

Brooke Dittmar, Director, also participated.

The training session stated that new members are instructed to request the 2018 Edition Trustees Handbook.

Submitted, Don Carragher.