

Town of Esopus Library  
January Board of Trustees Meeting  
Tuesday, January 25, 2022

**Agenda**

Call to order	Jim Fitzmorris
Approval of December, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes – 01/04/22	
Public Comment	Public
Treasurer’s Report/Finance Committee	Gilbert Ramos
Director’s Report	Brooke Dittmar
Friends	Susan Leiching

Committees

1. Combined Committee Meeting -- Jim Fitzmorris
  - Buildings and Grounds
  - Research and Development
  - Sustainability
2. Governance and Personnel – Susan Leiching

Adjournment

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Resolutions:

- 2022-01 – Payment of December Claims
- 2022-02 – Lukatis Donation
- 2022-03 – 2022 Foundation Annual Contribution
- 2022-04 – Responsibilities of Trustees Update
- 2022-05 – Acceptance of PILOT payment

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Town of Esopus Library  
Combined Committee Meeting: B&G, Sustainability and R&D.  
Jan 10, 2022 at 4pm via Zoom

Present: Brooke Dittmar, Reggie Heffernan, Nancy Beranak, Don Carragher and Jim Fitzmorris

Nancy described the contact info from Rep. Delgado's office; Green Mountain Energy and Rural Development (USDA). Brooke noted we have a 501C3 tax status.

Immediate needs:

- Have solar array and geothermal systems evaluated.
- Explore Battery Power Storage (BESS)

Contacts from Energy Conservation in Port Ewen:

- Solar-> Anthony Sicari 597-6631
- Geothermal -> Charles Lazili 235-1028

Laura Petit was active with Solarize Esopus and could be a good resource.

Other work requiring grants to start:

- Sealing and striping the parking lots.
- Clearing the drainage system-maps in our records.
- New parking lot lights and emergency power feed to the electronic sign.

Humbly submitted by Jim Fitzmorris via Don Carragher, with great appreciation to Don for crafting these minutes and forwarding them to Jim on short notice.

Next B&G meeting is February 14, 2022

# **TOWN OF ESOPUS LIBRARY**

## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES**

### **December 2021 meeting, held January 4, 2022**

**Board Members Present:** Gilbert Ramos, Jim Fitzmorris, Reggie Heffernan, Nancy Beranek, Don Carragher, Laura Lauria, and Susan Leiching (arrived after Research and Development Committee Meeting Minute review)

**Board Members Excused:**

**Board Members Absent:** Shannon Harris

**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 President Jim Fitzmorris at 6:07 pm via Zoom

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

Written minutes for November monthly Board meeting held on November 23, 2021 were submitted and open for review.

- A motion to accept the minutes of the November 23rd Board meeting was made by Don Carragher and seconded by Gilbert Ramos.  
AYE: 6; NO: 0; ABSTAIN: 0  
Board Members Excused:  
Board Members Absent: Shannon Harris, Susan Leiching

Written minutes for Emergency Board meeting held on December 15, 2021 were submitted and open for review.

- A motion to accept the minutes of the December 15th Board meeting was made by Don Carragher and seconded by Nancy Beranek.  
AYE: 6; NO: 0; ABSTAIN: 0  
Board Members Excused:  
Board Members Absent: Shannon Harris, Susan Leiching

#### **III. TREASURER'S REPORT/FINANCE – Gilbert Ramos**

Written report was submitted. Gilbert reviewed the Finance committee meeting minutes. The Fund Balance Policy was reviewed in the meeting. Library staffing was discussed.

- **Resolution #43 of 2021 (Payment of November Claims):** The Board of Trustees of the Town of Esopus Library accepts and approves the payment of claims from November 1, 2021 to November 30, 2021 for items in the amount of \$15,903.44. A motion to accept the resolution was made by Gilbert Ramos and seconded by Reggie Heffernan.  
AYES: 6; NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0  
Board Members Excused:  
Board Members Absent: Shannon Harris, Susan Leiching

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

Written report submitted. Brooke reviewed the Director's report. Brooke was happy to report that the library received a \$500 donation from Betty Chin. The Federal Government is disbursing funds to connect people with digital services. Digital Navigators of the Hudson Valley will be assisting with this. This program will prepare library workers and staff with new skills and resources to perform the duties of a Digital Navigator. Digital Navigators will be equipped to assist under-resourced individuals in their communities to access and use Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). The library will not need to buy anything for this. We received \$8,000 from Kingston Consolidated School District as we do each year. Some of the programs we did online in the past year are available via archive. We also received a \$500 promotional products grant which will enable the library to acquire free promotional material, in this instance large coffee mugs with our logo on each side. There was a change to the delivery bin process. We wrapped up the food drive.

#### **V. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- **Buildings and Grounds**– Jim Fitzmorris  
Written report submitted. Jim reviewed the committee meeting minutes. The committee is looking into a number of items, such as: steps toward having charging units for electric vehicles installed in the parking lot, additional lights in the parking lot, tightening up loosening screws on the deck, and applying for the annual construction grant to cover these projects.
- **Governance and Personnel** – Nancy Beranek for Susan Leiching  
Written report submitted. Nancy reviewed the meeting minutes. Brooke had noticed that the 2021 holiday schedule was missing December 24<sup>th</sup> as a paid holiday. An emergency meeting was scheduled to add this paid holiday via a resolution. The committee is reviewing the responsibilities of the trustee.
  - **Resolution #44 of 2021 (Health Benefit Change and Continuation for Director):** The Board of Trustees of the Town of Esopus Library accepts and approves the Health Benefit Change and Continuation for Director. A motion to accept the resolution was made by Reggie Heffernan and seconded by Don Carragher.  
AYES: 6; NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0  
Board Members Excused: 0  
Board Members Absent: Shannon Harris, Susan Leiching
- **Research and Development** – Nancy Beranek  
Nancy Beranek presented Research and Development Committee meeting minutes as Gilbert Ramos was excused from the meeting. Brooke and Nancy reviewed the Green Mountain Energy website at the committee meeting. We might be eligible for a grant. They are looking for something that pulls at the heartstrings and provides savings to the community. Nancy also spoke with the grant coordinator from Antonio Delgado's office. They recommended that we contact the USDA Rural Development Office, which we did. The grant coordinator from Antonio Delgado's office was very helpful and suggested a zoom meeting to pursue additional projects.

Brooke felt that a combined committee meeting with Sustainability, Buildings and Grounds, as well as Research and Development, in order to prioritize project ideas together in one list, is warranted. It was agreed that a combined committee meeting would take place on Monday, January 10, 2022.

- **Sustainability Committee** – Don Carragher

Written report submitted. Don reviewed the committee meeting minutes. We had two major discussions. We are discussing alternative power sources for the library such as solar, battery and generator. We are also discussing what the needs of the community with regards to providing warmth/cool shelter and power for charging. Outside consulting is needed in order to get answers on how to do the above ideas. Brooke contacted Timely Signs regarding solar power option and they do not do this type of work. Additionally, they suggested that the digital sign would not be able to be supported by battery or solar should the electricity go out. Don suggested contacting Energy Conservation Services in Port Ewen for an assessment.

Jim asked if the digital sign was on after 11:00 pm. It was suggested that the digital sign be off from 11:00 pm to 6:00 am or 7:00 am so that we can save on the electric bill. Brooke will investigate.

#### **VI. FRIENDS -- Susan Leiching**

Susan reported that Friends did not meet last month. Friends has decided to not have a book sale in April, 2022 as originally planned. The Friends are still accepting donations, and they continue to sell books in the lobby. The membership drive is scheduled for January or February.

#### **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business or discussion, Reggie Heffernan made a motion to adjourn and it was seconded by Gilbert Ramos. The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

AYES: 7; NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0

Board Members Excused:

Board Members Absent: Shannon Harris

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

**Director's Report to the Board**  
**January 25, 2022**  
**Brooke Dittmar**

We have opened the Book Cellar, with distancing and mask protocols. This makes a lot of people happy!

We've gotten the Foundation donation, which is \$48,380. I believe this is a greater amount than we've gotten before (since I've been here). The amount they donate is determined by the requirement that the Foundation give the library 5% of its value. This was a good year!

The Lukais quarterly donation is \$1,065

We received our 2021 PILOT payment, which is \$3,481.

We received donations from a number of patrons. Charlie Seymour (our guitar instructor and group organizer) donated \$100, which he has designated for a "flag fund". W. Mayer has donated \$100, in response to all the help computer help he recently got, from a very willing staff. Betty Chin, who is a Friend of the Library, had donated \$500. Scott and Barbara Taylor donated \$100.00 to the Friends. I'm telling you about it, because it came across my desk before being passed on to the Friends, and Barbara is one of our Community Garden (volunteer) Managers.

We have ordered 4 patron laptops with the American Library Association's "Libraries Transforming Communities: Focus on Small and Rural Libraries" \$3,000 grant. We have so far not been able to order the 4 hotspots we planned to buy, because T-Mobile has had a turnover of employees, and doesn't seem to have a 'government' person on staff at this time (we have a reduced pricing). We will look into the other companies that offer hotspots.

The mugs that we received with the PR grant (that I spoke of last month) have arrived! They look and feel great! Our logo is on both sides of the cups. We also received a box of pens with our logo on it.

There is an article about the Mid-Hudson libraries in the Hudson Valley Explore insert (Ulster Publishing), and we are one of the libraries that are highlighted! They pointed out some programs that the writer has not seen offered anywhere else. We have some virtual escape rooms located on our website that people can play. The article contrasted those programs with one of our upcoming serious talks on agriculture and climate change. In the main, introductory, part of the article, they also list a large number of other virtual activities that we offer (but the libraries offering them were not identified in that part of the article). I have attached a scan of the article for you, and have printed out a copy for your packets.

I'm really excited about joining the Digital Navigators of the Hudson Valley! When these funds were 1<sup>st</sup> announced, I knew it was something our library had to do. Three of us have signed up to participate in the training, which is quite rigorous, and requires a solid commitment. Here's the description from MHLS:

"MHLS member libraries have the opportunity to build their capacity to support their communities through the [Digital Navigators of the Hudson Valley program](#). The DNHV program will prepare library workers and staff at community-based organizations with new skills and resources to perform the duties of a Digital Navigator, who will connect community members to affordable internet

and tech options and provide basic digital literacy support. Libraries that complete the DNHV program will receive \$900 to support the work of a Digital Navigator.

Digital Navigators will connect patrons and community members to resources and services to secure affordable broadband, computers, and devices, and provide basic digital literacy training and support in completing necessary paperwork and applications. As part of the program, Digital Navigators will receive training in identifying local resources and services, understanding learner needs, and collecting data. Digital Navigators will also attend 2 calls each month where they'll receive coaching and share their experiences in implementing their training and connecting with and helping people in their community. The DNHV program also include a publicity campaign to call attention to the effort of libraries in this area, and professionally designed marketing materials libraries can use in their promotional efforts".

Have you seen the Story Walk, set up on the Community Garden fence? A longer one will be created in the spring, utilizing a greater portion of our grounds.

MHLS visited us a number of times lately to update computers. Our former onsite computer 'expert' had not been taking good care of them, so we were quite behind. It turns out that we have a number of computers that cannot be updated, and 2 that recently stopped working, so we have ordered 4 new desktop computers to replace our oldest ones.

Our wireless use for 2021 was 9,727 sign-ons.

The March photo club meeting will be a virtual gallery opening. Last year's virtual gallery opening was a success (you can follow the link on our website to see the show), and although is it time-intensive to set up, it is a worthwhile endeavor to do it again. During the Zoom opening, the artists talk a little about their photographs.

I attended the Town of Esopus Waterfront Advisory Committee's open house. They had an excellent display of maps, with suggestions of how the different areas could be managed. They are asking for our input, through participation in surveys. The surveys are available on the Town of Esopus website. While I was there I enjoyed a very detailed discussion of the things they have been doing. The Chairperson of the committee is Margaret Phelan, who is a Friend of the Library, and sorts books weekly. She is also a former Trustee, and is a volunteer inter-library bin processor and shelver. I met the new Town Supervisor, and she complemented the library for all the interesting offerings that she sees us doing. I know she has been to the library, because she specifically commented on the Story Walk that was just erected on the outside of the community garden fence. She would like to team up on some projects in the future.

Overdrive developed the Libby app a few years back to make the use of their ebook and e-audio book more accessible, as Overdrive was not easy to navigate. Recently Overdrive announced that there would no longer be a patron-facing Overdrive app. The Libby app has gone through a number of recent changes, to enhance user-ability, and have announced that they have also made major changes in accessibility features. I have attached that information for you, and hope you will pass it to your friends.

I attended the Collection development/Central library Committee meeting with the Directors of MHLS.



Town of Esopus Library  
Finance Committee  
January 13, ~~2021~~ 2022

The payment of claims for ~~\$30,898.54~~ <sup>\$39,821.04</sup> was reviewed by the Finance committee and a resolution for approval by the Board of Trustees will be presented to the Board at the January 25th. Meeting.

The committee made their final edit of the Fund Balance Policy in preparation for submission to the Board at the January 25th. meeting. The fund balance policy recommends maintaining a reserve of three months of operating expenses. An amount of \$35,000.00 is recommended to establish this account funded from unappropriated fund balance.

A recommendation was made that we should attempt to hold the line on the budget and attempt to keep the tax levy as conservative as possible. It was suggested that this could be accomplished by appropriating funds from the unappropriated fund balance.

The committee discussed employee wages and the need to establish a wage range for hourly positions. In this way more experienced personnel can be compensated on the basis of their experience rather than one size fits all hourly rate.

Respectfully,

Gilbert Ramos- Chairperson

All were present

**Town of Esopus Library  
Governance and Personnel Committee**

**January 11, 2022  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, @ 4pm)**

**Attendance:** Susan Leiching, Brooke Dittmar, Nancy Beranek, Jim Fitzmorris

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 PM

1. Completed the responsibilities of the Trustees. Will send to Mary for a resolution.
2. Next month we will review the responsibilities of the director.
3. Brooke will see if there are any changes in the Freedom to Read, Freedom to View and the restricted access to Library Materials. This statements are usually from the ALA.
4. The computer, internet and wireless policies should be grouped together.

Meeting adjourned at 5:15 pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Leiching, Chairperson

**Next meeting is January 8, 2022  
4:00 PM**

## Libby Accessibility Enhancements

To support your library's mission to serve every reader in your community, OverDrive has been working to improve the accessibility of the Libby app. Recent updates make Libby more accessible for all readers, including users with a diverse range of visual, motor, and cognitive needs.

OverDrive is partnering with [Fable](#) an accessibility platform powered by people with disabilities to interview blind and low vision users directly and hear their feedback on Libby's user experience. Based on the feedback and informed by industry standards, like the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#) (WCAG), they have made several improvements, including:

- **Screen reader support:** Low-vision and blind users can use screen readers to browse, borrow, read eBooks and magazines, and listen to audiobooks in Libby. Currently, Libby is tested with screen readers on the native mobile apps for iOS and Android, with plans to expand testing to desktop screen readers like NVDA and JAWS in the future.
- **Read From Here:** When using a screen reader, low-vision and blind users can enter "Read From Here" mode to have the text of an eBook or magazine read aloud.
- **Navigation Bar labels:** There's an option in the in-app menu to add labels beneath each of the navigation bar icons. **Note:** *This setting is currently only available in the English language.*
- **Adjustable text size:** Libby uses the text size setting of the user's device and scales the text in the app accordingly. Users can increase the text size in eBooks manually.
- **Adjustable playback speed for audiobooks:** Users can choose from 48 speed settings to find the speed that best suits their needs.
- **Keyboard shortcuts:** Shortcuts in Libby's eBook reader and audiobook player supplement the keyboard navigation.
- **Lighting options:** Libby uses the device's built-in lighting setting and displays the app in light or dark mode accordingly. Users can also choose a lighting option (light, dark, or sepia) in the eBook reader manually.

- **Screen reader and voice control improvements:** We are refining the labels and descriptions of all interactive elements, making it easier for users of assistive technologies to understand and interact with the app.
- **Keyboard focus indicators:** We are making improvements to help users navigate Libby with a keyboard or any other assistive technology that does not have a pointing device, like a mouse or touch controls.
- **New accessibility features** (under Settings > Accessibility Features):
  - **Reduce Color Variation:** By default, Libby adapts to the colors of book covers and the user’s active library. A new toggle will allow users to reduce such adaptive changes, favoring neutral colors with good contrast.
  - **Reduce Text Variation:** The app uses a variety of font styles to convey meaning, such as italics for important actions. Users will be able to adjust this setting to simplify text styles.
  - **Reduce Motion:** This setting will reduce most of the transitional motion in the interface. Users can also set this preference in their operating system or browser preferences, and Libby will apply it automatically.
  - **Reduce Haptics:** On devices that support subtle vibrations (called haptics), Libby uses these to provide feedback on certain touch interactions. Users can either turn it off at the operating system level or in the new “Accessibility Features” menu.
  - **Orientation Locking:** By default, Libby uses a “smart orientation” setting that chooses the device orientation that best suits the content. WCAG guidelines recommend that users should be able to override the default orientation of the app, which will be adjustable in the “Accessibility Features” menu.
  - **Full screen menus:** The in-app menu will no longer open from the side of the app. Instead, it will open full screen. This makes keyboard and screen reader navigation more consistent and helps all users concentrate on the task they are trying to perform in the menu.

For more information about accessibility in Libby, visit [Libby Help](#) or [OverDrive’s accessibility statement](#).



### **Responsibilities of Trustees**

This is an expanded list of responsibilities including those listed in the bylaws

1. To employ a qualified library director who shall be the executive and administrator of the library.
2. To attend all board meetings. The board meets monthly at a time and place that is convenient to the public in accordance with the open meetings law. Individual absences from board meetings are noted in the minutes and require justification.
3. To promote the library in the local community and in society in general.
4. To subscribe to the library Code of Ethics, the *Library Bill of Rights*, the *Freedom to Read*, and the *Freedom to View* statements.
5. To re-examine the short-range and long-range goals of the library annually.
6. To establish and adopt written bylaws, policies, rules and regulations to govern the operations, offerings, and use of the library.
7. To assist in determining the needs of the library in relation to the community by keeping informed about community changes, trends, needs, and interests; to keep aware of public library standards and library trends.
7. To assist in the preparation of the annual budget and approve the final document.
8. To help secure adequate funds from appropriating agencies and other sources to carry out the library's programs, provide for building and space needs, and maintain library property.
9. To review the board meeting agenda and background material in advance.
10. To support the Friends of the Town of Esopus Library.
11. To participate in Trustee Programs offered through the MHLS.
12. To complete annual evaluations of both the Director and the state of the library, making suggestions for change, if needed.

Reference: Handbook for Library Trustees, 2018 ed; Trustees Duties and Responsibilities.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees: November 20, 2013

Revised by the Board of Trustees: