

Town of Esopus Library
August Board of Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, August 24, 2021

Agenda

Call to order	Jim Fitzmorris
Approval of July Board Meeting Minutes -- 7/27/21	
Public Comment	Public
Treasurer's Report/Finance Committee	Gilbert Ramos
Director's Report	Brooke Dittmar
Committees	
1. Buildings and Grounds – Don Carragher	
2. Governance and Personnel – Susan Leiching	
3. Research and Development – Gilbert Ramos	
4. Sustainability - Don Carragher	
Executive Session to discuss matters relating to a staff member	
Adjournment	

Resolutions:

2021-28 – Payment of July Claims

2021-29 – Replacement of Remaining Older Lighting with LED Lighting

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TOWN OF ESOPUS LIBRARY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

July 27, 2021

Board Members Present: Susan Leiching, Don Carragher, Gilbert Ramos, Jim Fitzmorris, Reggie Heffernan, Nancy Beranek, and Shannon Harris

Board Members Excused: Laura Lauria

Board Members Absent:

Staff Present: Brooke Dittmar, Mary Garraty

I. CALL TO ORDER –

The Board meeting of the Town of Esopus Library Board of Trustees was called to order by President Jim Fitzmorris at 6:05 pm.

II. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Written minutes for the June Reorganization meeting and the June monthly Board meeting held on June 22, 2021 were submitted and open for review.

- A motion to accept the minutes of the June 22nd Board Reorganization meeting was made by Susan Leiching and seconded by Reggie Heffernan.

AYE: 7; NO: 0; ABSTAIN: 0

Board Members Excused: Laura Lauria

Board Members Absent: 0

- A motion to accept the minutes of the June 22nd Board meeting was made by Gilbert Ramos and seconded by Nancy Beranek.

AYE: 7; NO: 0; ABSTAIN: 0

Board Members Excused: Laura Lauria

Board Members Absent: 0

III. TREASURER'S REPORT/FINANCE – Gilbert Ramos

Written report was submitted. Gilbert reviewed the written report and presented Resolution 2021-24 for acceptance. The committee reviewed the profit and loss balance sheet and discussed the transferring funds from bookkeeper line to the hardware line.

- **Resolution #24 of 2021 (Payment of June Claims):** The Board of Trustees of the Town of Esopus Library accepts and approves the payment of claims from June 1, 2021 to June 30, 2021 for items in the amount of \$9522.15. A motion to accept the resolution was made by Gilbert Ramos and seconded by Susan Leiching.

AYES: 7 NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0

Board Members Excused: Laura Lauria

Board Members Absent: 0

- **Resolution #26 of 2021 (Transfer of Funds in the Operating Budget):** The Board of Trustees of the Town of Esopus Library accepts and approves the transfer of funds in the amount of \$8,923.63 from the Bookkeeper line to the Hardware line of the budget. A motion to accept the resolution was made by Gilbert Ramos and seconded by Reggie Heffernan.
AYES: 7 NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0
Board Members Excused: Laura Lauria
Board Members Absent: 0

IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Brooke Dittmar, Director

Written report submitted. Brooke reviewed the Director's report. The masking rules have been relaxed. Those vaccinated do not have to wear a mask. Small groups are being allowed to meet in person. Brooke discussed the plans of the 4 employees who resigned, as well as the new employees who were hired. The Bank of Green County invited Brooke to an event to receive a check for \$1000 for the grant that she wrote to cover the laptops we intend to check out to patrons. We have new furniture in the teen room. We received a Notice of Probate about the estate of Audrey Steinhorn, who has left the library \$25,000.

V. FRIENDS - Susan Leiching

Susan reported that the Friends group will meet on August 23rd. They are trying to rebuild the group and are also hoping to have the book sale this year.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Buildings and Grounds**–Jim Fitzmorris

Written report submitted. Jim reviewed the meeting minutes. The committee decided to remove the pond bridge and will beautify the area. Don will call Resource Recovery to recycle old equipment. Don discussed a group called Cyber Seniors as well as the GE Elfun Computer Rehab of Schenectady which donates refurbished equipment to schools and nonprofit organizations. Don has offered to inventory the library's old equipment and do the listing of the equipment.

The deck needs to be power washed.

Gilbert asked if we could replace or repair the bridge. First step is to remove the bridge and then rebuild it from scratch. Gilbert suggested that we hire a construction group to fix it.

Susan suggested that we hire a landscaping group to do all the weeding, clipping, etc, in order to get everything under control. We have the funds to support the beautification of the property.

Don mentioned that our flag is in bad shape. Don's wife fixed the frayed ends of the current flag. Don would like to have the current flag replaced. The replacement of the flag will be discussed at the next committee meeting

Shannon suggested going to Lowe's and using our tax exempt status along with 5% discount for the purchases needed for the LED retrofit project. She said that when she worked for the Town of Esopus, Central Hudson quoted a large amount for their project, and that ours should be relooked at. It was noted that, for our project, Lime Energy neglected to include all the rooms on the initial quote as they should have. Brooke is working with Lime Energy to rectify this.

- **Governance and Personnel** – Susan Leiching
Written report submitted. Susan reviewed the committee meeting minutes. The trustees have received letters and concerns regarding the Director. There are common themes and issues in the letters. The committee will meet with Brooke. The committee will hold off on bringing the issues to this Board meeting at this time.
 - **Resolution #25 of 2021 (Personnel Actions)** The Board of Trustees of the Town of Esopus Library accepts the resignation of four employees and the hiring of five employees. A motion to accept the resolution was made by Don Carragher and seconded by Shannon Harris.
AYES: 6; NAYS: 1; ABSTENTIONS: 0
Board Members Excused: Laura Lauria
Board Members Absent: 0
 - **Resolution #27 of 2021 (Health Benefits Plan for 2021-2022)** The Board of Trustees of the Town of Esopus Library accepts the recommendation of the Finance Committee to approve the MVP Healthcare Bronze 7 Health Benefits Plan for 2021-2022 and authorizes Brooke Dittmar to sign the contracts for this plan. A motion to accept the resolution was made by Susan Leiching and seconded by Don Carragher.
AYES: 7; NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0
Board Members Excused: Laura Lauria
Board Members Absent: 0

Shannon noted that the finance committee should have had a chance to review the Health Benefit plans before the Board meeting was held. Susan mentioned that Brooke sent the information in an email stating that they were looking into CDPHP but they decided to keep the same plan that they already have.

- **Research and Development** – Gilbert Ramos
Written report submitted. Gilbert reviewed the meeting minutes. He noted that the Foundation directory is a good resource for grants. Grants are important for the library.
- **Sustainability Committee** – Don Carragher
Written report submitted. Don reviewed the meeting minutes. Reggie and Don met during the time the Research and Development Committee was meeting. They reviewed the Green Business Partnership.

Gilbert would like the \$25,000 that we are to receive from the estate to go to a rainy day fund. The library has a 501c3 designation. Some designations are limited in the amount of funds that they can hold. It is fiscally responsible to have 3 months' worth of funds available at a time.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business or discussion, Gilbert Ramos made a motion to adjourn and it was seconded by Don Carragher. The meeting was adjourned at 7:14 pm.

AYES: 7; NAYS: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 0

Board Members Excused: Laura Lauria

Board Members Absent: 0

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

Town of Esopus Library
Buildings and Grounds Committee August 9, 2021

Attending: Don Carragher, Brooke Dittmar and
Excused: Jim Fitzmorris
Absent: Shannon Harris

The tree that fell on the driveway has been reduced to remove the vines and expose the branches. More vines in the swale have been cut to relieve the weight on other trees not yet bent over. Gilbert Ramos had a tree service come over to view the damage. Mountain Tree Service marked several trees for removal in addition to the trees that fell. Don will contact them to discuss the work. Brooke asked that the wood chips be moved near to the Community Garden for improving the paths.

The bridge at the pond is expected to be removed before the end of the month.

The furniture on the deck is several years old and in bad condition; dried, cracked and loose. They will be removed. Two new chairs and a bench will be assembled to replace them.

Don will inventory the computers to be disposed. They will be donated to the GE Elfin Group in Schenectady to be refurbished for New York community groups. Once the floor is clear the Network Room ceiling tiles can be replaced.

The six parking bumpers in the lower lot were dislocated by the snowplow. Two of them have been reset.

The committee requests that the American flag be replaced for pole display.

Brooke continues to research a weeding/landscaping service for the planted beds.

Central Hudson lighting refit: Phase 1 has been approved to be paid and Phase Two proposal has been sent to Finance Committee.

Next meeting Sept. 13, 4pm.

Submitted, Donald Carragher.

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Attending: Don Carragher, Brooke Dittmar and Shannon Harris
Excused: Jim Fitzmorris

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Director's Report to the Board
August 24, 2021
Brooke Dittmar

Anita Hadley, who is the lead organizer for the Photo Club has generously donated some of her photographs to the library. They are 5 different postcard-sized photo series taken from the air, framed in groups of 4 to a frame. These five local subjects are: lighthouses, bridges, mansions, landscapes, and a local quarry. She will be mounting them within the next few days on the wall across from the circulation desk. Anita has also donated a beautiful book of these photographs, in which she has discussed the history of these places. You can find it on the "New Books" shelves, for checkout.

We hired Mountain Tree Care to cut the downed tree, as well as a number of other trees that were leaning over the yard. It looks so good! I'm glad it was done before the potential downpours and wind of Henri, otherwise we might have had a bigger mess with additional downed trees. Don also worked on the trees and vines this past month. Thank you, Don! An interesting fact: this tree company has had to deal with huge amounts of vines this year. Just as in our yard, they are growing rampant everywhere. In a side note: we have also never had weeds grow so prolifically in our gardens as we have this year. I have not yet been able to hire anybody to weed, but am working on it. It may come down to me doing it.

Throughout the pandemic our library has established itself as a leader in diverse programming online, offering many more quality programs than all other libraries in the Mid-Hudson Library System. Now that things are changing, I asked Brian for a report that focused on the recent trends. Here it is:

"As summer began, we were still doing all programs online. Throughout the spring we'd seen online attendance drop as more things opened and people were getting vaccinated. While our Trivia Nights remained popular (averaging 15 -20 attendees), other programs lagged.

As a result, many libraries in Ulster County began joining forces to offer joint programming with some success. In June we sponsored a Backyard Chickens for Beginners presentation hosted by the Cornell Cooperative Extension and had several libraries join with advertising the event to their patrons. Esopus Library alone had 12 people sign up for it.

In July, we joined with other libraries to offer a presentation on the KonMari method of life organization had 12 of our patrons sign up for it, four of whom sent emails afterward telling us how much they loved it.

In August, we opened the library for in-person meetings of a few of our regular weekly and monthly programs. Our two weekly groups that had continued to meet online during the pandemic (Needleworkers and Artists) have been thrilled. In the Spring, the Artist group had shrunk to an average of 5 online participants per week. Our three in person meetings have averaged 13 attendees. By the beginning of Summer, the Needleworkers group had dwindled to

1 or 2 attendees online. Our three in person meetings have averaged 10 attendees. In-person attendance for the Book Club was 12 people, 4 above the online average of 8.

Our Writer's Group which has been running just over two years now has become a hybrid group of over a dozen regular members. In addition to mostly local members, it has active members from Oregon, Nova Scotia, Indiana, and Florida”.

We are proud of our continued success in adult programming!

The new cleaning company, The Green Janitor, will do an initial deep clean, then start on the regular schedule that we have had in the past. In the meantime, I've been the toilet and sink cleaner, as well as the facility garbage collector!

We are seeing a constant rise in patron visits, and are increasingly busy. With the rapid increase in cases of the COVID Delta variant, masks are again required in the library, as recommended by the CDC.

This month's Esopus Business Alliance (EBA) mixer, that was scheduled for August 23rd has been changed to August 30th, because of safety concerns. This is a joint mixer with the Highland Business Association. The mixer will be held at Highland Landing Park, from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM (please note the difference in time from previous mixers). It is a 'rain or shine' event, and it is suggested that we bring a chair if we want to sit and gaze at the river. There will be guest speakers - Tim Weidemann, Director of Ulster County Department of Economic Development, Jared Geuss, Town of Esopus Supervisor and Fred Pizzutto, Town of Lloyd Supervisor.

As you have probably seen on the MHLS listserv, or in the MHLS weekly Bulletin, two beginning-level training workshops are being offered for trustees. One is in the form of a trustee handbook bookclub series. This is the book that we had been using for the trustee training that we did monthly before we started meeting online. The co-authors and additional moderators will be in attendance to answer questions, and clarify where needed. They request that questions be submitted before the meetings. The meeting schedule is as follows:

Tuesday, October 19th, 5:00-6:30 pm. Topic: Duties & Responsibilities

Tuesday, November 16th, 5:00-6:30 pm. Topic: Library Board Meetings

Tuesday, December 14th, 5:00-6:30 pm. Topic: Personnel

To learn more about the program, register, and send in your questions visit

<https://midhudson.org/trusteebookclub/>

The second beginning level workshop being offered is “Core Values and Ethics”. It will be offered at the following times:

Tuesday, September 14th, 5:30-7:00 pm.

Friday, September 17th, 10:00-11:30 am.

Refer to the above-mentioned emails to see intermediate and advanced level offerings.

Town of Esopus Library
Finance Committee
August 12,2021

The payment of claims for \$14,633.16 was reviewed by the Finance committee and a resolution for approval by the Board of Trustees will be presented to the Board on August 24th. board meeting.

Money from the wage category was moved around from unstaffed positions to currently staffed positions.

New proposal for library lighting is \$6,235.22, this includes the downstairs lighting missed in the original proposal. This is to be paid out of retained earnings.

A fund balance policy should be established so as to set aside a separate account for any emergency that might occur should there be a delay in the receipt of our town tax appropriation. A fund balance policy should be created with the advice of our accountant as to how much would be appropriate. Brooke said she would look into how to go about hiring a firm to conduct an audit of the library accounts and procedures.

A new cleaning company has been hired.

Respectfully submitted,

Gilbert Ramos

Attending: Susan Leiching, Brooke Dittmar, Gilbert Ramos, Absent Reggie Hefferman

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

**August 10, 2021
(2nd Tuesday, @ 4pm)**

Attendance: Susan Leiching, Brooke Dittmar, Nancy Beranek

Excused: Jim Fitzmorris

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 PM

The committee is reviewing the Grievance and Resolution Policy. There are multiple suggestions made. Susan will send out the first draft of the revisions to the committee for further review.

We looked at the Whistleblower policy in both the personnel part of the policy book and in the internal part of the book. They will be reviewed at the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 5:20 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Leiching, Chairperson

**Next meeting is September 14, 2021
4:00 PM**

Town of Esopus Library
Research and Development Committee
8/11/21

A brief discussion included the facility plan and how grants could be pursued for projects outlined. Sometimes though grants might not be available for prospective projects so we have to rely on budgeting for them.

Gilbert informed the committee that presently there are individuals that are providing a great deal of money to schools and various not for profits including libraries. Two that I am aware of are Mckenzie Scott ex wife of Jeff Bezos and the Novo Foundation headed by Peter Buffet, Warren Buffet's son. It was suggested that working with theTown of Esopus Library foundation we might draft a letter to these individuals to solicit an endowment. I intend to follow up with the board of the library foundation.

Respectfully submitted,

Gilbert Ramos

Present, Nancy Beranek, Brooke Dittmar, Gilbert Ramos, Shannon Harris excused

Town of Esopus Library
Sustainability Committee Meeting August 11, 2021 5:30 pm

Attending: Donald Carragher, Brooke Dittmar and Laura Lauria
Excused: Reggie Heffernan

Laura had not received the Library Sustainability Action Points document so it was sent now. As the purchase of the Archive building is on hold, Don wanted to review what we had learned in the discussions of expanding this libraries services.

Brooke listed current and past programs; youth, senior and many area groups that meet here. We have not been short of programming or variety but are very constrained by the limited floorspace. Both the Teen and Childrens Book Rooms are so small that books must be regularly culled. Chair Yoga and Exercise classed are usually full. The Town of Esopus does not have a senior center and the local group often has 50 to 70 members attending. Except for the library, there is no public computer access and services. Programs such as Cyber Seniors for Keyboard Skills could be added here.

Meeting rooms for smaller groups and conferences were part of the new location wish list and that need is currently not met in town. Our own staff and volunteers have limited space. Many libraries have added a café which can be private reading, conversation or a setting for discussion. We have no Quiet Room for uninterrupted work. Another past resource was the Local History/John Burroughs Room that concentrated those materials and the works of our famous local writer.

Without actual construction there is only the option for temporary expansion outside if we use event tents. Funding could be requested for tent rental and scheduling a full weekend of events could appeal to varied groups of patrons. A three or four day series including Family Movie Night, a Saturday Dance Series and a Sunday afternoon concert would maximize the return on the cost of rentals and equipment.

The Library Foundation has monies for the support and expansion of the current facility.

The Board is invited to consider and add to this discussion.

Next meeting: Sept. 8, 5:00 pm in Community Room.

Submitted, Donald Carragher

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August 24, 2021
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Anita Hadley, who is the lead organizer for the Photo Club has generously donated some of her photographs to the library. They are 5 different postcard-sized photo series taken from the air, framed in groups of 4 to a frame. These five local subjects are: lighthouses, bridges, mansions, landscapes, and a local quarry. She will be mounting them within the next few days on the wall across from the circulation desk. Anita has also donated a beautiful book of these photographs, in which she has discussed the history of these places. You can find it on the "New Books" shelves, for checkout.

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