

Pawlet Public Library
Monthly Meeting of Board of Trustees
MINUTES
September 10, 2019

Present:

Trustees in attendance: Janno Gay, Kathryn Lawrence, Diane Mach, Marty Kravitt, Sally Caras

Trustees absent: none

Library Director: Mary Lou Willits

Invited Guests: Janine Seitz, Jed Rubin

Attending: Eve Schaub

Call to order: at 6:10 pm, Janno Gay opens the meeting.

Public Comment

Janno invited Eve Schaub to introduce the topic she brings for Public Comment, which follows Unfinished Business in PPL's monthly agenda. Eve asked to provide information related to the proposed Nimtze design for the library steps and lift expansion.

Norms: A Review of Operating Norms

The meeting began with a reading of the agreed-upon Operating Norms.

Minutes

Janno Gay motioned to approve the August minutes, seconded by Diane Mach, motion carried.

September Agenda

Janno moved to add the subject of Trash Collection at the Sorting Barn (re Book Sale). Diane Mach seconded. Janno moved to approve the updated September agenda, seconded by Diane Mach, the motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

Kathryn Lawrence presented the PPL Treasurer's Report and financial update, drawing attention to the July book sale revenue profit; grants secured by the library's director, Mary Lou Willits; and the status of PPL's Vermont Community Fund, checking and money market accounts. As discussed earlier and scheduled for September, the board voted to move two end-of-term CDs from a Bank North money market account to PPL's accessible reserve fund with the Vermont Community Fund. All finances are on track, no surprises.

Director's Report

Mary Lou provided her monthly Director's Report and walked the group through all items. Discussion focused on: new grants received, funding for the new community connector position and search campaign, plus a walk-through of recent and upcoming PPL-hosted intergenerational, community events. Mary Lou announced that PPL has been awarded four grants from Vermont civic-philanthropic organizations. Together, these fully fund year one of the PPL community connector job, as identified in the approved/posted PPL Strategic Plan. Now, she will move forward in promoting the position to find the best qualified candidate, with interviews to continue into October. Mary Lou is booked on the Select Board's September 24 meeting agenda

to share PPL's Strategic Plan progress and results to date, including the grant funding for the community connector position.

Review Commitments for Fundraiser Dinner/Auction

Janno lead discussion related to the September 16 fundraiser dinner and live auction to be held at The Barn. Auction items now displayed the library will be moved to The Barn that afternoon. Board members will serve as wait staff. PPL salutes Bob Ebling for reprising his wildly successful 2018 auctioneer's role and the many guests now booked to participate in September 16's fun evening. All auction and meal proceeds go toward PPL's programs and book purchases. Liquor is excluded, remaining under the aegis of The Barn.

Committee Reports: Book Sale

As follow-up to the board's August discussion of ways to refine 2019 Book Sale operations, Janine Seitz provided sorting team recommendations for dealing with problematic issues related to sorting, setup and post-sale removal of unsold books. Most critical are problems caused by people who overwhelm the sale with unwanted (unsellable) books and unrelated materials. To put it bluntly: too many people are dumping personal trash at the sorting barn, instead of shredding these items or taking them to the dump. Janine brought a box full of recent examples: severely water-damaged books with wadded-up pages, personal handwritten diaries, someone's personal garden log, dozens of decades-old, defunct state-issued worker manuals. Janno noted that she has explored trash-removal options, including renting a dumpster for the sorting barn. Further discussion centered on ways to clarify, communicate and reinforce what PPL can and cannot accept. The message: *donate don't dump*. Current volume is crushing PPL volunteers. New discussion: how to hone in on most-sellable material to curtail (by half) the number of books offered for sale. Goals: to significantly improve the book buying experience and to significantly reduce the volume of unsold materials requiring removal, post-sale.

Norms

At closing: the meeting norms were reviewed.

Public Comments

Eve Schaub introduced discussion related to the proposed Nimtz architectural design for the library lift expansion and steps. She drew attention to related exchanges on the subject at the Select Board May 21 meeting. She suggested a need for more and better communication about the proposed design between the Select Board and PPL Board and, when appropriate, with the public. PPL members agree that future lift plan communication is a priority. Group discussion centered on PPL's June meeting discussion about the design. Also discussed: public comments about the Nimtz design offered by Marty Kravitt and Eve, per PEG-TV coverage, at the Select Board's August 27 meeting. Noted were Marty's counter-proposal for rebuilding the library's front steps and Eve's query over lift plan priority. Janno cautioned Marty to consider his role on the PPL Board when making personal recommendations related to library concerns that have been voted on and remain under active discussion by the PPL Board.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:00 pm.

Next meeting: October 1, 2019

Minutes submitted September 17, 2019 by Secretary Sally Caras.