

Meeting Minutes of the Peru Free Library Board of Trustees
November 17th, 2021
Videoconference Meeting

Attendees: Patrick Andrews, Terri Cioppa, Rocky Divoll, Sandy Divoll, Diane Haight, Marque Moffett, Parker O'Mara, Tracy Orkin, Becky Pace, Sara Richman.
Guest: Shelley Fracalossi

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by President Marque. The agenda was approved with a motion by Sandy and seconded by Sarah. The minutes of the October meeting were approved with a motion by Pat and seconded by Tracy.

Report from Shelley about Library budget—Shelley sent an email (attached) to the Board members about the budget including the category of “Reserve Funds Transfer.” This category includes any excess funds from the previous two years’ budgets and from the PPP loan/grant that the Library received. The Reserve Funds should be an amount that would provide for the payment of any salaries for that year if needed which has always been considered \$50,000 for the Library. Currently the amount in the Reserve Fund, i.e. money market, is \$75,900. In the past two years the actual income exceeded the expenditures. Current salaries now exceed \$50,000 which indicates the Reserve Funds should be increased to cover the increased salary cost should it be needed. Shelley explained that traditionally in budgets any excess unspent funds in a category should be carried over to be spent into that category in the next year. In next year’s budget any extra funds could possibly be used for the Library construction project. In 2023 the Library will have a smaller Reserve Fund since the construction costs would occur in that year. Becky suggested that in a nonprofit organization, any funds not spent at the end of the year after the budget is balanced could be used for a staff bonus. She pointed out that the payroll expenses for 2021 were less due to closures for COVID regulations. Marque said this option will be discussed at the end of the fiscal year.

Director’s Report—The Library is currently setting up for the North Country Potters’ Guild and Adirondack artist Lynda Mussen show that will begin November 19th and continue until January. The number of patrons visiting the Library continues to be consistent including many families. Within the CEFLS in the past two months, 7 librarians have left their positions (about 1/4th of the libraries in the system) for several reasons including salaries and micromanagement by their Board of Trustees. The last 18 months of dealing with COVID restrictions and then reopening of the library buildings have been extremely stressful for all librarians which Board members don’t seem to necessarily understand. Therefore the librarians feel that no one is helping them. This situation is occurring across the state and not just in our local system.

President’s Report—Marque attended, virtually, a webinar entitled “Ballot Basics” about what Board members and staff can do for funding the Library. She will be emailing the program information to the Board members.

Marque received a call from a Peru Central School administrator asking if she would serve as a representative from the district to the CVES Board, filling a position to April 2022. She has agreed to complete that term.

Treasurer's Report—The balances in the accounts are checking--\$8860.18, savings--\$970.26 and money market--\$75,905.71.

Building/Maintenance Report—The trimming of branches on the tree beside the Library cannot be done until the ground is frozen which will be in 2022.

Subcommittee Status Reports—

Budget Committee: The Town of Peru has verbally reported to Marque that if the Library receives the Construction Grant through the New York State Library system, the Town will also provide \$5000 toward the construction. Marque will ask for that statement be provided in writing.

Fundraising Committee: Based on current information about fundraising it was suggested that the Friends of the Library group be initiated again to assist with this purpose.

Long-Range Plan Committee: No report.

Policy Committee: No report.

Old Business—Marque is asking for legal advice about Article VI of the Library Bylaws about Indemnification. It appears that this may have been copied from another library's bylaws but should still be reviewed.

New Business—Articles VIII, IX and X of the Library Bylaws were reviewed for clarification and corrections which were mostly grammar and punctuation. The entire set of Bylaws will be sent to the Board members so they can be reviewed at the December meeting and approved at the Annual Meeting.

Library Moment—A mother and her two young children came to the Library to pick up the clay pots they had made at an art class during the summer. The children also received their own Library cards and checked out books with the cards. When the mother saw the piano in the front room, she mentioned she would like to find a secondhand piano for lessons. Linda Jones, a volunteer in the children's room, offered a piano she had to the family which has already occurred. Another opportunity for the Library to be an integral part of the community by bringing people together!

The dates for the next two meetings are December 15th and January 19th (annual meeting and the regular Board meeting).

The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 pm with a motion by Tracy and Rocky and seconded by Pat.