

Meeting Minutes of the Peru Free library Board of Trustees
November 15th, 2023

Attendees: Patrick Andrews, Sandy Divoll, Diane Haight, Marque Moffett, Parker O'Mara, Tracy Orkin, Becky Pace, Sara Richman.

Absent: Rocky Divoll

Guests: Mel Irwin, Town of Peru Board Liaison; Anja Bouchard, CEFLS Liaison.

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm by President Marque. The agenda was approved with a motion by Pat and seconded by Sandy. The minutes were approved with a motion by Pat and seconded by Parker.

The dates for the next two meetings are December 13th and January 10th which will be the Annual Meeting and the regular monthly meeting.

President's Report—Marque reminded the board members that they need to complete the 2 hour trustee education requirement by the end of December. Each person is responsible to report his/her own information to her. Also each board member has to complete the Sexual Harassment training by the end of December and give the certificate of completion to Becky.

As Marque will be stepping down from the position of president at the end of December, she is attempting to consolidate the many tasks of this role. In this way the position of president could be easier for the next person.

John Ryan from the Peru Gazette contacted Marque to discuss 3 questions: the wording of the notice about the Library being closed for an hour daily when one of the staff members is absent, the amount of the water and sewer bill for the Library and the presentation at the Town Budget Workshop of the Library's request for funding. At this time John and Marque have not met to have the discussion of these topics.

Director's Report—Becky introduced Anja Bouchard who is the liaison from CEFLS.

The Library has received the \$10,000 from the line item on the Peru Central School budget vote. Also a donation of \$1,000 has been received from a member of the community.

The current art exhibit "Book of Shadows" collages by Tory and Norman Taber opened on October 13th and will close next week. Sales of these pieces currently totals \$3,150 from which the Library will receive a commission of \$787. The Potters Guild Show and Sale will open December 1st.

The Library hosted a guest author talk by John Mullane, a local mystery writer, on October 26th. The 2023 edition of the Handbook for Library Trustees of New York State has been provided for the Library by CEFLS. This copy is available to be checked out from the Library, and the handbook is also available from the New York State Library website.

Treasurer's Report—The balances for the accounts are checking--\$1955.87, money market--\$37,834.86 and CD--\$35,756.59. The total for all accounts is \$75,547.32.

The Library received a check from NYSEG for \$13,212.80 as partial payment of the amount owed by the company. The plan for the remaining \$2000 is still being developed. This issue with NYSEG is still being pursued by Becky and Sara.

The Library receives a bill from the Town of Peru for water and sewer on a quarterly basis. Since the November bill was not paid by the past due date, the past due balance was sent to the Clinton County tax office and would be added to tax bill at the end of the year. However, the Library does not pay taxes so this amount of \$1000 will need to be paid in January 2024.

Becky scans all bills that are sent to her and then emails them to Forrest to be paid. Apparently Forrest does not regularly review the emails sent by Becky about bills to be paid, and therefore this situation occurred. We have learned there are other bills which have not been paid in a timely manner.

Becky also explained that our water bill was very high during the early summer months due to a mechanical problem with the system used to water outside. The excess amount has been covered by a donation to the Library.

The time period for the CD previously purchased by the Library has now ended. A motion was made by Sara and seconded by Sandy to invest the base amount plus the interest income in a 6 month CD at a rate of 5% at TD Bank. The motion was approved.

Building/Maintenance Report—Rocky will contact the company to inspect the fire extinguishers at the Library before the end of November.

Subcommittee Reports:

Budget—Committee Members: Sara, Becky and Forrest. The 2024 budget will have to be revised due to a decrease of \$10,000 in revenue. The Library requested \$90,000 from the Town of Peru for 2024 but was approved by the Town to receive \$80,000. The Library requested \$15,000 through the Peru School District vote in May.

There are two options being considered to meet this need for additional revenue. First, the Library could increase the amount of funds requested through the School District vote to \$20,000 and fundraise \$5000 which would balance out the \$10,000 shortfall. If the voters do not approve this request, the funding would remain at the 2023 level of \$10,000 and other options for fundraising \$15,000 would be needed. The second option would be to continue with the request for \$15,000 through the School District vote which is a \$5000 increase from the 2023 funding and would require the Library to fundraise \$10,000. If that request does not pass, the Library will still have to fundraise \$15,000.

At the December meeting a decision will be made by the Board about which option will be pursued.

Long Range Committee Members: Marque, Pat, Becky and Sandy.

Policy Committee Members: Sara, Becky and Parker. Tracy was on the committee but will end her term in 2023. The committee has prepared three new policies and has two more to finalize to be presented at the Annual Meeting.

Fundraising Committee Members: Marque, Becky, ad hoc members: Holly Heller Ross and Tracy Orkin.

Old Business—The Board had decided to do a landscaping project in memory of Shelley Fracalossi and had requested an estimate from Nicki LaPlante to do the project. The original estimate was \$1500.75. If the dogwood tree would be removed prior to beginning the project, Nicki would acquire and plant 3 rhododendrons for \$400 or acquire and plant 1 rhododendron for \$300. There will be further discussion at the December meeting.

Sandy and Becky had provided a Board of Trustees self-evaluation form at the last meeting to be completed by Board members by this meeting. Since many forms were in the process of being completed, Sandy will provide a summary of the results at the December meeting.

New Business—No report.

Library Moment—Becky explained that the only volunteers the Library currently has is the Collier family who do snow removal as needed. Many people, especially 20 to 40 years old, have little desire to volunteer now. Therefore the Library, which could use someone in the Children's Room as well as other positions, has no volunteers at this time.

It was decided that after the December business meeting, the Board members will have a social time to celebrate the holiday.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:41 pm with a motion by Pat and seconded by Sara.