

The Field Library, Peekskill, New York

Board of Trustees Meeting January 14, 2021

Present: Sandra Smith, Mary Foster, Melinda Cosentino, Ben Bloom, Chris Vega, Tina Romeo, Ann Douglas, Joe Galella, Christopher Alexander, Alan Most (taking notes), Councilwoman Patricia Riley, Library Director Jennifer Brown.

1. The meeting was called to order by Ms. Smith at 7.02pm. The meeting was held via the Zoom platform, was broadcast over YouTube, and was recorded.
2. The December minutes were approved with one correction: the word “see” is to be changed to “reminded to review.” Mr. Bloom moved to approve the minutes; second by Ms. Foster; unanimous in favor.
3. Ms. Brown introduced Ms. Chelsea Handler, the new Head of Children’s Services.
4. It was noted that Patricia Brigham from Friends of The Field Library, along with two other members of the Friends, will be assisting with the development of the Library’s strategic plan.
5. There was an extended discussion about the City’s maintenance of the Neighborhood Center building and their response to building problems reported by Ms. Brown. This followed the recent leak over the weekend in the adult wing, the loss of Library property, and the City not providing immediate remediation and clean up. In the past Ms. Brown and Jack Eckhardt have graciously done the clean up to avoid further harm to the building, employees, and the Library collection.

Ms. Smith was asked to formally thank Mr. Eckhardt in writing for his help with the clean ups.
6. Ms. Brown noted that circulation from the Town of Cortlandt residents has improved over last year and the money from the Town of Cortlandt will increase.
7. There was discussion about the Saturday morning COVID testing in the basement of the Neighborhood Center. Because there is no City staff in the building, Ms. Brown has been opening up the building and waiting in the lobby until the Library guard arrives. When the guard arrives, he directs those getting tests into the basement and provides books to library patrons with pick up reservations.
8. Ms. Brown noted that the State library report does not ask her to include web views in her data (in addition to live attendance). Since almost all Library events were held over the web in 2020, she felt that this would dramatically impact the Library’s data. It was noted, however, that she could annotate the report with web views and that data from the report does not impact financing.
9. Ms. Foster noted that the 2020 Library budget was balanced and that no money was pulled from investment funds to cover expenses. She complimented Ms. Brown and her staff.
10. Mr. Most, on behalf of Friends of The Field Library noted two upcoming events: Josh Mensch, author of THE LINCOLN CONSPIRACY; and a virtual beer tasting in cooperation with the Peekskill Brewery. The Friends anticipate holding outdoor, socially distanced events on either Esther Street or the Library plaza in warmer weather.

11. There was an extended discussion of possible revisions to the by-laws. These were prepared by the Governance Committee. The Board of Trustees did not complete its discussion and this will continue at a later date. A summary of the possible revisions will be included when the discussions are concluded.

12. Mr. Most made a motion to move to Executive Session; second by Mr. Galella; unanimous in favor.

13. Mr. Most moved to adjourn the Executive Session at 8.59pm; second by Mr. Bloom; unanimous in favor.

14. Mr. Most moved to adjourn the Board of Trustees meeting at 9.00am; second by Mr. Bloom; unanimous in favor.