

BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2024 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

February 20, 2024 - 6:00pm

The Brunswick Community Library provides access to life-long learning, resources, engaging activities, and an inclusive community space for all.

Attendees: Virginia Anderson, Alix Duggan, Sara Hopkins, Grace Kosinski, Matt Perfetti, Jennifer Shatz, Andrea Wedler, Fred Wobrok. **Excused:** Jennifer Gordon, Therese Goyette.

Absent: Jennifer Mainello, Kevin Mainello. **Public:** Annie Metzger, Yusuf Silk.

Call to Order: 6:09pm

Approval of January 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes: No requests for changes to the minutes. Motion to approve by Alix Duggan, seconded by Andrea Wedler. All in favor. None opposed. **Motion carried.**

President's Report by Alix Duggan: See exhibit 1.

Treasurer's Report by Andrea Wedler: See exhibit 2.

Director's Report by Sara Hopkins: See exhibit 3.

Human Resources Report by Jennifer Shatz:

In 2023, the Human Resource committee revised our Meeting Room policy to include an "intellectual freedom" section, which reflects our constitutional duty as a library to provide an inclusive space for all. This policy led to a discussion about how the Meeting Room policy relates to requests for library space from political or other interest groups.

We revised our Facilities Use policy to limit food use in library space, due to concerns over insects and other infestation.

We created a Sexual Harassment Policy, which the library is required to maintain by law.

We amended the bylaws to reflect a new requirement codified in the NY Education Law that now requires annual trustee training.

We conducted the annual evaluation of the Library Director and are developing a policy to formalize that process.

Nominating Committee Report presented by Alix Duggan for Kevin Mainello:

There were no nominations from the floor.

The Committee moved to install the following current Trustees serving interim terms for full first terms: Virginia Anderson, Grace Kosinski, Andrea Wedler. Motion seconded by Alix Duggan. All in favor. None opposed. **Motion carried.**

The Committee moved to install the following new Trustees for full first terms: Annie Metzger, Yusuf Silk, Debra Zaffuts. Motion seconded by Andrea Wedler. All in favor. None opposed. **Motion carried.**

The Committee moved to install the following current Trustees for full second terms: Alix Duggan. Motion seconded by Andrea Wedler. All in favor. None opposed. **Motion carried.**

The Committee moved to install the following slate of candidates for Executive board positions: President, Alix Duggan; Vice President, Jennifer Shatz; Treasurer, Andrea Wedler; Secretary, position pending. Motion seconded by Grace Kosinski. All in favor. None opposed. **Motion carried.**

Public Comments: No public comments were offered.

President's Closing Remarks: Alix Duggan reiterated the library's mission statement and thanked the board, staff, and volunteers for working to support this mission in 2023. The board applauded these efforts and agreed that Brunswick's library is truly an inclusive community space for all.

Next Brunswick Library Annual Meeting: January 21, 2025 at 6:00pm

Adjourn: Motion to adjourn made by Alix Duggan, seconded by Jennifer Shatz. All in favor. None opposed. **Motion carried.** Meeting adjourned at 6:35pm.

Minutes compiled by Alix Duggan

Exhibit 1

Brunswick Community Library President's 2023 Annual Report

The Brunswick Community Library provides access to life-long learning, resources, engaging activities, and an inclusive community space for all.

2023 was another successful year for the Brunswick Community Library, as we continued to be a hub of activity for our patrons. Creative and educational programming (led by our excellent staff) set us apart from other libraries of our size, and brought new visitors of all ages into the building.

We were honored to receive UHLS's Adult Program of the Year Award for our Community Garden & Compost Program. This outdoor area is always growing – literally – as we involve more community members in ongoing garden planting, maintenance, and education. In the spring we began making plans for an Honor Garden brick walkway program that will begin at the greenhouse and extend as a path through the back yard. That program will be realized in 2024.

We made very few physical changes to our property in 2023, but made many programming changes: highlights included animal shows, writing workshops and author talks, clothing swaps for kids and adults, multicultural musical performances, holiday-themed art workshops, outdoor Tinkergarten classes, body wellness classes, and gardening classes. New approaches to holiday celebrations included Valentine "Blind Date with a Book", Easter scavenger hunt week, Halloween Art Party, and a Winter Polar Express Party.

Director Sara Hopkins, Assistant Lydia Desmond, and our team of part-time staff worked together to make 2023 our busiest year yet. The library's attendance and circulation statistics both rose by about 15% compared to 2022. Sara is always mindful to keep our offerings relevant, informational, and entertaining. Our staff promoted our physical and digital collections through winter and summer reading programs, "Library of Things", book clubs, Libby, Hoopla, NewsBank subscription services, and Literature Substack. We are proud to have these people as the daily face of our library.

Beginning in 2023, NYS required all library board members to take annual UHLS Trustee Training classes, and we gladly responded by asking Tim Burke and Mary Fellows to present their 2-hour course to us at our March meeting. This inspired our Executive Committee to begin meeting on a more regular basis to review the library's operations and find better ways to meet the goals of our Long-Range Plan.

Our board members' responsibilities in 2023 also involved:

- The Annual Appeal & Fundraising Committee planning events, donation opportunities and fundraisers throughout the year, including volunteering at our first Brunswick Elks Charity Dinner and staffing the 50/50 raffle nights at the Brunswick Town Concerts.
- The Building & Grounds Committee performing regular maintenance, evaluations of building systems, and planning for future projects and construction grant applications.
- The Finance Committee reevaluating our annual budget. (More on this ahead.)
- The Human Resources Committee reviewing policies and procedures, and making sure our library's patrons, staff, and property are well protected.

- The Nominating Committee expanding our portfolio of new board candidates.
- The Technology Committee presenting a Google Workspace workshop to share, access, and collaboratively edit our documents.

Increasing the library's financial stability was a top priority of our board and staff in 2023. After careful consideration, the Finance Committee moved \$100k from our savings account to a 13-month CD for a higher interest rate. The committee also reported that three areas of the budget needed to be significantly increased to stay competitive and meet the needs of our growing community: compensation for our employees, operations, and programs. We expressed these financial concerns in a meeting with the Town of Brunswick Supervisor, Assistant to the Supervisor, and Town Accountant, and were very grateful to be included in the Town's departmental budget planning process for the first time in 2023. The Town granted us an increase of over \$23,00 for 2024 and beyond, which brings us closer to our financial goals and budget needs.

We tried a new approach to targeted fundraising this year: we postponed the usual spring mailer to our 'previous donors' list and promoted our Garden Day, Fall Fest, and BBQ fundraisers instead. We then sent our holiday Annual Appeal letter to our 'library card holders and previous donors' list, plus we increased our mailing to the 5,000 households in the Town of Brunswick. This was a large effort by our board and staff, but unfortunately yielded disappointing results. Annual fundraising for 2023 totaled about \$28k, compared to \$35k in 2022. We learned a lot from this experience and will take a better approach to targeted fundraising in 2024.

Overall, the library continues to thrive because of our dedicated board and staff. In 2023 we welcomed Virginia Anderson, Therese Goyette and Fred Wobrock to our Board of Trustees. We are also grateful for the work of our outgoing board members: Jennifer Gordon who served for one year as our secretary, Jennifer Mainello who served for three years and chaired our Fundraising Committee, and Kevin Mainello who served for six years and chaired our Building & Grounds and Nominating Committee. Many thanks for your leadership and lasting contributions to the library.

It is my pleasure working with such a strong team of leaders and supporting the mission of the Brunswick Community Library. I'm looking forward to continued success in 2024.

With sincerest appreciation,



Alix Duggan

President, Board of Trustees
Brunswick Community Library

Exhibit 2

Brunswick Community Library Treasurer's Report for 2023

Our library closed the year on solid financial ground. Our income was \$23,042 over budget and our expenses were \$8,598 under budget. We received \$128,678 from the Town of Brunswick, \$35,000 from the Brittonkill School District and \$7,030 from Rensselaer County. The Town of Brunswick increased their contribution by 3% from the 2022 amount of \$124,928. Our income is augmented by donations from the library patrons, grants and miscellaneous other donations.

Appeal Letter Response/ Fundraising

The annual appeal letter was sent out once this year once in November to around 5,000 people from a list of town residents. The mailing was done with in-house printing and stuffing. This mailing had a \$12,495 response in November and December. Donations continued to trickle in during the new year. We also receive contributions throughout the year via checks, a donate button on our webpage using PayPal and solicited donations through Facebook. We received \$2,367 from web donations and \$300 from our Facebook page. The total of all donations for the year, including annual appeal, was \$18,449. These donations are for the library's annual operating expenses and capital expenditures.

Our fundraising activities raised \$9,535 with some of those items being:

Town concert 50/50 \$1,513; Garden Day \$1,815; Fall Fest \$502; Hannaford programs \$507.

Savings Account Totals

	12/31/19	12/31/20	12/31/21	12/31/22	12/31/23
SEFCU Savings	\$154,919	\$112,335	\$148,577	\$222,811	\$142,819
SEFCU CD	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$103,043
Total	\$154,919	\$112,335	\$148,577	\$222,811	\$245,862

Yusuf Silk asked if we plan to invest more of our savings in high-yield accounts in 2024. Yes, when the current SEFCU CD matures in March, the Finance Committee will look to increase the amount of reinvestment while still keeping an appropriate balance to meet our budgetary needs.

Anticipated Spending from Building Accounts

We currently do not anticipate any spending from the building account on building improvements in 2024. Any money spent on the Honor Garden Paver Program will be covered by donations. We will reevaluate other projects once we know DLD's matching construction grant rate for 2024.

Conclusion

Our financial successes continue. We are fortunate to have had another positive year punctuated by donations made in response to the annual appeal. Our Balance Sheet ended the year very healthy.

Andrea Wedler
Treasurer

Exhibit 3

Brunswick Community Library Director's 2023 Annual Report Highlights

Collection Data:

Total Print Materials - 8628

Total In Person Non-Print Materials - 2164

Total In Building Materials - 10792

Total Electronic Materials - 104401

Cataloged New Physical BRUN Items in 2023 - 993

New Electronic Items in 2023 - 31634

Borrowers & Usage:

Total Attendance - 28687 (26,973 in 2022)

Registered Borrowers - 4691 (4,443 in 2022)

Total Programs - 346 (316 in 2022)

Program Attendance - 8556 (7,825 in 2022)

Physical Circulation - 42668 (44,700 in 2022)

Libby and Hoopla Electronic Content Use - 26,655 (22,205 in 2022)

Newsbank Digital Newspaper - 18570 (10819 in 2022)

Total Circulation (Physical Books, Libby, Hoopla, and Newsbank) - 87893

The full 2023 Annual Report (with statistics provided by Upper Hudson Library System) was distributed by email to the Board of Trustees to review.

Sara Hopkins
Director