

Minutes of the SCHSFLA Board of Trustees Meeting on July 22nd 2024

The meeting was held at the Historical Society Building on Monument St.

Call to Order at 4:00 PM by President Steve Spero.

Board Members in attendance: Steve Spero, Rob Vermette, Cathy Harter, Joann Reimel, Vickie Calby, Eileen Baessler, Jim O’Pecko, Craig Benson, Fred Cicilioni, Dawn Augenti, William Squier, Angie Zick

Staff Present: Kris Ely, Administrator/Librarian, Rita Cooley, Bonnie Yuscavage, Historical Society

Excused Absent: Lorraine Chidester, Kathy Matis

Absent: Peg Miller

Zoom: none

Guests: none

Approval of Minutes from June 17th Meeting:

All in Favor: All 1. Cathy Harter

Opposed: None 2. Angie Zick

Approval of written reports: All in favor-All 1. Jim O’Pecko made the motion

Opposed- None 2. Rob Vermette seconded the motion

Historical Society- (Bonnie Yuscavage)

Bonnie explained that we will receive no funding from the America250 Grant as there is no money available at this time.

She was delighted to tell us, however, that we have been notified that we will receive a matching grant from the PHMC. This money will be received in the fall of 2024. We will need to match that grant with an additional \$100,000. This money will go toward the window restoration project. This job will now need to be rebid as the prior bid is outdated. The overall cost for this restoration is estimated between \$300,000 and \$400,000. Bonnie noted that we need to put together a campaign to raise additional money for the windows. There will be fundraisers specifically designated for this project.

Fred Cicilioni inquired if there are any windows in need of immediate repair. Bonnie explained that those in need of the earliest attention are actually in the “newer” addition to the Historical Society Building, and that they are currently able to withstand the winter months.

Currently an exhibit is on display on the 2nd floor of the museum called “Marching Through Time”. This showcases military uniforms and paraphernalia of Susquehanna County men and women in and those who assisted the military throughout our country’s history. The exhibit features uniforms starting during the Revolutionary War and extending through the present. This exhibit will run through early August, during the Blueberry Festival time frame. There were two separate speakers during the Third Weekend events on the 19th and 20th of July: Janice Gavern, Captain USAFRes, Retired, and Rich Jenkins, historian. They each spoke about veterans from Susquehanna County. There were many visitors

present during Mr. Jenkins' talk on the contributions of his 5th Great Grandfather, Lt. John Jenkins, an officer of the Connecticut Militia at the time of the Revolution and the Battle of Wyoming (PA), known as the Wyoming Massacre. The audience participants shared knowledge of the history of Lackawanna County and Susquehanna County during the discussion following his presentation.

Upcoming Events: Montrose Blueberry Festival August 2 and 3, 2024

- Cemetery Tour at Harford Cemetery September 7 and 8, 2024
- Paranormal Investigation October 5, 2024
- Penn Museum Bus Trip November 5, 2024
- Christmas in Montrose Events December 7, 2024

Property Notes (Steve Spero)

Update on Stair Project:

As of today's date, July 22nd, 2024, there have not been any bids for the exterior stairs at the front entrance of the Monument Street location. We have reached out to a couple of places- JW Construction (John Wood), and TIMZ. William Squier said he would propose it to the SCCTC (Susquehanna County Career & Technology Center) for consideration by the Vo-tech students.

Cost of this stair project is estimated at approx. \$25,000.00

Finance: (Rob Vermette)

See Attachment

Need the annual budget put into Quick books.

Need to have restricted versus unrestricted funds better managed

Talked about Payroll authorization at the bank level

Rob will continue to audit the books

Commissioners will continue to audit monthly, they are asking for a couple more items

EX: credit card statement (invoice)

More Payroll explanation

Need to talk about Community Room fees - to change it and keep the money

Sue Stone Fund – Follow Steve explanation

Bylaws & Policy: (Jim O'Pecko)

Jim reported that the committee had met on July 11th, 2024 and determined that we need to synch our Articles of Incorporation, the Mission Statement, and the By-Laws. The original Articles of Incorporation were recorded in 1892, and they were just for the Historical Society. Later they were amended to include the Free Library Association. We will need to contact our attorney to determine what changes

may need to be made in the Articles of Incorporation. We do not plan to present new Articles, but will plan to amend them.

The By Laws and Policy Committee presented the following motion: Shall we authorize said committee to recommend amendments to our Articles of Incorporation?

Motion to authorize the Bylaws and Policy Committee to recommend amendments to The Articles of Incorporation after the amendments have been reviewed by our attorney.

In Favor: all

1. Craig Benson made the motion

Opposed: None

2. Rob Vermette seconded the motion

We need to review the mission statement to see if it is in compliance with the current laws for non-profit organizations. The attorney's input will be required regarding this matter. Jim explained that the committee hopes to have something to present to the Board by the end of this year, but they realize it will take considerable time to accomplish this review.

Fundraising (Steve Spero)

First Energy has promised to donate a \$5000 grant to our Outreach Services Department. Steve explained that many supporting organizations now prefer to donate to projects rather than to a specific event. This is very important for us at this time because one of our main contributors in the past has been the Pump and Pantry Corporation. They have been covering the costs for maintaining our van that services our outlying areas. This has included gas, oil changes, tires, and all related maintenance. The Pump and Pantry has now been sold to Kwik Fill, and we do not anticipate that corporation continuing this service. A discussion was held regarding other locally owned companies that might take on at least part of these expenses. Vickie Calby volunteered to contact Hinds Oil (HoMart), and Fred Cicilioni will contact Kost Tire. Dawn Augenti also suggested contacting the Sunoco Corporation (which supplies product to HoMart).

Kris Ely indicated that she is going to request an additional credit card to be used specifically for purchase of gas for the Outreach van. Another issue affecting our Outreach Services Department is that the price of postage through the U.S. Postal Department has just increased to 73 cents. This affects our Books By Mail Service. We will have to discuss our annual fee (currently \$35.00/year) to subscribe to this program. We may have to increase this membership fee if the price of postage continues to rise. Rita Cooley reminded us that in 2 to 2 and 1/2 years, the price of a first class stamp is expected to be \$1.00/stamp.

Blueberry Festival is just 12 days away. We will have a better sound system this year to enhance our announcements and musical entertainment. David Nice of Nice Entertainment has agreed to do this for us for a small fee. He requires a scaffold to set up his equipment. Steve contacted Down To Earth Equipment Rentals and they agreed to supply that at no charge. Brian Welch has picked that up and we are very appreciative of the businesses in our community that support our Association. .

Blueberry Festival, (Steve Spero)

Kris spoke of the new event: 5K on schedule. Steve announced that to date we have \$28,000 in donations from businesses and service clubs. By the time of the Festival, we should have \$30,000, and we are hoping for even more.

Strategic planning: (Rob Vermette)

Follow sheet

- Questionnaire is out for the survey to the public. It is on-line, on Facebook and on our website.
- Would like to hold a public meeting at each branch to get their ideas for the survey
- Meetings at 3 locations are complete: Susquehanna, Historical Society (Friends Group), & Hallstead/Great Bend
- Many of the respondents indicate they would like to see the branches offer more evening hours for patrons. Kris Ely indicated that once Lauren Canfield starts as the librarian at the Hallstead/Great Bend location, she will be willing to offer more hours in the evenings and Saturdays.
- We are getting good information on the surveys that have been handed in. Interested persons have come up with a lot of ideas that will need to be compiled into a spreadsheet.
- Many patrons indicated they would like to see the monthly reports submitted by the branches. Steve noted that we already email out these reports via our Newsletter to patrons who have submitted their email addresses. Kris agreed that we could also post these on Facebook. Many folks would like to see these in print in the newspapers. Cathy Harter mentioned that an article in the local papers such as "The Library Corner" could be beneficial. A discussion ensued which brought out several ideas regarding the best way to make the Newsletter more attainable to those who do not have computers. The general sense is that we need to do a better job of informing the public of the news of our Association.

Public was wondering if our monthly Board meetings could be moved to the evenings. They state that 4:00 PM meetings are not at a convenient time for the public to attend. President Steve advised that we will try to address this issue at the December meeting. He encouraged all Board members to bring their ideas for discussion at that meeting.

In addition, Rob Vermette noted that the next Strategic Planning meeting will be held on August 14th at 4:00 PM at the Main Library. Rob has informed the County Commissioners of this meeting and invited them to attend.

Rob encouraged all Board members to turn in their strategic planning surveys so they can be compiled.

Personnel Committee: (Jim O'Pecko)

Steve Spero and Jim O'Pecko met with Administrator/Librarian Kris Ely to present the Committee's review of her 2023 performance. The results of this review and Kris's written reply are on file in the library in Kris's personnel file, and the report is available to any board members wanting to view it.

Updates on Forest City Expansion: (Kris Ely)

More fundraising needs done.

Kris would like to do a grand “reopening” of the Forest City Branch on August 24th. The mayor has the large scissors and ribbon for the ceremony. There will be light refreshments. Time to be announced.

NOTE: Lauren Canfield, current librarian at Forest City, will transfer to the Hallstead Branch. Prior to this move, Lauren will need to finish the expansion project and the Summer Reading Program. In addition, she will need to train the new FC librarian, Katherine Cruse. Katherine will start on Aug. 6th.

New Business:

Kris spoke of Shirley Smith (Hallstead Staff). Shirley’s 28-year-old niece had been volunteering this summer with the Summer Reading Program in Hallstead. Kris learned today that Shirley’s niece was in a car accident on the weekend and did not survive. We were all asked to keep Shirley and her family in our prayers.

Eileen asked about the Soup Sale on Election Day, November 5th. She plans to contact the Judge of Election for the Bridgewater Township voting district which votes at the main Library Building on High School Road. She wants to be certain that it is still ok for her to conduct the soup sale in light of the fact it may be a large voter turn-out for a presidential election. She wasn’t certain that there would be enough space in the lobby to set up the sale. Last year’s sale had generated a profit of \$900. Kris assured her that space can be provided, even if it has to inside the actual library.

Eileen also asked if anyone was “aging out” (after 8 years) of being a Board member at the end of this year. She would like to do a little something at the December meeting as a thank you to any outgoing members. Although no Board members will be “aging out” at the end of the year, two other Board members mentioned their future intention to leave the Board.

Will Squier discussed the plans for the 5-K run scheduled for the Saturday morning of the Blueberry Festival, August 3rd. The race is being named “Blueberry Hill.” He indicated that students from some of the local schools are planning to enter “teams” to run in the race. This participation by members of the track teams is a good way to build interest in the race and to add encourage more runners. Will had had a call from one mother of a team member who expressed concern that the cartoon mascot used in the color printed flyers used as race advertisements, Newberry the Blueberry, was shown wearing brightly colored shoes that looked like rainbow shoes. She stated that some people will not support the run because of this. There was no opposition raised by any Board members regarding this matter. Will indicated that the race course has been determined, and that Prospect St. will be closed off for the race.

Although an executive session following our regular meeting had been planned, that session was cancelled due to time restraints.

Motion to adjourn: Time 5:34pm All in Favor: Yes 1. Rob Vermette
Oppose: No 2. William Squier