

**VALATIE FREE LIBRARY**  
Minutes of December 19, 2022

The meeting came to order at 7:05 p.m.

Present:

Trustees: Emilia Teasdale, Jill Leinung, Melissa Schieren (briefly left the meeting at 7:37pm, returned at 7:48 pm); Vi Becker, Laura Rogers, Shirley Kelly, Meg Todisco

Excused: Kristi Berner

Director: Elizabeth Powhida

Also Present: Joyce LaRowe, Verne LaRowe

President Teasdale opened the Annual Meeting.

Motion by Leinung, seconded by Becker, the Trustees voted to reappoint Trustee Shirley Kelly to an additional four-year term, and Laura Rogers to a full four-year term. AYE: Teasdale, Schieren, Leinung, Becker, Todisco; NAY: 0

Motion by Becker, seconded by Rogers, the Trustees voted unanimously to approve the Slate of Officers as presented:

President:	Emilia Teasdale
Vice President:	Jill Leinung
Treasurer:	Shirley Kelly
Secretary:	Kristi Berner

Director Powhida delivered her End of Year Report. She noted that the statistics reflecting the activities and Library's operations had been emailed to the Board members. She mentioned, in particular, the popularity of the programs involving cookies. In terms of library system operations, she reported that Overdrive had ordered a lot of books at the end of the year. In short, it was a very good year, interesting and productive, with patrons commenting to her that they are very happy and find that the Library provides a fulfilling service.

Discussion opened on the 2023 Budget, which had been emailed to the Board prior to the meeting. President Teasdale noted that the funding increase from the successful 414 campaign would be very welcome.

Director Powhida opened a discussion about the Overdrive program, noting that the 2022 budget did not cover the Library's full obligation to Mid Hudson, given the change in the usage formula. Treasurer Kelly was able to transfer \$1,000 from the DVD fund but there is still money owing to MHLS. There is a grace period which will allow us to make up the deficiency and plan for meeting the future obligation.

Discussion then turned to employee payroll expenses. Director Powhida noted that the position of programmer can sometimes require more hours than scheduled because of an activity running overtime and asked if the Director could be given leeway to provide pay for the extra hours. A

broad discussion ensued regarding how scheduled hours could be brought into alignment with the scheduled salary by reconciling hours worked in a particular time frame with adjustments in the schedule for upcoming schedule requirements. An example given was that perhaps balancing summer hours scheduled for greater time commitments because of more extensive programming with fewer hours scheduled during the winter. It was decided that this would be a good discussion to have with the new Director at the beginning of next year so that a suitable approach could be worked out.

Treasurer Kelly noted that all employees would be getting a raise in the hourly rate. The programmer will be going to \$15 per hour and all others rising to the minimum wage. The Library has been building in a little extra in salaries every year. Trustee Leinung noted that improving staff pay is a big part of why we did the 414.

Motion by Leinung, seconded by Schieren, the Trustees voted unanimously to accept and approve the Budget for 2023.

**Public Comment:**

Mrs. Joyce La Rowe spoke in praise of Director Powhida on the occasion of her retirement. She noted that her husband is present tonight as well, also to honor Elizabeth and her service to the community. Mrs. La Rowe commended Director Powhida's involvement with Ichabod Crane and the food pantry, serving always as a very important part of this community. "Thank You, Elizabeth."

President Teasdale then closed the Annual Meeting and opened the Regular Meeting.

Prior to the vote on the Minutes for the November Meeting, Trustee Todisco read a proposed correction to the Minutes from the November Meeting to clarify that the request for the Valatie Free Library to become a repository for Dominick Lizzi's archive came from Mr. Lizzi himself, and noted that Mr. Lizzi is currently the Village of Valatie Historian. A brief discussion followed clarifying that the understanding is that the archive materials in question would consist of two binders of his writings, which clarification will also be included in the amendment to the Minutes. Motion by Leinung, seconded by Becker, the Trustees voted unanimously to approve the Minutes as corrected.

**Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Kelly noted that she had sent a report prior to this evening's meeting, but this is not the Final report since there is still a pay period to be completed. The Final Report will be presented at the January meeting.

Treasurer Kelly opened a discussion about the need to replace the siding on the back of the building, due to damage done by squirrels. A construction grant will be needed. Given that a ballpark estimate of the cost would be around \$45,000 and there is only about \$14,000 in capital savings, she proposed that \$15,000 be moved from Operations to Capital funds. Funding from the Town will come through in March so more will be available then. Motion by Kelly, seconded by Becker, the Trustees voted unanimously to approve the transfer of \$15,000 from Operations to Capital. Efforts to address the squirrel problem are ongoing.

Treasurer Kelly reported having been contacted by the Division for Library Development indicating that the State wishes to send the money from the construction grant via electronic transfer, which requires Board approval. There being no problem raised with this action, Trustee Leinung motioned to accept the proposed transaction, Trustee Schieren seconded, and the Board voted unanimously to approve.

## **Old Business**

### **1. Planters/Bike Rack**

President Teasdale reported having a conversation with Ron Rich, who will search for a new option that would be smaller and he will do the installation. Fran Fullerton, who donated the funds for the bike rack, had said she liked the idea of a nearby bench, and a discussion followed about where the bench should be located. Placing the bench should take into consideration where snow plowed from the parking lot would be piled. The bench clearly should be placed near the trail as opposed to the road, and could well be placed near the Little Libraries, now being constructed by students at ICC to celebrate Director Powhida's years of service to the VFL.

### **2. End of year fundraiser/Plan for summer fundraiser**

President Teasdale reported that Trustee Berner has a draft of the End of Year fundraiser letter which, when finalized, will be delivered to Director Powhida, who can furnish the names of previous donors for outreach via email.

President Teasdale also noted that the Board needs to begin planning for a summer fundraiser. Since the Library will not be seeking a 414 adjustment again next year, there's a need to upgrade fundraising efforts. So, this item will stay on the agenda.

## **Director's Report**

Director Powhida noted that the statistics relating to Library use had been sent and the Board had already discussed the issue that arose with Overdrive costs. Mid Hudson will be sending circulation statistics. She is compiling a notebook of items that will be of help to the new Director.

Treasurer Kelly has the Hudson River Bank Grant info and the report letter will be sent to Mr. Florio.

The Stewart's grant application for \$500 will have to be submitted in January. The application is available on their site. The program this money would support must be for kids 18 and under.

The Director asked if she could have the Library staff work from 12:00 to 2:00 on Thursday to assist her in culling files and carrying out other tasks in preparation for the arrival of the new Director. Staff have indicated they'd be happy to do this. Since the Library does not open until

2:00 on Thursday, that will give them two hours. Treasurer Kelly reported that there is money available in the budget to cover pay for the extra hours.

Discussion followed about the change needed, per Mid Hudson, in the password for the construction grant. Director Powhida noted that the best plan would be to change after the new Director is in place. She cautioned that if an interim “password holder” were established now, and then needed to be changed in January, that could result in a holdup in securing the funds.

## **New Business**

### **1. Greene County Bank grant**

Treasurer Kelly reported that she had had phone calls from the Bank regarding the grant. She informed them that she can get the application done by mid-January. The Library doesn't have many programs for teens and she believes that money could be requested for the development of teen programs in the summer, though that could mean a need to provide extra money for the program coordinator. Discussion followed with suggestions including a book club and an art program, and mention of a program on jewelry.

Treasurer Kelly noted that the Library has typically asked for \$1,000, but she has seen other groups getting \$5,000. Trustee Leinung suggested asking for \$3,000.

### **2. Trustee Training Policy**

The Model Policy as posted on the Mid Hudson website had previously been edited to reference the Valatie Free Library and had been circulated to the Board members for their review. Motion by Kelly, seconded by Leinung, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Policy for Trustee Training.

As a corollary to adoption of this Policy, Trustee Todisco referenced the “Training on Demand” program being offered by Mid Hudson, which would make available to Library Trustees access to an archive of previously recorded Trustee Training webinars which they can then attend when most convenient for their schedules and fulfill the new Training requirements. Participation in the program requires that the Library register by December 23, as outlined in MHLS Action Memo 22-04. Director Powhida indicated she would be sure VFL was registered by the deadline.

## **Trustee Concerns**

### **NYLA and MHLS updates**

Trustee Leinung reported that NYLA is looking for a new Director of Government Relations and Advocacy. MHLS has recently been certified by the Sustainable Libraries Initiative as a Sustainable Library.

## **Adjourn**

Motion by Kelly, seconded by Becker, the Trustees voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:06 pm.

Minutes submitted by Meg Todisco.