

Library Director's Report

January 2023

Trustee Election and Budget Vote Calendar [Action Item—see attached]

The Trustee Election and 2024 budget vote is scheduled for the first Tuesday in May (May 2, 2023) which will be held at the Library. Polls open at 9 am and close at 8 pm. Trustee Larry Sorokes' term expires in June 2023; he must decide if he plans to run for a second term. Trustee Laura Whitford has to run to finish the term she was appointed to in 2022, of which one year remains. Therefore, one of the terms on the ballot will be for a one-year term, while the other will be for a five-year term. Whoever gets the most votes, gets the longer term.

Petitions for nomination to the ballot for Library Trustee will be available on March 2nd, along with applications for absentee ballots. The budget hearing will be held on Tuesday, April 18th, at 6 pm. The Board should review and vote whether to adopt the attached Schedule for the Trustee Election and 2024 Budget Vote.

Personnel Updates [Action Items]

The Board has to vote on whether to approve the following personnel appointments: Caleb Austin, who was hired as a part-time Library Assistant on January 9, 2023; Emma Dodge, who was hired as a part-time page for the Children's Department on January 9, 2023; Heather Angell, who was provisionally hired as Senior Accountant for the Library's Business Office on January 17, 2023. Heather must take and score reachable on the Civil Service Senior Accountant test, which will be held on Jan. 23rd, in order to be appointed to a permanent position. The test should be scored sometime in the spring or early summer.

NYS Construction Aid

On December 28th, \$228,122 was deposited into the Library's Broadband bank account. This represents 90 percent of the Construction Aid we were awarded this year to replace the two remaining rooftop HVAC units. Our clerk of the works, Curt Wallace, re-bid the project after receiving only one bid on November 7th. Bids were now due today, Jan. 18th, between 4 and 5 pm. The Board should open the bids at this evening's meeting and determine if they will accept any of the bids received. The final 10 percent of our award will be paid after the work is completed.

2024 Budget Planning

Due to the fact we are asking for a tax increase for 2024, we will have to approve the 2024 budget in March 2023, which will be voted on by the taxpayers in May. Kathy Elser, Heather Angell and I will meet soon to begin drafting an initial 2024 budget, after which a Finance Committee meeting should be scheduled to further discuss it and make changes if necessary. A draft budget should be ready for the February meeting to leave time for discussion and additional changes as needed.

As the Board is aware, we have to plan far in advance, not knowing how inflationary trends will develop over the course of the year, what the tax cap will be set at in September, what might happen with the NYS minimum wage, and any other number of factors that could affect the 2024 budget. Once the voters approve the budget, the board has the authority to move monies

from one budget line to another, but not to increase spending beyond the approved budget for the year voted on.

There will be a public hearing in the Library on April 18th for constituents to ask questions about the proposed budget. While the Director runs the hearing, it is recommended that Trustees also attend, especially the President and Finance Officer, to help answer questions and show support for the proposed budget. Usually, a reporter from the OTH attends and interviews Library officials about the budget.

2021 Annual Report to the Community [Action Item]

Every year the Library publishes an annual report to the community providing highlights, statistics, and other information about the prior year. Much of the information comes from the Annual Report to NYS that libraries are required to complete every February. We typically get the final report from the state sometime in March after DLD has a chance to review it. After we receive the final report, we produce our annual report to the community, which we usually post publicly in April ahead of the public hearing for the annual budget vote. For this reason, we always include Return on Investment (ROI) figures, letting the public know what a bargain they are getting in return for their library taxes.

Because we did not go for a tax increase in 2022, the 2021 annual report fell through the cracks, mainly because of the business office situation this past year. In 2023, we will have to produce the 2022 Annual Report to the Community by March so it can be publicized in advance of the budget vote. The Board should vote to approve the attached report so it can be posted to the website and so we will be in compliance with the state mandate for our 2022 NYSED report due in February.

Conflict of Interest Forms

Each year Trustees, the Treasurer, and staff must fill out the Conflict of Interest form (attached). Please fill this out and scan and email it back to me, or drop it off at the Library.

Friends of the Library

The Friends will hold their annual beer-tasting fundraiser, FeBREWary, on Friday, Feb. 17th from 7-9:30 PM at the Library. Tickets are on sale now—one for \$20, two for \$35, and \$10 for designated drivers.

As they do at every event, the Friends are requesting basket donations for the very popular basket raffle. If the Board is interested in donating again, it would be greatly appreciated by the Friends. All of the proceeds from these events go to the Library to help pay for presenters, programming supplies, circulating materials, furniture, technology, and many other needed items that are not covered by our normal operating budget.

News from the Library

The Library staff have expressed gratitude for both the wage increases for 2023, as well as the Library-sponsored Paid Family Leave benefit. Many expressed the sentiment of feeling appreciated and also of relief for being able to better make ends meet and having a meaningful benefit that helps them to support their families in difficult times.