

Library Director's Report

March 2024

2024 Trustee Election/2025 Budget Vote

The Trustee Election and 2025 budget vote will take place on Tuesday, May 7th at the Library. Polls open at 9 am and close at 8 pm. Kim has arranged for 3 election inspectors to be at the Library that day; they will be paid the Library's current minimum wage of \$16.01/hour.

As reported at last month's meeting, Trustee Gretchen Copella is seeking reelection to a full 5-year term, as she will have completed a one-year term on June 30th to which she was elected in 2023.

Nominating petitions for OPL trustees are available at the Library, along with applications for absentee, military, and early voter ballots, which NYS law now requires.

There will be a public hearing in the Library on April 23rd at 6 pm, for constituents to ask questions about the proposed 2025 budget. While the Director runs the hearing, it is recommended that Trustees also attend, particularly the President and Finance Officer, to help answer questions and show support for the proposed budget. I have also requested the Treasurer and Business Office to be present at the hearing.

NYS Construction Aid

The security camera phase of our 2022/2023 Construction Aid project is complete, meaning we can close out the project (the lighting portion of the project was completed in 2023). Once we receive the final invoice from FSC, which installed the lighting, I'll close out the project with the Division of Library Development, at which point they will release the final 10 percent of the Aid (\$3,649).

Gifts/Donations [Action Item]

Per the new Policy on Acceptance of Gifts, Grants and Bequests to the Library, the Board must now formally accept all of the above at its monthly meetings.

In February, we received a gift of \$150 from Sherri Lothridge which was designated for teen programs. We also received an anonymous donation of \$20 for the comfort cabinet. We received \$1,285 in memorial donations for Fred Eade and Julie Reynolds Majka.

Personnel [Action Items]

Library Assistant Abigail Meek submitted her resignation effective March 19, 2024. Two new staff members were hired: Kaedence Ault was hired as a Library Page on February 28, 2024, and Samantha Burkhouse was hired as a Library Assistant on March 18, 2024. The Board should approve the resignation and the two hires.

Friends of the Library

The Friends held their annual beer-tasting fundraiser, FeBREWary, on Friday, Feb. 23rd from 7-9:30 PM at the Library. Approximately 100 people attended, and the Friends raised nearly \$3,000 to benefit the Library! This included over \$1700 in ticket sales, nearly \$1,000 from basket raffle tickets, and close to \$150 from the 50/50 raffle. Four Mile Brewery was in attendance, and several other area breweries donated beer for the event. Alex Cole performed live music.

An interesting note was included, per Cookie's request, in my closing remarks at the event: "there is one more volunteer I'd like to thank. A couple of weeks ago, the community lost someone who gave so much of his time to serve Olean so that it "would thrive and provide opportunities or recognition to its residents." These words came from the obituary honoring Alfred Victor Eade, who passed away on Feb. 8th. As it happens, Alfred served for 17 years on the Board of Trustees of the Olean Public Library, including a number of years as board president. He also established the Friends of the Olean Library Association! In 1981 and 82, the Library budget apparently had a significant shortfall because of reduced funding by the schools and the state. Staff and programming would have to be cut if additional revenues were not found. On December 15, 1980, Eade wrote to Florence Stout, president of Zonta, asking for \$750 for seed money to form a Friends group. Zonta agreed and the Friends were born! In 1981, Mayor William O. Smith declared September "Friends of the Library Membership Drive Month"!

The Friends have set the date for this year's Bookmark Awards Ceremonies. They will be held on Saturday, May 4th; one will be held at 11 am and one at 1 pm. The bookmarks will be on display in the Gallery by Budget Vote Day (May 7th), and they will have a table set up in the Library lobby for a good portion of the day to advocate for the Library and recruit new members.

The Friends approved paying for a new/second displayer for promoting Library programs, as the one we currently have doesn't have enough room for everything we have going on!

News from the Library

Last week I sent out an email about the city of Olean ending its rural transit service, OATS, due to unanticipated cost increases. This obviously affects many of the city's residents, and beyond, including a number of our lower income patrons who depend on it. We should follow this situation and consider voicing our concerns to city officials.