

**Dennis P. McHugh Piermont Library District Monthly
Board Meeting Minutes**

MEETING DATE: Wednesday April 14th, 2021 Time:
7:00 PM via Video

Present: Danial Clark, Judy Epstein, Kelly Ruby, Ed Stanford, Cara Stepanian, Mitch Eiss, Len Hunt, Vickie Panetis, Kristine Palacios

Quorum was present

- I. **Minutes:** March 2021 minutes accepted and approved.

- II. **Library Director’s Report/Statistics:** Distributed by Kristine Palacios

OverDrive:

	<i>March 2021</i>	<i>February 2021</i>	<i>March 2020</i>
Streaming Video	3	0	0
Audiobooks	120	112	115
Ebooks	304	381	108
OverDrive Read	169	221	35
Periodicals	53	9	9

- Kristine reported our curbside circulation was 642 total items for March; this number is up from last month’s 517. We had 216 curbside pickups in

February. Kristine added that our curbside method continues to go well and patrons seem to have the rhythm of it figured out. Digital circulation holds strong, as it has been for several months now. Our physical circulation is in the expected range and she believes we should see those numbers come up as we get closer to Summer.

- Kristine reported the staff is preparing our Summer reading program, with online and in-person offerings. She says we will be in much better shape than last year and it should be a great program. She also said our library will be coordinating with the “Mighty 5” other local libraries on some programming as well. Cara Stepanian asked which grade levels. Kristine said all grade levels but mostly younger grades although Kristine said she hoped to get high school teachers involved as well. Kelly Ruby mentioned the “Wax Museum” project for third graders which is a biography project and is a “big deal” for third graders. Kristine said she would follow up on that.
- Kristine says she has been interviewing candidates for the two front desk positions. She said the primary piece of these two hires will be Saturday although she is aiming towards a “normal” schedule during the week. She has narrowed down the candidates to two people she thinks will fit well in the role, and plans to extend offers this week. She added a note for the treasurer: of course we budgeted our payroll numbers without planning on adding staff members. These new hires will put our total payroll at \$196,175, when we budgeted \$170,000.

She said these positions are both very limited hours, and lower pay, but to get the coverage we need, Kristine said this is what we'd need to do. She added she can trim both these new positions to be Saturdays only, and leave us slightly under-covered but manageable in the evenings. However, she said she had tried to add evening coverage to allow Nancy Russell to run more programming. Kristine added she could also lower everyone's hours by increments, to bring us back closer to that \$170,000 number, but leaving current staff at their current hours will leave us at \$196,175. Kristine said Jana Buchanan was "still down" with Covid effects. Mitch Eiss said he had a lot of questions. Mitch asked that since the \$196,000 was on an annualized basis, once the staff is up and running will we still need the additional staff? Kristine said that pre-covid the library often had just one person on the desk but she said to continue evening programming we would need one person on the desk to allow another person to handle programming. She said that Nancy Russell is doing Wednesday and Thursday programming and that would not be possible if we didn't have an additional body to man the desk. Len Hunt said he believed that post-covid we need to staff the desk with two people at all times. Mitch Eiss said we do have some wiggle room in the budget but he wanted to see the staffing plan in writing. Kristine said she had that scheduling and could send it around to the board. Judy Epstein asked that once Jana was back full time would we still need these new part-time workers? Kristine said that even if Jana comes back, without these two new hires we

would not have enough to have two people in the library at all times. Kristine said that every day from 5-8pm we would only have one person on the desk and not available for programming. Kristine added that the new staff would be \$12.50 or \$13.00 per hour. Kristine said Civil Service starts pay at \$12.50 but that we could elevate that. She said that most libraries start at between \$13 and \$15 an hour. Kristine said that the number in her report was for \$12.50 to work out a \$196,000 budget. Judy Epstein asked who would train the new hires. Kristine responded that she could acclimate them through zoom meetings. She said she would also get the second vaccine shot in late April so two weeks after that she would be able to come into the library to train them. Ed Stanford said we needed to have a plan for the next six months in writing. He mentioned that one option would be to use volunteers in place of new hires. Kristine said one of the problems with volunteers is we could not allow them to check in and check out books according to Civil Service rules. Ed suggested the volunteers could do the non-civil service specific jobs but Kristine said that would not allow the library staff to get the things done they needed. Mitch Eiss said that he was interested in getting the library open and “back to normal” as soon as possible and that hiring people to “get us over the hump” would be worthwhile. He suggested we could use \$13 an hour for new hires to open. Ed Stanford re-iterated that we needed to see the opening plan on paper with Kristine’s best recommendations to get the library open. He said we should try to open “next week”. He also asked if Jana comes back, then do we drop the new

hires? Len Hunt pointed out that even if Jana comes back we would still not be covered. Kristine said she would put the schedule in writing and send it out to the board.

- Kristine reported that the history project is coming along very well; she said the library launched our public-facing PR push this past week. She says the library has a press release launched to many free sites, and we will be running an ad in the Piermont newsletter as well as Nyack News and Views. She says we sent out our own eblast and will be sending out via the Piermont Historical Society an email blast as well. Kristine reported we've made great progress on collecting stories, and we hope to get a flood of new candidates with our press push. She says she was contacted by a local radio station to talk about the project, so she has done that, and project director Bill Batson will be on some other venues as well to promote our project. All in all Kristine reports the project is coming along very, very well. She noted the biggest problem is setting up dates and times with subjects to be interviewed.
- Kristine reported that RCLS is finally finishing up their email transition, so hopefully meetings with those committees will begin to bring out new news again.
- Kristine says she would like to set up the library's paypal account to accept electronic payments. She said this involves getting a credit card swipe reader, and then she can integrate it with our online catalog for fines payment. She said this also allows for donations via our website and payments in person too. Mitch asked about what

kind of fees the library might be responsible for but that he was interested in having it set up. Kristine noted that a donate button could also be set up on the library's website that could facilitate donations.

- Cara Stepanian also asked about the future of remote meetings from RCLS and the State. Kristine said remote meetings are approved through June and probably extended until September.

- Kristine reported the staff have counted up the bricks on the patio. She says we have 216 engraved bricks and just over 1500 total bricks. She said the library can order all through the Florida company, or just the engraved ones, but she says we should probably plan on reordering all engraved bricks so they match. She added we can source the blank ones locally perhaps, or order those through Florida. She added that an alternative is to lay down concrete and use the engraved brick to make a small memorial wall. This may prove better long term, but visually it's a different aesthetic.

- **Budget & Finance:**
Kristine had nothing new to report.
- **Building, Grounds and Furniture:**
 - See Kristine comments on the patio above.
- **Personnel:**
 - See Kristine comments above.
- **Policy:**
Nothing new to report.
- **Purchasing and Technology:**
Nothing new to report.
- **Special Events and Outreach:**

See Kristine's note on history project above.

III. TREASURER'S REPORT/CLAIM SHEET

Mitch Eiss reports as of 03/31/2021:

- We have \$221,522 in our Operating Account, \$254,801 in our reserve account and \$100 in our money market account for a total of \$476,423.
- We had \$544 of revenue for March. Total revenue YTD vs. the same period last year was \$380,185 vs. \$387,522 respectively (less income from operations, art exhibits, book sale, donations due mostly to covid).
- Total expenses for March were \$26,342 or 6.9% of total budget. Total expenses YTD vs. same period last year were \$278,118* vs. \$307,967 respectively.
- Our budget this year is \$382,300. Our actual expenses through the first nine months are 72.75% of budgeted expenses, or we are running 2.25% under budget overall YTD.
- In summary, we have reached 99.4% of our income goal. We are short \$2115.

*Our YTD expenses through 2/28/2021 were revised to \$251,776.77.

- Claim sheet for April accepted and approved.

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Budget and Finance:**
- Mitch Eiss said he will call a meeting to go over possibly revising the budget due to possible new hires.
- **Special Events:**
- Judy Epstein said the committee met to discuss plans for the Historical Project events. She said the date for

the project party is Sunday September 12th. There will be an indoor reception for VIP guests – program participants and local “dignitaries”. She said they will plan on cake and drinks and speakers. Then the party will head outside to Flywheel Park with music from The Old No. 7 Band. Kelly Ruby said she was also speaking with Mayor Bruce Tucker about banners.

- **Building, Grounds and Furniture:**
- Len Hunt reported that with Judy Epstein they have been working with Chris Meredith on a price of \$7500 to raise the front steps and replace the worn memorial bricks. Len thought it would take a day and a half for Chris Meredith. The total cost would be about \$12,000 including the new bricks. Len pointed out the bricks that were used were meant to be on a wall, not on a patio. Cara Stepanian said we needed to do it. Judy Epstein said the crumbling bricks were a safety hazard. Len said the library would try and fund raise with 12 new bricks. Kristine suggested if we poured concrete and put the bricks somewhere else could be better but Len Hunt said that would probably be a wash to pour concrete rather than replace the bricks and would not look aesthetically as good. Kristine said we needed to get a formal proposal from Chris Meredith for the patio. Mitch Eiss suggested since we were not talking about a lot of money we should just take care of the patio. Judy Epstein said she thought she had received a proposal from Chris Meredith and said she would check on it but that we should just move forward with the plan.
- Meanwhile Kelly Ruby said she had walked the grounds with landscaper Mary Ellen LaWarne. She noticed a conifer that had been damaged and some others that needed pruning.

- There was also a question of sprinkler heads and how they can be manually adjusted after rain. Len said Chris Meredith needed to show us where the sprinkler heads were located and how to manually adjust them.
- **Personnel:**
- Kristine interviewed for part-time help. (see above). Judy Epstein noted the committee needed to meet to discuss reviews and salaries for the staff as well as the new hires.
- **Elections & Nominating:**
- Nothing new to report
- **Policy:**
- Kelly Ruby suggested the committee should meet to discuss an overall evaluation of the new employee handbook.
- **Goals and Strategic Planning:**
- Cara Stepanian noted that it has been a year since the board had discussed a retreat to go over the new plan for library goals and strategic planning. She suggested again that the committee should meet to discuss plans going forward.
- **Purchasing and Technology:**
 - As noted Ed Stanford said the library should look into a wifi repeater. Kristine said she had asked our computer vendor about it but hadn't heard back. She said she thought it just needed to hook into an RCLS provided router (Linksys)
- **Historical Project:**
- See Special Projects and Director's report above.
- **Black Lives Matter Projects**
- Kelly Ruby said the race project book club met with 5 participants to discuss the first three chapters of "How to be Anti-Racist". She said it was a good conversation and a good start. Kristine suggested she could also

order materials from RCLS. Kelly and Kristine would keep their eyes out for other initiatives.

- **Building Expansion**
- Len Hunt reported that he and some of the committee members met at the library to walk around and discuss possible expansion and re-design ideas. Len said he would like to include the whole board in the committee meetings. They discussed a partition of the front room for speakers. They also talked about moving the kitchen in the conference room to the staff area or at least the refrigerator. Mitch Eiss noted it was important to include Kristine in building a consensus on what was needed and wanted. Len suggested another meeting at the library to go over some ideas.

V. New Business:

- No new business.
- Adjourned 8:38 PM
- Next Board Meeting: Wednesday, May 12th. 7PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Danial M. Clark, Secretary