

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Minutes– March 9, 2023

IN ATTENDANCE: JoAnne Hanrahan, Peter DeWind, Charmian Foster, Kate Miller-Corcoran, Jennifer Embree, Jill Kissick-Castro, Sarah Glose, Josias Bartram, Jennifer Church, Sherry Kowalski, Judd Karlman, Laura Haynes, Gillian Friedlander

GUESTS: Al Buyck, Vikki Collazo, Sarah Seese and Alexis Bronson
CALL TO ORDER: 6:04pm

NO PUBLIC COMMENTS

NO AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

MINUTES: February 9, 2023 minutes approved. Motioned by Jill Kissick-Castro and 2nd by Charmian Foster, passes unanimously.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS:

Resignation: Sienna Dransfield – PT Library Clerk in Youth Services. Motion to accept by Sarah Glose and 2nd by Peter DeWind, passes unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Period Pantry (Sarah Seese and Alexis Bronson, Public Defenders Office)

The Period Pantry provides free menstrual products, underwear, moon cups that the community has access to. There is a similar, successful program in Schenectady.

The Period Pantry is located in the rotunda of the library. It is displayed in nice baskets, on shelving. The location is key because community members don't need to ask someone if they need a product.

The Pantry is restocked by Sarah and Alexis, along with their interns. It has been available for a month and it has taken off. An [Amazon Wishlist has been created](#) and monetary donations are being accepted. As the program gets up and running Sarah and Alexis are looking for ways to continue the program, sustain it and hope to spread it to other libraries in the area.

JoAnne Hanrahan reports that she has had a lot of positive feedback about it. A press conference is scheduled for this month, as it is Women's History Month.

Many members of the board spoke in support of the project, mentioning how inviting the space looks, they like the logo, and find the whole thing aesthetically pleasing.

A motion was made by Kate Miller-Corcoran to support the Period Pantry initiative, 2nd by Peter Dewind, passed unanimously.

- Harm reduction at BCPL

Gillian Friedlander spoke to the Board about public health initiatives revolving around harm reduction, specifically focused on drug use - keeping people safe, and providing information and services for public well-being.

Friedlander noted that the library does have drop boxes for used syringes already, in each bathroom. Staff would like to increase Narcan trainings and provide fentanyl test strips to the public. These test strips would be available in the Peer Counseling Room, and are small strips of paper that can detect the presence of fentanyl in all different kinds of drugs and drug forms.

These initiatives help to keep the community, the library and all patrons safe and prevents patrons from overdosing in the library.

Why the library? Libraries are increasingly becoming community spaces and many people who are unhoused and, often living with mental health and/or substance use disorder, can utilize our space during the day for shelter, while it's possible they aren't allowed to be in other spaces. We already have community members who are using and overdosing at the library; security is trained to administer Narcan and have to use it frequently. Librarians and staff are already dealing with this directly. These initiatives will meet a need that is already there.

Gillian shared a hand out (attached to 3/2023 board packet) of current BCPL Harm Reduction work and other public health initiatives, aside from harm reduction, that the BCPL is already involved with.

A question was raised about pushback from the perception about this program. The feedback from the public is that there is already a perception/reality that drug use is happening in the bathrooms. Josias is talking with the Broome County Sheriff's Department about both current use and how to address it in the community.

Josias suggests that we create a zone that is a safe zone for families, and that initiatives that are directed to adults would be past the circulation desk. Messaging will be important so that families aren't caught off guard. There is a bathroom in the youth services area that is only accessible with a key from the Youth Services desk, keeping that bathroom secure.

JoAnne mentions that the Peer Support Program has changed the feel in the Public Lounge Area. Now, Friends volunteers who are running the bookstore feel more secure. There is a community feel being created, and even when the counselors aren't there, patrons are filling in as leaders.

Through the Friends \$2,000 has been received from the Community Foundation for Narcan trainings which will be offered free at the library through the Southern Tier Aids Program. The funding will be used for food at the event and to buy test strips.

The Narcan training is optional for library staff. Security is the default for administering Narcan.

The Board would like to recognize that there will be NO needle exchange at the library and that the library is NOT being promoted as a safe space for drug use. We also do not approve tabling that

endorses or enables drug use.

A motion was made to approve the \$2,000 from the Community Foundation for SCNY for harm reduction and setting safe zones for families and children by Jill Kissick-Castro and 2nd by Sarah Glose, passes unanimously.

Harm reduction is an interest to the board. Anything beyond what we have agreed on will have to come before the board for approval.

- Distributing condoms and safe sex information

There were condoms displayed in the library rotunda for a time, there was feedback and the display was temporarily removed.

Josias spoke about it being appropriate for libraries to work with organizations who are handing out condoms as these are public health initiatives. As a compromise, the condoms will remain outside of the safe zone, and be available in the Peer Support Room and the public bathroom. Pamphlets will also be available in public bathrooms. This is in line with our partners and our mission. These products are also available in other public spaces in the community.

We are much stronger when we can talk about things and come to a compromise. A conversation will be held in the future about the Teen Area.

A motion was made that condoms, lube and pamphlets will be available in public bathrooms and adult zones by Jill Kissick-Castro and 2nd by Sarah Glose, passes unanimously.

In the future, new initiatives and new partners should be brought to the Board.

- Farm to Library/Produce Pantry

Kate Miller-Corcoran spoke about the Farm to Library initiative that she, as the Food as Medicine Coordinator for the Rural Health Network of SCNY, Kevin Davidson (Public Health Americorps member for the Rural Health Network), Josias and Aimee Chalusant from the BC Department of Health have been exploring.

The premise is to have fresh produce from the community available at no cost during the library's operating hours throughout the growing season.

Farm 2 Library was inspired by a successful program that is currently running through the Southern Adirondack Library System.

The team spoke to the folks who run the program there sometime after Thanksgiving including their Library Director to see how it worked and if it would be a fit, and to make sure it was something we could do with minimal effort from staff.

The team would like to launch a small pilot this growing season. This would not be a feeding program.

The DOH has funding for a cooler with glass front and we will partner with local gardeners, farmers, and community-based organizations to stock the fridge with excess produce.

The library will also continue to partner with local community orgs to provide educational opportunities in the library on cooking, growing, nutrition, etc.

There is an application into the Community Foundation for funding to stock the fridge from time to time with produce from a BC Farm.

This idea is both to fight food insecurity in Broome County by providing additional access to fresh veggies but also to introduce ALL community members to produce which they might not be familiar with, especially our youngest members of the community.

According to the United Way ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) Report, the household survival budget of a family of four in Broome County totals to \$57,696 annually, significantly greater than the U.S. poverty level of \$26,200.

In Broome County, 44% of residents live below the ALICE report level, meaning that many families struggle to make ends meet, even though they may be employed. In Broome County, the poverty rate is 18.4%, and the child poverty rate is 24%.

A motion was made by Charmian Foster to support the Farm to Library initiative, 2nd by Jill Kissick-Castro, passes unanimously.

- MOU – Greater Opportunities

Gives Greater Opportunities the ability to be in the Library and to refer clients to each other.

A motion was made by Charmian Foster to accept the MOU, 2nd by Jill Kissick-Castro, passes unanimously.

- 2022 Annual Report

Annual report to the State, a separate annual will be produced by Laura Haynes to be distributed to the public, elected officials, etc.

A motion was made by Sarh Glose to accept the 2022 Annual Report, 2nd by Jill Kissick-Castro, passes unanimously.

- Improving Library statistics and reports

Josias and Dale have been discussing the reports that the Board is being given. While the graphs that have been added to the reports are showing some trends, Josias would like to give the board more context about what the graphs are showing.

Josias requests that the board think about questions around the data and what would make his reports more meaningful.

- Executive Committee

The Executive Committee recommends the continuation of Jennifer Embree as a trustee after three consecutive absences.

Sarah Glose made a motion to accept the Executive Committees recommendation for the continuation of Jennifer Embree as a trustee, seconded by Kate Miller-Corcoran.

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OLD BUSINESS

- Nominating Committee

2023 committee assignments held over until next month when Al and Vikki are officially on the board and all members are present.

Board nominations did not make it on the March Legislative agenda but will be on the April Agenda.

A motion was made by Sarah Glose to move the April 8th meeting to April 27th, which is after the April Legislative session, seconded by Peter DeWind, passes unanimously.

Board members are asked to please check the updated chronology and board list to ensure your information is correct.

- Construction

-Quote from PJF Enterprises for front door replacement

Peter DeWind made a motion to authorize, up to and not to exceed, \$63,250 for replacement of the automatic door openers, 2nd by Jill Kissick-Castro, passes unanimously.

-Smith Group project (bathrooms, ramp, and door to garden) – letter of intent and adding 10% to the legislative request

A motion was made by Jill Kissick-Castro to approve the \$439,732 for the project with the Smith Group to add bathrooms, ramp, and door to the Reading Garden, 2nd by Charmian Foster, passes unanimously.

- Advocacy Day was canceled for the Four County Library system, but Josias was able to have a zoom meeting with Senator Lea Webb and Sherry with Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo.

REPORTS

Committee Reports:

Strategic Planning Committee: Continuing to survey the public. 555 replies to date.

Finance Committee: No Report other than what is attached to the Board packet.

MOTION TO ADJOURN 7:36pm

Made by Jill Kissick-Castro, Seconded by Sarah Glose.

Respectfully Submitted by Kate Miller-Corcoran 4/23/2023