



**SARANAC LAKE FREE LIBRARY BOARD MEETING**  
**November 8, 2023**  
**Cantwell Room**

**Trustees Present:**

Mike Beccaria, President	Wendy Austin	Amy Richardson
Cheryl Joyce, Vice President	Angela Bates	Aurora Wheeler-Pfaff
Christina Lawrence, Treasurer	Mackenzie Davison	Jesse Jakobe
Beryl Szwed, Secretary	David Staszak	Tiffany Van Etten

**Also Present:** Jacob Widrick, Library Director  
Mark Kurtz, President Blu Seed Board  
David Woodward, Sculptor

**Call to Order:** by Mike Beccaria at 5:15 pm. A quorum was present.

**Approval of the Minutes from the October 11, 2023 BOT Meeting:** Amy Richardson moved to accept the corrected minutes, seconded by Christina Lawrence. Motion passed.

**Period of Public Expression:** No Comments.

**Director's Report:** Jake Widrick, Library Director, presented highlights of his written report:

- Building on the success of Chair Yoga, Mary Bartell contacted local businesses, banks, and the Adirondack Health Center for grant opportunities and sponsorships. All seemed agreeable. This might help fund technology upgrades.
- Solar panel installation is complete, and National Grid will complete the transfer on Thursday, 11/16. The Library will open late that morning
- The New website proposal from Jasen Lawrence has been accepted; to go live Q1, 2024
- Ashley Restoration will do carpet cleaning 12/21 through 12/25. The library will close Thursday, Friday, and Saturday if needed, before Christmas holidays.

- We received a CEF grant to bring Perry Ground, a Haudenosaunee story teller and cultural educator to the Town Hall on 11/28 for a program to be attended by several elementary school classes and open to the public. ***Rethinking Thanksgiving: A Native American Perspective on an American Holiday*** will take place 12:30-1:30 p.m.
- Bali Thurston, a high school sophomore, began working on Monday night as a page. Her duties will include shelving library materials, shelf organizing, and providing customer service at the front desk.

**Committee Reports:**

**Buildings & Grounds:** Christina Lawrence noted the windows will not be installed until spring, but the deposit was paid. Sources are being researched for upgrades to the Cantwell Room.

**Finance:** Christina reported that expenses and income are on track. Additional expenses (carpet cleaning, computer upgrades) will be paid from the NYS grant. Expenses for the APEX bill, the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the window replacement will be paid when the projects are completed.

**Personnel:** Amy Richardson met with Jake for his annual review. He will develop a one-year plan of goals, to be presented at the Annual Meeting. He will also work on a five-year plan. Health costs for employees will increase 10% in 2024, to be reflected in the revised budget. Since Amy is going off the Board, a replacement Chair is needed for this committee.

**Governance:** Mike Beccaria will reach out to the incoming members of the Board. He confirmed the slate of officers, to be elected at the Annual Meeting on January 24, 2024.

**Service:** Jesse Jakobe and Jake reported that Adult Center options are still being explored. Literacy Volunteers are working here effectively; more ESL books have been requested for the Children’s Room.

**Membership and Outreach:** Cheryl Joyce reported that the fundraising letter is at the printers. Five volunteers will be stuffing envelopes at 11a.m. on November 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Old Business:** None.

**New Business:**

**Library Art Proposal:** Mark Kurtz, Board President of BluSeed Studios explained that BluSeed and Pendragon have received a sizable grant from the NEA to fund 12 artist (6 for BluSeed and 6 for Pendragon) to develop murals, plays, sculptures, programs over the next year. These projects will be contributing to the community and be long-lasting. Mark introduced

David Woodward, a local sculptor to discuss his projected sculpture project, to be placed in front of the Saranac Lake Free Library. His focus is on communication via physical and tangible artworks, reflecting the Library's purpose that all knowledge is stored in books. All expenses will be covered by the grant, and the project must be installed by September 24, 2024. Discussion ensued with concerns about design, maintenance, and safety.

Mark's request to the Board was to approve the Library Art Project. The Board unanimously approved the concept of the sculpture. Marisa Hernandez of BluSeed and Michael Aguirre of Pendragon will work out the details.

**Trustee Training:** Jake included links for training videos in his Director's Report.

**2024 Tax Levy Discussion:** Jake presented a comparison of percentages and actual amounts that increases to the Tax Levy would provide and the corresponding amount money needed to be required through library fund-raising efforts. 15% was approved at last year's school budget vote. Jake will make a presentation to the school board as they prepare the budget for next year, explaining long-term goals of the library, how the levy pays for five full-time staff and two part-time members, as well as cleaning staff, operating expenses, and other expenses that benefit the entire community. The Library Board agreed to support Jake's recommendations.

**Review of Nominated Upcoming Officers:** Amy made a motion (Christina seconded) to accept the present slate of officers, as noted in Mike's report. The motion passed.

The slate will be:

Mackenzie Davison	for	President
Beryl Szwed	for	Vice President
Angela Bates	for	Secretary
David Staszak	for	Treasurer

Mike, Amy, Cheryl, and Jesse will be stepping down in January, 2024. Their service will be addressed at that meeting. David Staszak committed to a 3-year term as Treasurer.

**Update from Anja Bouchard from the October Meeting** She contacted Stephen King's publisher concerning his availability and costs for a Winter Carnival presentation. He isn't available, but another fiction writer (R.L.Stine) would be about \$10,000+ for an in-person event.

**Adjournment:** A motion to adjourn was made by Amy, seconded by Aurora. The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Beryl Szwed, Secretary  
November 14, 2023