

THE FREE LIBRARY OF NEW HOPE AND SOLEBURY
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
August 21, 2013

PRESENT: Jacqui Griffith, President; Susan Atkinson, Vice President; Ellen Stiefel, Treasurer; Kathy Meier; John Blady; Bill Behre; Connie Hillman, Director; Linda Landis, Bookkeeper; Lawrence Booth.

I. **CALL TO BUSINESS.** Jacqui Griffith at 5:35 pm.

II. **APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES.** MOTION by Susan to approve minutes from the July meeting, SECONDED by Bill, and APPROVED by all.

III. **FRIENDS' REPORT.** Lady Haight-Ashton was not present and did not submit a report.

IV. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT.** Connie Hillman (report distributed).

A. **WEBSITE PROJECT.** The cost of the new website will be \$99 per year for hosting, and the library will continue to pay "A Small Orange" \$10 per year for rights to the library's domain name. Currently, the library pays "A Small Orange" \$55 per year for hosting the site and for hosting library email. Connie has set up a gmail account for the general library account and suggests that a gmail account be created for the treasurer's account. The library's current hosting contract with "A Small Orange" ends in December.

B. **E-READER PROJECT.** Connie contacted Amazon regarding a non-profit e-reader account for the library. Kindles and e-books potentially will be added to the library collection when the Amazon account is created.

C. **DISTRICT INFORMATION.**

- **County Coordination Budget.** The proposed County plan and budget are the same as last year. However, because of flat funding and also increasing costs of delivery maintenance, the library's delivery service from the County is being cut from five days per week to three, effective September 1st. Our library is one of four County libraries that are affected by this change. Connie declined to sign the budget at the County meeting because it did not include dollar amounts, but all other directors signed the agreement, and it was therefore approved.
- **Behavior Policy.** Prior to the board meeting, Connie provided board members with the new County behavior policy. The County recommends, but does not require, that all libraries adopt the County's behavior policy. Any alternative library policy must be "reasonable." Every library in the County is expected to adopt a "reciprocal banning" policy, so that patrons who are banned for behavioral issues from one County library will be banned from all County libraries. The Governance Committee will prepare the draft policy regarding reciprocal banning. The board

discussed the library's pet policy (dogs are permitted), which is not consistent with the County policy. Concern was expressed that prohibiting dogs in the library would cause a negative response from dog owners and would make the board appear inconsistent, since the official pet policy was enacted a couple of years ago. Concern was expressed that permitting pets in the library leads to liability for injury from bites, alienates those patrons with pet allergies or those who are afraid of dogs and causes unnecessary clean-up issues. It was noted that pets now are prohibited in outdoor restaurants in New Hope Borough. The board will consider this issue prior to the next meeting, and the Governance Committee will prepare a draft motion in the event that the board decides to revise the current policy at the September meeting.

- **IT Service Agreement.** Connie noted that there were no major changes to the County IT Services Agreement, and she provided the board with a copy prior to the meeting.
- **Workshop opportunities.** The County is offering a board member workshop either on September 21st or October 5th, from 9 am to 12 pm or 1 pm to 4 pm. Connie highly recommends the speaker, Michael Kumer. Connie has applied to participate in a Pennsylvania state conference for new library directors. The state conference is free and will be held from September 30th through October 2nd in Gettysburg.
- **E-books:** Currently, the downloadable e-books are being purchased out of the County's book budget. At some point in the future, individual libraries will be asked to contribute toward the purchase of e-books. The amount will be based on the volume of e-circ for each library. Based on this year's volume, our library's portion would be approximately \$3,200.

D. **PROGRAMMING/OUTREACH**

- The Summer Reading Program ended on August 8th. 286 preschoolers, children and teens took part in the program; 79 programs were held (39 of them for teens).
- Several library programs were featured in the Bucks County Herald, specifically *Book Buddies* and *Kindergarten Here I Come*.
- The Huxley family has generously agreed to permit the library to use the remainder of their summer reading program donation (\$2,000 remaining) to fund other library programs during the year. Vivian Francesco also generously donated \$2,000 to be used on teen and tween programming. The library has applied for a grant from the Pennsylvania Humanities Council for \$2,500 for programming.

- Connie has contacted the NH-S Upper and Lower Elementary schools about attending Back to School Nights as part of a library card registration drive, and she has contacted local preschools to set up fall visits.

E. **VOLUNTEER CHANGES.** Connie is considering restructuring the circulation desk assignments so that volunteers provide more supportive rather than primary assistance. The goal of this change is to improve consistency in the daily flow of the circulation desk and to reduce mistakes made during basic transactions, as well as reduce confusion and stress. Additionally, the County will be upgrading the library's ILS system in mid-October, and the County circulation policies are being reviewed. Resulting changes may most effectively be addressed by staff, rather than volunteers. The board discussed the impact that re-assignments would have on staff, volunteers and patrons. Our library is the only library in the County that utilizes volunteers at the circulation desk.

V. **TREASURER'S REPORT.** Ellen Stiefel (financial reports distributed).

A. **FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES.**

The Finance Committee met on August 7th and discussed investment allocation. Based on a recommendation from the Finance Committee and board discussion, Bill MOVED, Susan SECONDED and all APPROVED authorizing

- a transfer of all assets from the higher-risk Vanguard Long-Term Investment Grade Fund (approximately \$360,000) to other accounts, as follows: transfer \$30,000 to the Prime Money Market account so that there is approximately \$50,000 in cash, and transfer the remainder of the money to the lower-risk Vanguard Short-Term Investment Grade Fund (which currently contains approximately \$200,000); and
- a transfer of all Augenblick Account assets (approximately \$120,000) from the higher-risk Vanguard Long-Term Investment Grade Fund to the lower-risk Vanguard Short-Term Investment Grade Fund.

Connie will propose widening the allowed collection purchases from the Augenblick Account and will discuss this with the Augenblick family.

B. **2013 FINANCIALS – RECENT HIGHLIGHTS AND CASH FLOW.**

The library received another generous \$2,000 volunteer grant from Sarita Karve. In July, the library received \$47,000 from Solebury and \$1,082 from New Hope. As of the end of July, the library has received over \$20,000 from the Annual Fund campaign. The updated estimate of the operational shortfall for 2013 is approximately \$20,000.

The next Finance Committee meeting will be held in October.

VI. **PRESIDENT'S REPORT.** Jacqui Griffith.

A. **EXECUTIVE SESSION AND RETREAT.** The board agreed to meet in executive session and participate in a retreat in the fall to discuss personnel and financial issues. A tentative date was set for the evening of October 2nd.

B. **VOLUNTEER PARTY.** The volunteer appreciation event will be held on August 25th at noon. Board members expressed appreciation to Lawrence for organizing the event.

VII. **COMMITTEE REPORTS.**

A. **BUILDING AND GROUNDS.** John Blady.

John has secured insurance for the White Party. The library's roof will be repaired during the week of August 26th, and the job will take approximately three days to complete. John will get a check from Ellen for the roofer. The library's oil tank is leaking and must be replaced. The cost of the replacement is \$2,300. The Board discussed paying for this cost monthly, with no interest financing or paying for the replacement with endowment funds. Bill suggested that, in conjunction with the silent auction at the White Party, guests be encouraged to "bid" on helping to pay for capital costs, such as replacing the roof and oil tank and painting the building. Bidders would commit to donating a certain amount toward a capital cost. The board was very supportive of this idea, and Susan agreed to work with Beth to implement it.

B. **GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE.** Susan Atkinson.

The Governance Committee did not meet in August. Connie has provided an electronic copy of the draft 2009/2010 employee handbook to the Governance Committee, and the Committee is highlighting questions that will need to be answered prior to preparing a current version of the handbook. Kathy and Susan noted that many of the issues involved are complicated.

C. **PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE.**

1. Read-a-thon. Ellen Stiefel and Susan Atkinson.

Board members confirmed that they had read Beth's summary of the Read-a-thon. The board responded very positively to the proposal and had no concerns. Susan reported that the library will partner with Winterfest to engage the community in the Read-a-thon. Ellen emphasized that this would be a fundraiser that has a very low overhead.

2. Update on the White Swan Party. Ellen Stiefel and Lawrence Booth.

Ellen reported that sponsorships currently total \$17,000, including recent generous donations from the Waldman family and Woody Holbert. The goal is to raise \$3,000 more in sponsorship money and \$30,000 from ticket sales and auction items. Lawrence reported that the evening schedule is as follows: from 5 pm until 6 pm classical music will play; at 6 pm acknowledgments will be made, particularly, recognizing our honoree, Mr. Augenblick; from 6:30 pm until 7:30 pm, food stations will be enjoyed; at 7 pm an announcement will be made regarding the end of the silent auction. Lawrence will email the board an updated list of event responsibilities. Lawrence reminded the

board that individuals need to take ownership of each responsibility so that the event runs seamlessly. The board discussed pairing the silent auction coffee table books with local “experiences” and gift certificates. Bill will ask a contact at the Nakashima studio if the studio would consider donating a tour.

3. Strategic Plan Update – Bill Behre.

Bill reported that he and Carol have been working on the strategic plan.

VIII. **MUNICIPAL NEWS.** No representative was able to attend the municipality meetings. Susan noted that it would be helpful to appoint a board member who is active in New Hope Borough politics.

IX. **POLICY ISSUES.** Please see Director's report above. The Governance Committee will draft a policy regarding reciprocal banning of patrons in the Bucks County libraries. Additionally, a new pet policy will be drafted that will reflect the recent guidance provided by the County.

X. **OLD BUSINESS.** NONE

XI. **NEW BUSINESS.** NONE

XII. **PUBLIC COMMENT/CONCERNS.** NONE

XIII. **MOTION TO ADJOURN:** MOVED by Bill at 6:55 pm, SECONDED by Susan and APPROVED by all.

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held on September 18, 2013, at 5:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Atkinson
Vice-President