Board Meeting Agenda

Free Library of New Hope and Solebury

March 19, 2025

5:30pm

In attendance: Stacy Smith, President; Lauren Mauro Mellon, Vice-President; Karen Wachsmuth, Treasurer; Lisa Menz, Secretary; Sam Pharo, Executive Director; Board members: Christopher Whitney, Kara Gasiorowski, Deirdre Alderfer, Julia Klossner. Also attending: Pamm Kerr (Friends of the Library).

**I. Call to Order**—Stacy

The meeting was called to order by Stacy at 5:35 p.m.

**II. Motion to Accept Minutes of February 19, 2025** **– Stacy Smith**

**MOTION** to accept the amended minutes of the meeting by Christopher **SECONDED** by Julia. **APPROVED** by all.

**III. Friends Report- Pamm**

Sponsors. The book the friends are organizing is “Vibrant New Hope- 21st Century Stories” which has an April 30 deadline. No board member has contributed a story as of yet. There is a concern about duplicating sponsors.

The book sale is starting May 1 till November at the usual spot at Randolph and Main. They need volunteers to help man the stand and especially for set up Friday first shift and breakdown on Sunday last shift.

Beth Moler is a new board member and has a marketing background. There is a possibility that they will go after a grant.

**IV. Finance Report- Karen**

1. **Operations**

**Income Statement:**

Excluding investment activity, February revenues totaled approximately $10,100. February revenues included individual contributions (including matching gifts) of approximately $3500 and a contribution from Friends of the Library in the amount of $6000 to be used for programming. February expenses were approximately $20,500 with no significant unbudgeted expenses. Although we had more expenses than revenue in February, we are still approximately $13,000 behind budget YTD.

**Balance sheet:** Cash on hand of $169,876 decreased approximately $16,400 at the end of February and provides expense coverage for approximately 6 months. Net worth was approximately $2.87 million as of February 28, 2025. The net worth calculation does include the value of the investment portfolio.

1. **Investments**

The unrestricted endowment balance at the end of February was $1,777,706. The Vanguard stock and bond funds slightly decreased in February from January 2025 but is still up 2% YTD. The Library’s Vanguard portfolio of four stock and bond index funds is designed to produce solid returns over time, rather than react to short-term market movements.

The restricted endowment balance was $136,191 at the end of February. The restricted endowment fund is invested in the same Vanguard stock and bond funds as the unrestricted endowment fund, so it has had a similar overall experience as the unrestricted endowment fund.

The non-endowment general fund balance was $39,328 at the end of February 2025.

1. **Other**

This year is an audit year and it has kicked off with Baum, Smith & Clemens.

**V. Director’s Report—Sam**

I’m pleased to report an incredibly busy month for programming, with February clocking in 52 programs total. We expect to maintain this pace and increase it, if anything, through the summer.

We had a conversation with Hannah Howe about offering a similar reciprocal system that we use with the NHSD librarians. She seemed receptive and we hope to get something started, though there aren’t many months left in the school year.

Our Friends of the Library have made a wonderfully generous donation of three furniture pieces (two for Juvenile, one for Fiction), the first of which has been delivered and stationed by the Mystery section. It will anchor our Board Game, Video Game and Library of Things collection.

The first floor has been reconfigured to hold a puzzle exchange, which we’ll debut once we receive enough puzzles!

We will start a seedling station in the 1st floor corner by the ballot box location once the glass jars have arrived. Louise and Ross have generously offered seedlings/cuttings that can offered to the public.

Our nature station offerings will be expanded soon, we expect several more bird/bee baths and Mason bee hives to arrive this week.

The sidewalk book cart has proved to be popular, especially in the improving weather. Another cart has been added to encourage browsing, if the Board has any recommendations to improve daily book sales, we’re happy to hear them. Once the Friends get their own book sale up and running, we’ll continue to offer the carts but only on weekdays.

We are participating in the Longwood Gardens Community Read program for 2025, this means we’ll dedicate a Book Chat program and likely a children’s program (storytime) to discussion of one of their community read books (one adult, one children’s), and in exchange receive free vouchers for Longwood Gardens.

For outreach, we’re waiting to meet with Patricia Lorenz of Welcoming the Stranger, they facilitate ESL classes and immigrant outreach in the area. I hope we can host our own ESL group regularly as well.

We’re also looking to work with the Bucks County Housing Authority with regard to New Hope Manor Apartments, seeing how we can support the residents there. The meeting is rescheduled.

The 2024 Annual Report was certified and filed last week without difficulty.

The anticipated Bias training was held on Monday 3/17 and went very well, the team from Temple did a great job and attendance was roughly 22, drawn from half the libraries in Bucks county.

Respectfully submitted, Sam Pharo

* Board further discussion:
* Sam reported Louise has found an opportunity to buy t-shirts for staff to wear during reading program.
* Board discussed making the t-shirt more personalized with branding about NHS- Library specifically. Pamm said that folks could wear them in the Pride Parade in May.
* Summer reading theme is “Color Our World”.
* Stacy suggested putting book sale books in a paper bag labeled “Mystery Books” in the sale of books on the stand in front of library.
* Huxley fund typically gives $3,000- $5,000 for the summer reading program. Sam will meet with them soon to find out what they might give this year. Louise has prepared a plan for the summer reading program. Kara suggested having a write up of what could be done with different amounts of money if more were to be contributed.
* We now have seedlings near bay window, a play kitchen for the children’s garden, and a donation by the friends of $5100 of furnishings, cushions, a display, oversized book bin and board book organizer. We all thank them for these wonderful upgrades to the library experience.
* Sam would like to make the children’s outdoor area more colorful and attractive like doing some painting of the fence.

**VI. President’s Report- Diversity training 3/17; Cintra update**

Stacey and Dierdre met with Mr. Hillier, the owner of the Cintra property to get current updates about a past statement of a donation of land and architectual plans for a new library building on that Cintra property and the restrictions and obligations entailed. One of the restrictions is that 10 years after Cintra’s get their building occupancy certification on new buildings that currently are not started, the library can build on a reserved piece of land. There would be room for a parking lot. Their plan is for condos and townhouses to be built on the land. Dierdre said there is documentation about the proposed project and the parameters of the library portion of obligations and they said they would give it to us. Pamm suggested asking if we could put a parking lot there and a sidewalk to the current library.

Bias training was held on Monday 3/17 and was very successful.

**VII. Property—Lisa**

The native flower garden in the Children’s courtyard is starting to sprout. Lisa put some small stake fences in front of plants to discourage folks from walking on the garden area which may kill the sprouts or compact the garden soil too much. Jade will be organizing with the girl scouts in mid-April to do a fence project in the later spring.

Lisa has a call in to Solebury roofing to seal up the eaves and fix a slate that has fallen off.

**VIII. Marketing & Development—Julia- SOFA**

Sofa starts next week. Eric sent out a test email. It is ahead of schedule and almost ready for release.

**IX. Trivia Night**

Sponsorships will be mentioned on social media and on a screen during Trivia night. We will have sponsorship level sheet and what sponsors get for the amount of their donation. Door Prizes but no baskets.

**X. Governance- Christopher-**

No report.

**XI. Motion to Adjourn Public meeting**

Motion to adjourn meeting by Julia seconded by Lisa at 6:35pm

**Next Meeting is April 23, 2025 at 5:30pm**