

## MEETING MINUTES

PRESENT: Marjorie Galen, presiding, John Guzewich, Sarah Buterbaugh, Suzanna Frosch, Margaret Cook, Paul Riccobono, Maria Gagliardi, Debbie Firestone recording

EXCUSED: Jennifer Citrolo, Christopher Keywork, David Englander

GUESTS: Susan Nemesdy, Eileen Larkin, Nancy Bucciarelli, Larry Bucciarelli, Carol Baxter, Loren Plotkin

Marjorie called the meeting to order at 7:32pm

Guests were present regarding the redistricting process. Marjorie opened the floor for them to voice their concerns. These were their main concerns: (public guest initials are next to each voiced concern)

Sarah Buterbaugh joined the meeting at 7:36pm

- Suggested more individualized meetings (meaning each library individually) in the future. EL
- The process is very confusing and people don't have enough information. CB
- What is the cost of the lawyers for this process? EL
- The public thinks this is something the library is just going to do without a public vote. EL
- Sometimes things need to change a little for them to stay the same, she thought people should be more open about information on this process. SN
- People need to know how much things cost and how this will affect them. CB
- Will the library still be the way it is now when you come in to use it? NB
- Will the consolidation vote be done on a town-by-town basis or will it be a consolidated vote? NB
- Concerned the information on when and where the vote is will not be apparent to many as we are all inundated with so much information every day and this might get lost. CB
- Would like this vote to correspond with a town vote. LB
- What happens to the library tax line item on our tax bill? I am afraid this will not go away and we will essentially be taxed twice. CB
- What power do we have to control representation on the new Board of Trustees? LP
- Suggestion of a gentleman's agreement with regard to even hamlet representation on the new Board of Trustees. EL
- Would Palisades have guaranteed seats on the new Board? LP
- I have major concerns over the bonding issue, especially with regard to Orangeburg and their building, which is in need of repair. She thought there were things that were not attached to the 2% tax cap and asked what they were. She does not want to have to pay for repairing or building a facility for Orangeburg. EL
- I have big concerns about civil service and its impact on our staff. I want our staff to stay, but with civil service, we run the risk of losing our employees to others who score better on tests. EL

- Hamlet residents should not have to pay for building renovation or purchases made outside of their hamlet. LP
- What is the amount of Orangeburg's reserve funds? SN
- What are the reasons Blauvelt has opted out of this consolidation? NB
- Who actually owns the Orangeburg building? EL
- What or how would employee benefits change? EL
- If the consolidated library needs more than the 0% we are currently getting, who will be monitoring the funds and making those requests? CB
- I do not believe that this redistricting will save any money as the bulk of the budget is tied to salaries and benefits and those costs only go up every year. EL
- I love the library and want it to be successful, but fear this action will only increase taxes instead of reducing them. EL
- Have a public vote on this before you spend any funds on lawyers. CB
- The Community Center is always available to host future meetings on this subject. CB
- If during the vote, the majority of Palisades voters vote NO, but the other hamlets vote yes, can we be forced to join something we are opposed to? LP
- This really comes down to taxes. How can we be assured that the libraries always keep things lean? CB
- If the libraries are "sharing services", will each branch then become a specialized branch, meaning you won't be able to get certain things at certain locations? CB

Following, find a summation of comments and answers supplied by Marjorie, the board and Maria during the public information and question session of the meeting regarding the redistricting process: Marjorie gave a brief description of the library history with town funding and indicated that it was the town and Chris Day who really pushed the agenda of redistricting on the libraries. After much consideration, over several years, the board has decided they believe redistricting to be in the best interest of the library. If this all goes through, which is probably at least a year and a half away, it will put the decision making power about our funding directly in the hands of the voters instead of 5 elected public officials who may or may not have any interest in libraries. She indicated that they really did not want to hold individualized meetings since the theme of redistricting is to join into one entity. There definitely will be more meetings on the subject and they would consider holding one or more at the Community Center. The cost of the lawyers, who will write the legislation, will be evenly shared by the three libraries. The final step in this process is to hold a public vote, which would be a unified vote between Palisades Orangeburg, Tappan and Sparkill residents. The vote will most likely not correspond with any other town or school vote and the libraries will make best efforts to publicize the date and location of the vote because we want the public to come out. Maria noted that in the last public vote for the School District Referendum, Palisades had more voters come out than Orangeburg or Tappan. Regarding concern over what would happen to the existing library tax line on tax bills, should redistricting be passed, Maria indicated that was a question for the town to answer. The library would remain tied to staying within the 2% tax cap. The only items that are not subject to that cap are bonding and employee pensions. With regard to collecting taxes, the town would still collect the library taxes and it would just be a pass through to each library. There would be one unified board for the new entity. Maria said that a gentleman's agreement regarding board

representation could be possible. Marjorie thought Orangeburg's reserves were about \$300k and said that anything major that needed to happen with regard to the Orangeburg building, which is a very complicated situation, would most likely go out for a vote. Such a vote would be necessary due to language in the legislation protecting the branches. The main reasons given that Blauvelt does not want to join the redistricting are they feel they have enough funds in reserve and they do not want to be part of the civil service system. We understand no one wants taxes to go up and no one wants a branch to close and we feel this is the best way to safeguard against both of these concerns. If redistricting occurs, your library will still look, feel and provide the same services it does today.

Marjorie thanked the guests for attending and sharing their concerns, questions and thoughts with the library board about the redistricting process. More informational public meetings on this subject will be scheduled so public decisions can be well-informed ones.

Guests all departed the meeting at 8:27pm

**Margaret moved to approve the minutes from the 12/14/19 meeting. John seconded. All in favor.**

## **LIBRARIAN'S REPORT – by Maria**

10:00 am Opening Report for January

121 people walked through our doors between 10am – 11 am on 21 weekdays.

The average is 5.76 people during that morning hour.

Weekday average break out during that hour:

Mon 3.25

Tue 7.5

Wed 7

Thu 2.75

Fri 7.8

Overall attendance has not noticeably increased and it appears to us that our regular patrons are the ones coming in between 10-11, not necessarily new patrons.

Notable Programs

- Another successful Saturday children's program, Paper Heart Puppets present "I Love Tacos" – 13 children and 12 adults attended
- Guestimation Station expanded to include an adult guessing jar – 18 adults and 49 children participated
- Teen – led coding club has 10 participants
- Our first musical performance at the library – Song and Dance of the Roaring 20s had 22 attendees. Collaborations
- South Orangetown School District Pick a Reading Partner (PARP) and the Mighty Five SO Libraries – we held a read-in and scavenger hunt.
- Life is a Bowl of Cherries? – Maturely Motivated Players at the Orangeburg Library – 48 attendees
- Sustainability Initiative
- Georgia, teen librarian, is working with Keep Rockland Beautiful for a Spring cleanup at the Clarke Rail Trail on March 28. Teens and families can volunteer.
- Maria is working on final presentation for certification in the Green Business Partners program
- Sustainability Goal: Reduce Green House Gas Emissions by 50% from 2017 numbers by 2022 and reduce waste by 5% a year. We will achieve this through a more efficient natural gas HVAC and signing up with Community Choice Aggregation that will supply us with 100% renewable energy.

**Suzanna moved to make the Palisades Library Sustainability Goal: Reduce Green House Gas Emissions by 50% in 2022, as compared to 2017 numbers and reduce waste by 5% a year. Sarah seconded. All in favor.**

- Maria reviewed progress on the Long Range Plan

Comments on the Librarian's Report:

- Suzanna suggested we post our CO2 reduction information inside the library.

## **FINANCIAL REPORT**

Maria reviewed the year-end 2019 financial. With the exception of the capital expenses, which were not budgeted, expenses were in line with the budget more so than any other year.

Restricted funds were reviewed.

**Paul moved to replenish the Capital Fund with \$150,000. Margaret seconded. All in favor.**

**Sarah moved to accept the Orangetown Town Contract with the Palisades Library for 2020. John seconded. All in favor.**

Building Committee: John and Maria reviewed building status.

- John asked if we pay for snow removal in bulk or per event? Maria indicated it was per event.
- Maria met with electrician, Will Buechli, regarding lighting in the meeting room and replacing the electrical service to the building.
- Meeting Room: Will had the following recommendations:
  - uplighting on the walls was a good idea, only putting it on the main 2 walls (North and South sides). There is maintenance involved in making the lights last longer (dusting).
  - add shadow lighting on the ceiling to light the artwork.
  - Remove existing fixtures and replace with low profile (1.5") fixtures down the center of the room. Samples can be provided.
  - thought our money would be better spent on samples rather than a lighting designer.
- The electrician's quote for the work to connect to the underground power is a little over \$9k.
  - Will thought this could be scheduled in 2-5 weeks and he will coordinate with O&R.
  - Library must contract for trench work to connect to the new location dropped by O&R. This person will also need to break through the library wall. The electrician will make a contractor recommendation and Maria will contact Richie Rasmussen for a second quote.

**John moved to accept electrician's quote for electrical work. Suzanna seconded. All in favor.**

- The board reviewed the carpenter's meeting room cabinetry drawing and a cabinet brochure. Consensus was the cabinets were too "kitchen-like". They thought they would be more for display of historic items. A future date will be set for anyone who wants to attend to view the historic items owned by the library to help decide what type of cabinetry is needed.
- HVAC Update Received final bill from Seth Glassier for punch list items for \$1,457. This brings the total of the project to \$82,764.
- Thermostat on top floor was relocated to the meeting room from the reference area. The meeting room is now more comfortable for occupants and has had no impact on the reference area.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Special District Update:

- Maria and Paul attended the annual meeting of the Palisades Community Center. Teresa Kenny was present and indicated she was not in favor of the proposed redistricting effort of the libraries. Marjorie will reach out to Teresa Kenny's office to schedule an appointment to discuss the subject.

## **New Business**

**Sarah moved to adopt the meeting dates for the second Wednesday of the month at 7:30 pm as follows: April 8th, June 10th, September 9th, October 14th and December 9th. John seconded. All in favor.**

Sarah left the meeting at 9:06pm

**The group moved to accept the slate of officers for 2020:**

**Marjorie Galen – President  
John Guzewich – Vice President  
Christopher Keywork – Treasurer  
Jennifer Citrolo – Secretary**

**Margaret moved to remove Beverly Warwick and add John Guzewich as signators on the Sterling and RBC Bank accounts. Suzanna seconded. All in favor.**

**Suzanna moved to create the position of Head of Adult Services position (description attached). John seconded. All in favor.**

Next scheduled meeting is Wednesday April 8<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm.

**The meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.**