

THE NEW CANAAN LIBRARY, INC
MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING
OF
MEMBERS

July 16, 2019

Member Action Summary

The following items of business were unanimously approved by the Members:

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Members held July 10, 2018 as presented.

Election of Trustees.

Welcome and Call to Order

Robert E. Butman, President of the Board of Trustees, welcomed those present to the Library's 142nd Annual Meeting of Members, calling the meeting to order at approximately 6:40 pm.

Minutes of the 2018 Annual Meeting

As the first order of business, Mr. Butman requested the Secretary, Maya Frey, to address the approval of the minutes of the 2018 Annual Meeting of Members. Maya Frey presented the minutes of the 2018 Annual Meeting of Members, noting that copies had been made available to the attendees for review upon entering the meeting, and in the interest of time, initially moved that a reading of the minutes be waived. The motion was thereafter seconded, and following a vote, Maya Frey declared the motion duly passed. Ms. Frey followed with a motion for the approval of the minutes of the Annual Meeting of Members held July 10, 2018 in the form presented. The motion was seconded and unanimously carried.

Treasurer's Report

Robert Butman then stated that the Annual Meeting gives the Library's Board and staff the opportunity to update members on the state of the Library and called on the Treasurer, Harold J. Spitzfaden, to make the Treasurer's Report. Mr. Spitzfaden initially confirmed that the Library continues in excellent financial standing. He then proceeded to summarize the Library's preliminary unaudited financial results for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2019, highlighting the following:

- Total support and income for FY2019 was approximately \$3.13 million, substantially equal to that generated for FY2018; of such amount, Annual Appeal contributions, fundraising event revenue and designated giving accounted for \$755,000, exceeding the budgeted goal by 9%.
- Total expenses amounted to approximately \$3.1 million, slightly higher than last year, which result was attributable to added programming, increased fundraising costs, and various other enhancements.
- The Library anticipates a surplus of approximately \$66,000 for the fiscal year, which will be allocated between operations and the proposed new library in accordance with the determination of the Board of Trustees.

Mr. Spitzfaden stated that these results were harder to duplicate year after year, and the Library was only able to achieve these results due to the continuing generosity of its donors and the diligence of its staff, Trustees and volunteers. He added that the Library looked to continue this momentum into FY2020.

Mr. Spitzfaden further reported that the Library's Capital Fund, now at \$333,000, and its Endowment Fund at a record level of \$1.58 million, both critical to the future fiscal standing of the Library, were healthy.

Before turning the meeting back to the President, Mr. Spitzfaden expressed his appreciation for the accounting expertise and invaluable support provided by the Library's contract accountant, Caroline Giannitti, and financial and administration manager, Pam Parkington.

President's Remarks

Robert Butman stated that he was pleased to report that the Library continued to do extremely well in almost every aspect of its services. He noted that as is readily apparent to those who are frequent visitors, the Library is a place of innovation, learning, gathering and teaching and is the cultural and educational hub of the community. Mr. Butman then furnished the following statistics for FY2019 as evidence of the Library's continuing contribution to the community:

- The Library had 214,000 visitors, an average of nearly 18,000 per month, representing a 4% increase over FY2018.
- Program and class attendance was up 3% over the prior year to over 37,000 persons who attended 1,560 such offerings. Even more notable, both children's and teen programming participation were up by 20% and 30%, respectively, over last year with teen participation reaching over 1,000 participants.

- Over 350,000 physical and digital items were borrowed during the past year, the equivalent of 18 items per person in Town. Of that number, downloadable content increased by 16%, reflecting the continuing shift from hard copy.

Mr. Butman attributed the Library's continued improvement and popularity to its remarkable staff, who, despite the limits of the existing building, are able to sustain existing, and innovate new, offerings to entice the public.

Mr. Butman also commended the Library's Board, volunteers and the Town for their ongoing support. Specifically, he recognized the dedication of the Library's Trustees, who not only give their time and resources, but their insights and enthusiasm. He noted, in particular, the Board members' participation during the last quarter of the fiscal year in a \$50,000 matching grant promotion for the Annual Fund in which they agreed to match up to that sum in outside contributions. Mr. Butman indicated that the success of this initiative contributed to raising the FY2019 Annual Fund giving to over \$400,000.

He then commended the Town for its support and generosity, singly out, in particular, the First Selectman, Kevin Moynihan. He felt it was fair to point out that the burden on the taxpayer represented by the Town's annual grant to the Library was minimal relative to the programming and services offered by the Library to the community.

To maintain the Library's upward trajectory, Mr. Butman stressed the need for the construction of a "New" New Canaan Library, given the dismal physical state of the existing building that is costing more than it is worth to maintain. With the new building, Mr. Butman indicated that the Library will have a beautiful, modern, energy efficient 48,000 square foot facility that should meet the future needs of the community. He further noted that New Canaan was the last town in Fairfield County to build or undertake a major renovation of its premises; the last significant remodeling of the Library having been completed in 1979, forty years ago.

Mr. Butman reported that substantial progress had been made toward such goal, the Library having continued to move ahead with the "leadership or quiet phase" of the \$30 million Capital Campaign for the new building. In the past year he reported that under the guidance of the Capital Campaign Committee, significant advances had been made in achieving the \$15 million fundraising goal in this initial stage of the Campaign, and an approach to the Town was planned for the fall to finalize its funding commitment. Bob Butman then took the opportunity to highlight the \$1 million gift to the Campaign made by the Harlan and Lois Anderson Foundation, a generous vote of confidence from Mr. Anderson, a longtime benefactor to New Canaan, as one example of how he hoped the community would demonstrate its support for what is likely to be one of the most important civic projects that the Town will undertake for future generations.

Executive Director's Remarks

Robert Butman then took pleasure in introducing Lisa Oldham, Executive Director of the Library, noting that she will speak on the exciting happenings at the Library over the past year.

After welcoming the attendees, Lisa Oldham reported that FY2019 had been a terrific year for the Library with the team delivering on the Library's mission of inspiring lifelong learning through innovation and discovery.

Lisa Oldham then proceeded to review the services provided by the Library's various Departments over the past year, including the following:

Family Services:

- Family Services continued to inspire lifelong learning through its early literacy work for school age children, fostering in them a lifetime love of reading and learning. To this end, the Library celebrated its first "One Book" for children, complementing the adult selection for the year, which proved to be an unqualified success with parents and children all reading and discussing the selection during the month of March.
- This summer the Library is building on its reading program of last year with ***Joust Read***, a medieval-themed book and programming endeavor. This offering represents the second year that the Library has broken away from the statewide program, offering a Summer Read developed by the creative children's librarians tailored just for the community. This change resulted in double the number of child participants last year, and as a consequence, an increase in the number of families frequenting the Library during the summer. This year's numbers have already far exceeded those of the prior year with over 700 participants having already signed up. Summer reading programs have proved useful in combating the "summer slide," ensuring that children enter the new school year with reading comprehension levels at or above where they left off the prior June.
- Teen overall program participation significantly increased over the past year. Registrants for this group's summer reading program has also increased with over 130 teens having signed up.

Collections:

- The Library experienced continued strong use of its collections, in particular digital borrowing, which is attributable in large part to the Collections team which is experienced in anticipating demand and getting the material that the community wants into the hands of the Library's users. This past year the Library responded to 2,500 requests for specific titles.
- This past year digital audio books were the fastest growing format.

- The most popular genres were fiction, mystery, biography and cookbooks, but New Canaan reader's interests are broad as evidenced by those four categories accounting for only 12% of loans.

Adult Services:

- Responsible for the Library's main service point, the Adult Services team helps visitors find materials, learn new skills, navigate technology and answer all manner of questions, all with the intent to make the user's experience at the Library the best possible with the available resources.
- This team is also responsible for organizing and delivering the large array of adult programs and classes that the community enjoys each week. These include a variety of experiential technology learning experiences, such as Virtual Reality, Python Coding, Cyber Security, Dark Web and the perennial favorite, cutting the cord. To enhance the Library's art exhibitions in the Curtis Gallery, an augmented reality app has been developed to be used with the artwork on exhibit.

Infrastructure:

- Behind the scenes the Library's IT and Facilities teams ensure that the Library's systems, from plumbing, heating, cooling, Wi-Fi and printers, continue to function.

Development

- As a nonprofit organization, the Library is financially supported as a public/private partnership with the Town. This past year the Development team did a stellar job raising the funds necessary to support the collections, programs and services provided by the Library as well as the costs for the maintenance, repair and operation of the Library's physical plant.
- The community's generosity was evidenced this past year with 400 supporters coming to the Library's signature fundraising event, the annual Literary Luncheon with author Jennifer Egan, discussing her latest, *Manhattan Beach*, which was followed by another 160 attendees at the second Spring Edition literary event with Tayari Jones, author of *American Marriage*.
- As noted by the President, the Board of Trustees put up a \$50,000 matching grant for the Annual Fund as part of the first Library Giving Day. The community responded both by enthusiastically participating in the programs offered on such Day and donating the matching \$50,000. The Library also initiated its first staff giving campaign as part of the matching gift offer, and the overwhelming majority of the team, who give of themselves every day, also contributed.

Lisa Oldham then stated that the community's response to the dedicated and exceptional services provided by the Library's team has resulted in the following favorable usage statistics for the past year as compared to FY2018:

- Visitor numbers were up 4.4%;
- Downloadable content increased by 16.0%;
- Museum pass borrowing was up over 41.0%;
- As noted previously, overall program attendance was up by about 3.0%, with the following departmental increases:
 - children's program attendance was up by 20.0%; and
 - teen program attendance was up by 30.0%.
- STEAM class attendance was up by a huge 125%; and
- Community organization attendance in the larger meeting rooms was up about 30% with nearly 7,000 attendees.

Lisa Oldham then observed that New Canaan is a strong and caring community that values volunteering and thoughtful philanthropy working together to improve the Town. She noted that the Library contributes to this endeavor by working hard to deliver the experiences, collections and services in response to the community's intellectual curiosity and desire for learning.

Election of Trustees

Robert Butman then indicated that the meeting would proceed to the business agenda and called upon Anda Hutchins, the Co-Chair of the Governance Committee, to address the election of Trustees.

Anda Hutchins stated that she had been asked to present this year's nominees for election to the Library's Board of Trustees, which election had two parts – the first being the election of those Trustees, whose initial terms expired at this meeting and who have been nominated for election to a second three-year term. She stated that the nominees in this category were Christine Seaver and herself. Ms. Hutchins then made a motion that Christine Seaver and she be elected to the Board of Trustees to serve for a second three-year term. The motion having been seconded, Ms. Hutchins called for a vote, after which she declared that Christine Seaver and she had each been duly elected a Trustee to serve for another three-year term.

Ms. Hutchins then proceeded to the second part of the motion, which she advised affected the remaining four nominees, Sarah O'Herron Casey, Deborah S. Gordon, David J. Rucci and Thomas D. Teles, each of whom had been recently elected to the Board to fill vacancies. In this case, Ms. Hutchins noted that as required by the Library's By-Laws, the members were being asked to ratify their election at this meeting.

Following a request for, and receipt of a second to the motion ratifying the election of the following Trustees to the Board of Trustees, Ms. Hutchins called for a vote on the motion:

Sarah O'Herron Casey
Deborah S. Gordon
David J. Rucci
Thomas D. Teles

The members proceeded to vote unanimously in favor of the motion, after which Ms. Hutchins declared the election of such Trustees duly ratified.

Appreciation of Retiring Trustees

Mr. Butman then stated that the last order of business is one of sadness as two Board members, Kevin Seth and Kate Burt, have finished their terms as Library Trustees. He noted that Kevin Seth had been on the Board for the last six years, having helped support the Library's fundraising efforts, including Books and Beats. He further indicated that among other things, Kevin purchased a cutting edge robot for the Library's MakerLab and had been generous to the Capital Campaign. Mr. Butman concluded by thanking Kevin and his wife, Kendra, for their support of the Library.

As for Kate Burt, Mr. Butnam described her as one of the Library's true dynamos, having served on the Board for the past five years and contributing during her tenure to the Library's fundraising activities, which has resulted to her agreeing to resign from the Board in favor of becoming a full-time Library employee tasked with leading the public phase of the Capital Campaign. Mr. Butman proceeded to thank Kate for her incredible dedication to the Library.

Adjournment

Robert Butman then stated that the meeting would now be adjourned, but that Ms. Oldham and he would remain after the meeting to answer questions. Mr. Butman then made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion having been seconded and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:54 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Maya Frey
Secretary