

Minutes of the Stamford Library Association Meeting, Monday, February 24, 2025

Present at Stamford Library: Trustees Barbara Balliet, Millie Faulkner, Katy Graves, Susan Harwood, Pat Heath, John Hubbard, Stephanie Rubin-Ruquet (via Zoom), Linda Stratigos, Mike Teitelbaum, Ellen Thorn, Janet Wenner (via Zoom); Director Erika Eklund; Russell Antonacci (investment officer from NBT Wealth Management; left 6:12)

Call to order: Barbara called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. and introduced Russell Antonacci of NBT, who distributed a written report summarizing the SLA portfolio and answered board questions. He reported total income earned in 2024 as \$39,428.99; and a January 2025 distribution of income as \$26,939.34. Growth since inception in June 2024 is about \$114,000. Performance return since inception is 6.5%, over the benchmark of 5.6%.

The board suggested that Antonacci plan to next attend the August 25, 2025, board meeting. Millie will send him the library's most current investment policy.

Minutes: The January 27, 2025, Regular board meeting minutes were approved by trustees attending that meeting (motion by Ellen; second by Mike).

Ellen also provided an updated list of trustees with personal contacts information, so trustees, 4CLS, the library's annual report, the LTA section of NYLA, and others as needed will have up-to-date access.

Financial reports

Financial reports were distributed in advance by Erika and by Millie.

P&L statements with income and expense against budget will be provided after budgets are approved.

Wayne Bank Business Checking account #2720 statement on January 31, 2025, had a balance of \$2,168.47. **Wayne Bank Investor** account #3242 statement on January 31, 2025, had a balance of \$84,807.63, which includes interest for 2025 of \$22.48 (and 2024 year-to-date interest of \$151.12). **Wayne Bank Business checking (construction)** account #8612 statement on January 31, 2025, had a balance of \$2,931.76 (no change from previous month).

NBT Reconciliation for period ending January 17, 2025, has an ending balance of \$219,576.62.

Millie reviewed the check sequence, deposits, bank statements, and investment income amounts through January, with MM interest amounting to \$22.48; NBT Wealth Management at \$26,939.34; ME total at \$26,961.82; and NBT fees at \$1,573.71. She'll share NBT's monthly statements with the board.

The **Balance Sheet** as of December 31, 2024, lists total assets at \$3,991,833.99. Millie confirmed that the assets and balance sheet match.

Millie explained that the balance sheet will no longer include previous investment vehicles once our tax return is complete in April.

The report was approved (motion by Millie; second by John).

Library director's report

Erika distributed a report electronically in advance of the meeting. In addition to the standard ongoing tasks related to payroll, invoices, spreadsheet recordkeeping, filing, weeding, maintaining an up-to-date website, and 4CLS involvement, the following items were reported.

In addition, Erika collected the signed forms from trustees who had audited the New York State interactive education video on sexual harassment prevention training; Erika provided the link earlier this month for all trustees to watch.

Erika also distributed the latest edition of the Trustee Handbook to those who needed copies.

Operations

Erika purchased Adobe Acrobat for her library computer through 4CLS so she can convert and modify files. 4CLS handled the installation and integration. Erika's replacement computer does not work with some older library equipment (a scanner and printer), which the board agreed Erika could remove.

Erika helped complete information needed for the annual Reorganization details for inclusion in the January minutes.

Erika took part in a virtual directors' conference during inclement weather in February. The group reviewed recent federal laws and executive orders which could impact libraries and reviewed aspects of the state's annual report.

The New York State Annual Report was submitted on February 19, after working with 4CLS to discuss handling of reporting construction aid funds.

Erika distributed an updated version of the 2025 draft budget for review, increasing income to book donations under Fundraising and increasing expenses for computers under Operations.

Erika deposited the \$30,000 received through Chris Tague into the construction account on February 10 and a \$100 donation dropped off at the library by Edith Thomson on February 18. Both transactions were added to the building fundraising spreadsheet Erika has been keeping. A thank-you note and perhaps a photo op and press release for the newspaper will be arranged by Erika and Linda.

Erika and Marta picked up a free (large and heavy) bookshelf from the New Berlin Library to display our growing collection of graphic novels.

Erika will explore some possibilities for selling the Chinese vases that the library has had since the Churchill donation. The space could be better used for other items that benefit library patrons.

A problem patron, who is banned here until June 12, came in just before closing to drop off a DVD borrowed from another library, after being warned again that he could not come in. Staff called 911 as instructed. Police understood that we would not press charges at this time; they reported that he was cooperative and that he said he would not enter the library moving forward. We need to review and update our Patron Code of Conduct policy.

We got approval from O'Connor Foundation to spend remaining funds from last year's computer grant on new seating. We now have story-time seating mats, children's stool seating, and a bean bag chair — all getting good feedback.

Erika will confirm that 4CLS emails from Steve Bachman are reaching all the trustees.

Erika and Lindsay are working on updating and detailing the training for library clerks.

Programs and Outreach

Hoopla costs increased surprisingly in January, so we are looking for an alternative that we can offer that won't impact patrons too much. We hope to drop Hoopla by the end of the year.

Erika has been working with Lindsay and with 4CLS Adult Services to discuss successful adult programming strategies for a Senior Social Club and services, including puzzles, game playing, chair yoga, coffee/tea service, relevant speakers, and other ideas for our senior population.

We hosted a new Retro Video Gaming night, to alternate with our active Dungeon and Dragons group on alternate Thursdays.

Megan Avery delivered \$861 so far in donations she raised through sponsoring a roller-skating event in Florida. Even more is expected!

We have scheduled a stoneware glazing workshop in March with The Studio for Art and Craft in Cobleskill, which was very popular when we ran it two years ago.

The Blind Date with a Book program has been a big success, bringing in new community members for library cards and encouraging participation from infrequent users. We checked out more than 90 blind date adult, young adult, juvenile chapter, and picture books. More than half of those who checked out books have returned book reviews to be entered into the prize drawing.

We had an Annual Book and Bake Sale on February 22, with no set prices: all books are donation-based. We are pleased with the results: The combination of the bake sale and book sale raised a total of \$910.

We are again partnering with Neighborhood Forest to offer free trees to local children. Last year, we provided more than 80 trees to the community through the partnership; caregivers have registered for 35 trees so far this year. Tree registration will remain open until March 15.

Committees

Building (planning, plant, resources): Linda (chair), Barbara, Pat, John, Mike

Joe Dianich bid \$132,900 and Bill Boyle bid \$131,752 on site-clearing and geothermal work; bids were sent to Paul Mays for review. The board voted (motion by Millie; second by Katy) to award the work to Boyle; Paul Mays will inform the bidders of the decision and make plans to proceed with the work.

Millie asked if a payment schedule would be forthcoming, so she could recommend appropriate action on the CD maturing in April.

The library is on the Village board's agenda for its March 19 meeting. Linda will send the Planning Board packet to Paul Mays for completion so the Village board will be informed that the library has asked the Planning Board to meet with Mays on behalf of the library to share the scope of work involved, including the geothermal component; curb cuts; drainage and hook-ups; etc. Barbara and Janet both intend to attend the March 19 Village meeting.

A meeting needs to be scheduled with Matt Blumenfeld at FDA.

The committee will meet on March 4.

Fundraising: Mike (chair), Millie, Pat, Stephanie, Janet

Banners: Erika shared some sample designs for banners for the new property in the spring, announcing it as the "Future home of Stamford Library"; several suggestions for change were offered (i.e., larger type, bolder background color).

Old business

Lease at Churchill Building: We delivered the new lease to the Village office, which includes the changes we deemed necessary and discussed at our January meeting. Neither the Village nor SLA has signed it yet, but the amount has been included in our new budget.

Budget: The board voted (motion by Katy; second by Pat) to adopt the updated version as our 2025 budget.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m. (motion by Millie; second by Barbara).

Upcoming meetings

- Monday, March 24, 2025, at 5:30: Regular board meeting
- Monday, April 28, 2025, at 5:30: Regular board meeting

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Thorn, Secretary