



Marcellus Free Library
ANNUAL MEETING
Meeting Minutes JANUARY 30, 2024—5:45 PM

Trustees present: Kathryn Dennis (President), Jeremy Pellizzari (Treasurer), Shane Ventura (Vice President), Mary Drabot (Secretary), Guy Donahoe, Dennis Robillard, Michelle Hubbard, Jeremy Pellizzari

Also present: Sophia Brandt (Director), Brigid Farrell (Assistant Director), Jackie Smith (Friends of MFL President), Sara Randolph (staff), Martha Dickey (staff)

Meeting Called to Order by Kathryn Dennis at 5:50 PM.

Additions/Changes to Agenda. New board nominee Kathleen Welch unable to attend; we will vote her on the board at the March meeting.

Review and Approval of Minutes from December 5, 2024. Motion to approve December minutes made by Michelle. Seconded by Dennis. Minutes approved unanimously.

Director's Annual Report.

Overall stats for 2024: There was a total of 37,674 visits to the library in 2024; Among registered borrowers, 1,362 actively checked out materials; Contributing to the circulation of 107,511 items throughout the year.

Library Trends:

- Library patrons borrowed more materials in 2024 compared to 2023, reflecting a 3.7% increase;
- Digital check outs saw significant growth with a 27% increase in Libby usage and a 17% increase in Hoopla usage.

Programs & Services:

- Offerings included 118 events for adults; 125 for children ages 0-5; 93 programs for children and teens.
- There were 105 exercises classes via partnership with Marcellus Parks & Recreation
- The *Knitting for a Cause* Initiative resulted in the collection of 802 knitted hats
- Young patrons and their caretakers attended story time 1,463 times

Committee Reports

Friends:

Last meeting:

- Held on 1/5/25; 15 were in attendance; local author Jo McNally was a presenter.
- Membership is up to 167 and there are now 225 FB followers



- Basket Raffle now has a subcommittee and on 1/15/25, a meeting was held to focus on early solicitation to online corporate sponsors. Next subcommittee meeting is 2/12 @2pm
- Friends board members continue to emphasis the following open board positions beginning July '25 fiscal year: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary (vacant now).

Upcoming:

- Next Meeting is February 19th @ 1pm in the Friends Community Room
- Library volunteer day will be held that same day, immediately following a brief business meeting at 1pm
- Friends are celebrating “Library Lover’s Month” with a member bingo board, which will offer ways to show the library some extra love.

Finance:

2024 highlights include:

- 2024 operating results were positive to the budget, attributable primarily to employee departures, coupled with a delay in hiring a new employee verse budget from the prior year. The success of our library in 2024 is a testament to the hard work of our staff who stepped up throughout the year to fill unexpected roles and continue the smooth operation of the library.
- Continue to see the need for building repairs & improvements expanding as the building ages. Most improvements have been deferred into 2025, but there may be increases in in future budgets, as well.
- Received employee retention tax credit checks.
- Benefited from a strong interest rate environment on our M&T Savings account.
- Multiple successful public events were hosted in 2024 to both benefit the library financially and to provide exposure to the community. These includes the Annual Gala & Murder Mystery fund raiser, Solar Eclipse viewing party, summer reading events, and the winter holiday party, to name a few.
- Friends of the Marcellus Library generously provided grants of \$15,129 during the period 1/1/2024 – 12/31/2024 which funded many wonderful events and additions to the library, including the iPad for the children’s area, Wonderbook Collections, Rapid Reads, and contributing both financially and volunteer hours towards many of the large events hosted through the year.

Looking to 2025:

- In 2025, we anticipate the completion of what will be ‘Phase 2’ of the Creekwalk Project. Planned improvements include outdoor gaming tables, a shade structure for the stage, a



walking bridge and a musical garden. Funding will come primarily from the NYS grant and June Ast bequest.

- As previously noted, the 2025 budget reflects significant building maintenance expenditures that need to be completed.
- Our 2025 budget continues to be reflective of the strategic plan we adopted:
 - Over 10% of the annual budget is allocated toward new collections, resources, programming for the public
 - Payroll remains the most significant operating expenditure, with an increase in 2025 due to COLA and expectation of returning to full staffing after departures in 2024.
 - We expect to continue to provide multiple opportunities to engage with the public in 2025 and raise funds for the library with fun & interactive events.
- Library continues to remain in a financially stable position.
- The Bond is scheduled to be paid off in 2027.

Nominations Committee:

- Board nominee Marissa Cameron was introduced to the board. Marissa currently works at Hueber Breuer Construction and has volunteered at a wide variety of organizations and is on the board Onondaga Historical Society.

Development:

- More than \$16,000 was donated to the library through our annual letter drive.
- The committee met to discuss 2025 initiatives.
- October 12th has been booked with Tuscarora for another fundraising gala.
- The October event and the November letter drive remain the main fundraising vehicles
- The committee discussed adding occasional activities, such as a paint & sip, which would take place at the library.

Buildings and Maintenance:

- Keplinger Freeman Associates proposal for planning and coordinating outdoor park enhancements approved; estimate \$7,500
- Summary of 2025 projects include exterior fascia and soffit repairs, interior window cracks, installation of chess tables and bench, musical park instruments, shade solution for amphitheater, memorial brick repairs
- Assume remaining funds from grant and the Ast donation will fund the outdoor park enhancements, however building repairs will come out of regular funds

Personnel/Policies:

Upcoming vote for unattended child policy and NYS No Gun Signs & Policy



Vote on new Board Trustee

- Motion to vote on Marissa Cameron joining the board made by Mary Drabot. Motion seconded by Kathryn Dennis. Motion unanimously approved.

Questions/Comments from the Public. No questions or comments from the public

Other Business. None

Adjournment. Motion to adjourn meeting made by Shane. Motion seconded by Dennis. Motion unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 6:47 PM.

Minutes recorded by: Mary Drabot

Next Board Meeting Date – Thursday, March 13, 2025