



Katonah Village Library

Board Meeting Minutes

October 25, 2021

Regular Meeting - IN PERSON

Call to order (Mike Dwyer) at 7:39 p.m.

Present: Mary Kane, Mike Dwyer, Rhea Johnson, Mary Herrnsstadt (virtual), Sue Hassett (virtual), Jennifer Versacci, Tony Mamo, Ian Shaw, Barb Chintz, Joe Tropiano

Absent: Cassie Coccaro, Vienna Wong, Ian Shaw, Amy Drucker, Susan Popovic, Joe Tropiano

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the September, 2021 meeting were approved with one correction.

APPROVAL OF 2020 ANNUAL REPORT unanimously by all members without exception.

Director's Report (Mary Kane) See attachment

General Discussion

We introduced the idea of bringing in-person programming back in the library as it is getting too cold to continue to do children's programming outdoors; i.e. Mother Goose in the Garden Room.

The Board approved the following:

For adult and age 12+ programming, participants are required to sign a library waiver, wear a mask, show proof of vaccination, and will have limited occupancy in accordance with current CDC guidelines (and / or 60% capacity which is the threshold for movie theaters).

We agreed we need to follow the current CDC and the NYS Department of Health guidelines and implement the same protocols. We will be reviewing this at our monthly meetings for any changes.

Mike Dwyer provided an update on discussion at the Town meeting regarding the library resolution plan.

The Town Board met on 10/19/21 to discuss ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) monies and how they might be used for a variety of purposes, including to help stabilize KVL and the other libraries in Town. **Outcome:** The Town's consultants confirmed that ARPA can be used for library infrastructure projects, relieving KVL of the burden to pay for the pending sewer hook-up, the ADA compliant bathroom on the first floor, a storm resilient generator, drain improvements to reduce Garden Room flooding, etc. ARPA-funded infrastructure support is a critically important element in our overall plan to restore KVL's operating funding, as described further below.

The Town Board met the following day (10/20/21) in a work session to discuss library budget allocations (as a follow-up to the budget meetings held on 9/27). **Outcome:** Of the \$100K the Town has earmarked to help shore up the 3 libraries in 2022; roughly \$50K will flow to KVL, \$30K to BHills, and \$20K to Bedford Village. Before the 11/2 election, a vote will occur on the Town's preliminary budget, including this library allocation.

Analysis: \$50k is a far cry from the \$140K that KVL requested for 2022. However, we've known for some time that it will take several annual budget cycles to fully integrate the large step-up in operating support that KVL needs (i.e. \$140K in 2022) into the Town's normal, recurring budget framework.

The current thinking – per Dwyer's discussion w/Supervisor-elect Calves by phone the morning of 10/21/21 – is that a majority of the town board supports increasing KVL's operating support in 2023 and beyond until the sustainable KVL-Town funding target of "83% of operating budget" is achieved in 2024. Provided Town Board member McCaine is elected on 11/2 we should be in good shape (i.e. Bitker and Calves have 2-year remaining terms and also support this approach). It should be noted that current Town Boards can't legally "bind" future Town Boards to spend monies in any particular way (but town boards can certainly signal their intentions).

The Plan: The Town would like to see KVL restored to full service in January 2022. To "bridge" the \$90K shortfall we face (i.e. the difference between the \$140K we need to operate on a full service basis and the \$50K the Town is being allocating to KVL in 2022), the Town has proposed tapping into (non-budget related) one-time ARPA funds. To the extent ARPA can be used to offset the cost of infrastructure projects that KVL would ordinarily pay for with its Reserve Fund, KVL can legitimately release an equivalent amount of dollars from its Reserves to subsidize operation until the higher level of ongoing operating support needed by KVL can be fully integrated into the Town's regular budget framework.

The Plan involves risk: It only works if the operating support we receive from the Town in 2023 and 2024 actually steps-up significantly to cover our full service cost structure before the one-time ARPA "bridge" dollars are gone. Because the Town can't legally "bind" future Town Boards to spend budget dollars in a particular way, KVL has no iron-clad future "guarantee" that the Town will pick up the slack when the ARPA monies run out. However, we have

communicated to Calves that we don't need a binding guarantee, per se, all we need is a formal expression of the Town Boards intent to see the Plan through.

Supervisor-elect Calves suggested a non-binding Resolution be drafted on 11/4, following the election: The resolution would acknowledge the Town's intention to pick up the higher cost of KVL's ARPA-subsidized full service operations when the ARPA monies have been exhausted and KVL's good faith reliance upon the Town's plan as the basis for expending its Reserves in support of KVL operations during the transition period.

KVL can't rely on verbal assurances alone; we may need to remind future Town Boards that they have a moral obligation to follow through on the plan to sustainably restore KVL.

Last Point: Inasmuch as the 2022 budget allocations ensure the BH and BV libraries are now fully stable and sustainable from an operating perspective in 2022, those libraries are foreseeably going to receive only normalized "cost of living" style increases of 1-2% in 2023-2024 whereas KVL's operating support (still deeply inadequate) will need to grow at a higher rate in future years to achieve a comparable level of operational sustainability. Dwyer emphasized to Supervisor-elect Calves the importance driving that message (and that future expectation) home now, in this budget cycle, so BH/BV don't develop the false impression that this year's 50%/30%/20% allocation of new library dollars represents a precedent for the future. Ideally, this is documented in the Resolution.

Committee Reports

Finance Report (Ian Shaw)

N/A

Building and Grounds (Tony Mamo)

We are still waiting on many estimates, including to make the bathrooms ADA compliant.

Book Sales (Mary Herrnstadt)

N/A

Programming Committee (Mike Dwyer)

N/A

Development Committee (Rhea Johnson)

Ellen Waltmyer secured an additional matching anonymous grant towards the Annual Appeal Challenge in addition to the previous two grants for a total of \$10,000.

*****Board Meeting adjourned at 8:51 pm.**

**The next Board Meeting is Monday, November 29.
Please see Director's report attached below.**

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Versacci, Secretary



KATONAH VILLAGE LIBRARY
We are Community...

Director's Report

September 25-October 22, 2021

Library Advocacy

There have been three recent meetings with town officials regarding KVL's restoration of funding. On October 15th, Michael Dwyer and I met with town board member Ellen Calves and Comptroller Abe Zambrano to discuss whether ARPA funds might be used as a bridge for KVL and funding purposes. (The monies would go towards ARPA qualifying issues such as sewer hookup, ADA restroom upgrade and stormwater management issues in the Garden Room). Both Ellen and Abe expressed that it was likely KVL could depend on these funds. However, an agreement "in principle" on sustainable future funding—and integration into the Town's normal budget framework—could not be secured or reached at this meeting.

On October 15th, the Town Board Meeting initiated with a town-hired consultant speaking on ARPA funds and uses. The consultant indicated that nonprofits (town libraries) would likely qualify for ARPA funds from the town. And finally, on the afternoon of October 16th, a Town Work Session was held with the Bedford Town Board to discuss how to split \$100,000 of available funding from the town towards increased library operating support. Supervisor Carr pushed for Bedford Hills

Library and Bedford Village Library to obtain more than the two libraries originally requested for their fiscal 2022 budgets on 9/27. Several board members argued that the libraries should receive the monies that they officially requested, but Supervisor Carr said this was not equitable. The town board members also confirmed that ARPA funds would be made available to the libraries. However, there was no discussion on sustainable future funding for KVL and what will happen when ARPA funds run out. Therefore, KVL does not have an operating scenario for the coming years to share with our community members, and cannot open weekends yet, as we may end up needing to close/furlough staff again without future funds to support our operating costs.

Annual Appeal Launch

The Library's 2021 Annual Appeal letters were personalized by board members and officially mailed on October 22. The first eblast promoting the \$10,000 challenge was sent on October 23rd. Ellen Waltmyer also recently secured a \$3k pledge from Frank Richardson for our end of year challenge.

Programming

Katonah Poetry Series held a live poet reading on October 17th. This was the library's first true "in person" event since Covid began. Proof of vaccination and masks were required. The program went well, and KVL would like to continue with similar programs.

Public Restroom ADA compatible Upgrade

The original contracting company KVL was depending upon to renovate the upstairs public restroom has backed out. Therefore, I am attempting to get new estimates from other companies. Many items for the restroom (i.e. toilets) are backordered due to the worldwide manufacturing delays/shortage of materials. Additionally, the Town of Bedford's Building Department is still backlogged with permits. (The library's permit was submitted in July.)

Garden Room Update

The Garden Room has been cleaned and its damaged carpet replaced. I am looking towards securing estimates from engineers to come up with a solution to manage storm waters around the Garden Room area.

