

THE HAVERFORD TOWNSHIP FREE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
Annual Association Meeting Minutes (DRAFT)

DATE: MAY 20, 2020

ATTENDING: Phil Goldsmith, President	Sukrit Goswami, Director
Margaret Fox-Tully, Vice-President	Donna Reeves, Staff
Madeline O’Fria, Secretary	Amy Moskovitz, Staff
Alyce Callison, BOT	Katherine Adriaanse, Staff
Scott Lowe, BOT	Julie Schultz, Staff
Debbie Cella, Treasurer	

PUBLIC: 14 Community Members, including staff in attendance

EXCUSED: Jim Brown, BOT

The meeting was called to order by Phil Goldsmith, Board President, at 7:02 PM.

OPENING OF MEETING: All in attendance to the Zoom meeting were welcomed by Library Director, Sukrit Goswami.

PUBLIC COMMENT: NONE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion: To approve the minutes of the May 15, 2019 Annual Association Meeting. Proposed by Madeline O’Fria, 2nd by Alyce Callison. Unanimously approved.

TREASURER’S REPORT: Debbie Cella

Debbie Cella mentioned that at every Association meeting, we present a comparative between the current year ending and the previous year ending financial reports. The Library’s annual independent audit for 2019 agrees with all figures discussed in the financial reports.

The overall total assets of the Library in the previous year was approximately \$1,600,000 and this year the Library is at approximately \$1,900,000 The largest asset is the cash balance of just over \$1,000,000 which includes the capital campaign fund of approximately \$488,000. These are committed funds for the capital campaign. We also have a small commitment for improvements for things like the parking lot and other extensive things we might do at our current facility. The overall increase in assets from last year to this year is approximately \$200,000 primarily made up of increase in cash and fixed assets.

Liabilities for the year went up slightly by approximately \$3,000, from \$78,000 to \$81,000 due to standard payment pools and benefit pools.

Revenue slightly decreased from approximately \$1,798,000 to \$1,775,000 primarily due to restructuring of how the Library recognizes grant revenue. Last year it was recognized when it was awarded to the Library whereas in the past we recognized it when we received it. So we recognized an extra year of revenue last year and an award that we received in 2019 had been recorded in 2018. The Library had a slight increase in revenue and decrease in expenses which produced an overall increase in profit.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Phil Goldsmith

Phil Goldsmith reported the following: It seems like only yesterday –it was actually February 3, 2020--when I appeared before the Haverford Township Commissioners to press our case for a decision on whether to resume our plans to renovate the library or to build a new library at the shuttered Brookline school site.

Now—four months later-- we worry not about renovate or build anew but when and under what conditions we can physically reopen our current facility closed on March 14th--to our patrons so they can use our computers to do research or can attend the multitude of programs they have been used to for their children or themselves or could come browse through our shelves at our books or pick up a book they ordered on-line or borrow a DVD or sit on our chairs and read the newspaper or flip through old magazines. Play cards, chess, checkers, knit or just socialize.

It is a reminder of how much is out of our hands whether it be as a library board member or simply as a human being—or even a mouse.

But mouse friend, you are not alone

In proving foresight may be vain”

The best-laid schemes of Mice and Men

Go oft awry,

And leave us only grief and pain,

For promised Joy:

As any of our crackerjack reference department members could tell you I am quoting from Robert Burns 1785 poem entitled To a Mouse.

As to when a decision might be made on the library improvement project, I would not risk a guess. Nor out of respect and understanding what township officials must be going through now would I even pose the question to them. They face more immediate priorities.

Nor do we know when the library will be opened to the public.

The decision to close the library and remain closed was made under the order of the commonwealth. And that is who will dictate our status. While libraries throughout much of the state—in so called—yellow counties can start to take steps to reopen, as we all know, Delaware County remains a red state. As Glenn R. Miller, Deputy Secretary for Libraries, stated in a memo the other day: “For those libraries located in counties designated red by the commonwealth they are to remain closed until further notice is given. Any library that reopens before being designated as yellow by the commonwealth risks placing their operations at risk.”

We will continue to follow the mandate of the state, not only to comply with the law, but, most importantly, to protect the health and safety of our patrons and employees.

Regardless of our physical status, I am proud of the effort that our staff under Sukrit’s direction have made in providing online, informative, and entertaining services to the public. And, speaking on behalf of the board, I am proud that we have so far been able to do so without jeopardizing the job security or livelihood of our employees. Not every library in our area or throughout the state can say that. Our ability to do so was assisted by our receiving an SBA loan; again, something not every library can say.

I know our employees, like our patrons, are zoomed out by now, but in many ways, it has been a valuable learning experience. Our employees have enhanced their technology skills, learned more about the vast array of databases we have; have used their ingenuity in helping patrons over the telephone and providing informative programming online. It has given them—and us—an opportunity to peek into the future.

Imagine if this had happened a decade or so ago, we would not have had the resources at our fingertips to continue to provide the type of services we have continued to provide. And we can only imagine what technology might be available in another decade or so to provide additional services to our patrons. One thing we do know. Change will continue.

At the regular board meeting that immediately follows this meeting Sukrit will go into more detail about what steps are being taken to appropriately reopen the library when we are given the green light to do so. In the meantime, I would like us to take a moment of silence to remember the 43 Haverford residents who have lost their lives because of the virus.

Election of Board of Trustees Position – Margaret Fox-Tully was unopposed in her bid to continue to serve on the Board for another term. Margaret was re-elected to another term by the Association and the Board.

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Proposed by Margaret Fox-Tully, 2nd by Madeline O’Fria. Unanimously approved.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 7:19 PM