

- 1) At 7:31pm the online meeting was called to order by Ms. Karp. Present were Hildy Karp, Heather Marvell, Brian O'Leary, Diego Ribadeneira, Tracy Carroll, Alice Greenberg-Sheedy, Jamie Saeed, Kathie Abrams, Friends Rep, Karen Hilton, Village Trustee, Lindita Cani and Shanize Haddock. Linda Beck was also present. Donna Grohman joined the meeting later.

Introductions were made. Linda Beck is part of the South Orange Environmental Commission, the SOMA Film Festival, a trustee on the local anti-slavery group and a big library advocate. She is very engaged in the community.

- 2) **Turtle Habitat:** The discussion of the project started a year or two ago, between Beth Halliday, Melissa Kopecky and Brent Shelley. Ms. Cani was recently brought into the discussion. Ms. Cani told the Board that it is a great idea and will be a great addition to the children's room as an attraction and as an educational tool, but her head goes to the funding. Not just funding for supporting the habitat, but general maintenance. The price only for maintaining/cleaning the tank is about \$4,500 for two years. The life span of these turtles is 35 years. Ms. Cani said that she wants to make sure there is a discussion on this before someone else new comes in, and is faced with an expense they had no say in. Ms. Cani had reached out to the Kiwanis Club, to see if they saw this project as an educational tool, maybe they would commit to some funding, but she has not gotten any response yet.

Linda Beck applied for a grant back in 2019, with the Association of NJ Environmental Commissions (ANJEC). They jumped on the idea right away. She explained that there are invasive turtles that are pet releases, which have overbred down at the Meadowland Park pond and are crowding out other native species. Ms. Beck told the Board that she looked into every option for getting the pond back to a safe and healthy biome for native species. She said that the habitat is on orange alert because of the invasive turtles. Originally, they were going to put a couple of aquariums in the schools, SOMS & South Mountain. However, it seemed problematic for the schools to have to deal with the turtles over the summer. Ms. Beck then began to discuss the idea with library staff.

The cost of the turtle aquarium is about \$11,000 with installation. Ms. Beck explained that the tank includes a filter, lighting, heat lamp, sterilizer, is up to health code and safe for kids. Ms. Beck had \$1,500 from the grant from ANJEC, and \$500 from the Friends of the Library. The deposit on the aquarium is \$2,000. Ms. Beck would like to start a GoFundMe in order to raise the funds needed.

Ms. Beck and a friend built a mock aquarium that is the exact dimensions of the aquarium they want to purchase. They hope to put it in the library to generate some buzz and get people to donate. She said the total they are looking to raise is about \$13,000. This will include the aquarium, maintenance and food for 2 years. Ms. Beck said that this would give kids an enhancement; a little piece of nature that they can get close to.

The Board shared their concerns. Ms. Marvell asked how much is the staff expected to be educators; there is no active education going on, with the funds that Ms. Beck has set aside for the education campaign, it will be more like a museum display. Informational signs will be placed onto

the aquarium. Ms. Karp commented they are about to embark on fundraising for the library, and this muddled the message a bit. Ms. Saeed inquired about a smell associated with the turtles; the tank will have a very high tech ultraviolet sterilizer, there's a hood on it and with a monthly cleaning there should be no smell. Mrs. Carroll was concerned about the cost. She also asked to what extent would removing 2 turtles from the pond, going to truly impact the overall habitat. Ms. Beck told her that they plan to take 2 females out, to stop the breeding there. The turtles can lay 200-400 eggs a season. It will also educate people not to release pets into the pond. She explained that it will not completely curb the problem, and she has been working with the herpetologists at great swamp to try to figure out what to do with the rest of the turtles. But this is the first step in getting the problem stopped.

Mr. O'Leary made a motion to accept the funds raised for the turtles and hold it, but not necessarily committing to spending it on this project. If the library does not go through with the project the funds would be returned. Ms. Marvell seconded, all approved.

Ms. Karp told Ms. Beck that it would be important to have a conversation with the people who are doing the capital campaign fundraising.

The timeline for this project would be around fall. Ms. Beck left the meeting.

- 3) **Friends Update:** At the March meeting the Friends looked at the participation numbers for Black History Month programs they funded. They were good programs but they had small turnouts. Ms. Cani shared the views from Library's YouTube channel: Dr. Gretchen Sorin had 178 views so far. Ms. Abrams was delighted with that news.

They are still working on the jewelry sale; they are looking at a target date in June and looking for a site. Sandra Dickerson has some leads to SOPAC, they lent their lobby for sorting jewelry.

The book home delivery started February 15th, had 11 sign ups and 5 deliveries. Only 2 deliveries last week. The Friends will do it for 2 months to see how it goes.

They are looking for events they can share; Newcomer's Day and River Day are coming up.

Mr. O'Leary also updated the Board. There was a brief discussion of the Better World Books bin at the Friends meeting; they were happy that the pickups are more frequent, but there is a persistent wish for a second box.

Ms. Cani asked Ms. Abrams if it would be possible for the Friends to fund a program with author Paul Auster. He was born in Newark and raised in South Orange. In his book he remembers where he would visit the library, which is where he started writing poetry. He is willing to speak on April 3 at 2 pm. Laura Sims, SOPL librarian and local author will be the moderator. He did not ask for any money, but he did mention that it would be nice if the library can donate to a charity. Ms. Abrams said that is fabulous; she is sure it will be approved.

- 4) **Board Meeting Platform:** Ms. Cani looked into both WebEx and Zoom to compare them. They are both good in security; they both offer encryption and user authentication. Pricing is a little lower on Zoom. The library has Zoom for free through the State Library. WebEx is \$20-something a month. Ms. Cani was told that they have an option to use the license that Ms. Hilton has, but that is up to

Ms. Hilton. WebEx has been used for a longer time for government meeting. However, it's all about familiarity. Ms. Cani said the decision it is up to the Board; she can make it happen both ways. Ms. Karp said she would prefer not to take on another expense, and given that the board has done their meetings through WebEx, it would be better for consistency sake if they could use Ms. Hilton's license. Ms. Hilton is happy to turn it over.

- 5) **Minutes:** With Ms. Zacker's clarification to the overall total of the Annual Appeal, Ms. Zacker made a motion to approve the minutes from the February meeting, Mrs. Carroll seconded, all approved.
- 6) **Foundation Update:** Ms. Hilton updated the Board. New members are starting. There will be an outside socially-distanced tour of the exterior of the Connett building. The foundation put together a board book for the new members, a really nice history of what the foundation has done for the many years they have been working on building projects. Annemarie Maini has taken over as president of the Foundation and is doing a marvelous job. Next meeting is Thursday at 5pm.
- 7) **Finance Committee Update:** The finance committee did not meet this month. They will try to meet before the next board meeting, to be able to take a look at the financial result for the first 3 months of the year and update the Board on that.
- 8) **Personnel Committee update:** Mrs. Carroll updates the Board. They are still in search of a library director. There are 5 credible candidates from the official job posting. They are posting at Rutgers as well. They are looking forward to getting applications via that venue. The committee just found out that they will not be able to use a village email address because they can't initiate any emails from that account. Ms. Cani and Mrs. Carroll were able to iron out the difficulties with the Library sopl email address and they think that will work. The email address on the job posting will be changed. They have one applicant via the village website. Mrs. Carroll will respond to that applicant via the library board sopl email.
The Personnel committee will put together the committee that was mentioned at last month's Board meeting, between now and April 6th.
- 9) **Financial:** Ms. Zacker made a motion to approve the bills totaling \$12,652.50 from Operating and \$1,339.60 from Trustees, Mrs. Carroll seconded, all approved.
- 10) **Director's Report:** Ms. Cani updated the Board. When the library got the ransom ware, the data was encrypted. TLC discovered it within an hour and disconnected all the library services. That saved the library from the virus landing to individual computers. No data was stolen. The virus came from a staff email that was clicked on.
The library has 2 networks, one is wired through Verizon and is maintained by Jersey Connect at the state library, the other network is wireless provided by Optimum. The wired network is for

internal domain and patron PCs. It is protected by a firewall, it allows only communications in and out for services that are predetermined. Staff PCs are protected with Norton Antivirus. The Patron computers are only granted static IP addresses and internet access. Patrons cannot download anything that can make changes on the system. The library uses deepfreeze so after every use, the computer goes to the settings it started with; nothing gets saved. The wireless network is also protected by a firewall. This is offered to the public through two access points.

All library activities get backed up. It is done from TLC every night; all the information is saved in the library's data server. With the ransom ware, the library's back up was encrypted. In order to decrypt it, the library bought a piece of software, which helped and is almost back to normal. There is however, a few weeks of data that is missing.

The library reached out to Jersey Connect to find out what can they do differently not to get hit again. Jersey Connect offered the library to have a backup on cloud which is very good and won't cost the library anything. The library also purchased another backup tape. The library got a recommendation for Kaspersky anti-virus which offers better protection. For \$300 a year the library can have 3 licenses for the servers and 25 PC coverage.

The Library is keeping track of the backups, educating staff about emails that look suspicious. The library does need another server; it will cost about \$1000.

Ms. Seed asked how often are the antivirus updated, she said it should be updated monthly, or every other month; Brent Shelley deals with all of that. Ms. Saeed also inquired about outdated operating systems; the library is in the process of swapping the older computers with newer ones.

The kickoff for Makers Month is Friday March 19th. The Maker's menu is out; every week is a different theme, the first week being Puzzles and Pieces. Some programs being held are the gigantic DIY puzzle pieces, patrons will get to check them out, design, decorate and return it; the library will make a mural. Another program is rapStudy, k-12 kids, can listen to their favorite music while learning different subjects. One of the cofounders of rapStudy is Cosimo Fabrizio, who was a South Orange resident and library page, he is now a student at Cornell university. Another program will be planting forget me nots in remembrance of all the people who have passed away from Covid. This will be done at Makers Mayhem which is also Earth Day April 22nd.

Ms. Cani asked about signage for the dogs around the library property, mostly between the two library buildings. A lot of community members walk their dogs, and do not pick up after them. The Board authorized Ms. Cani to post temporary signs and also authorized reasonable funds to have permanent signs made in the event the Village can't provide the library with permanent signs.

- 11) **Connett Connections Project Update:** the new date for the next round of the grant application is June 4th, with submissions beginning as early as May 10th. Ms. Marvell and Ms. Karp have a meeting with a potential grant writer tomorrow. Tom Hut has very generously gotten really involved from a design perspective. There will be a meeting with Mr. Hut and others, along with H3 on Friday. They are also going to work with the Historic Commission to try to resolve the concerns that they had. The decision is to resubmit the whole project; however, they are open to thoughts about

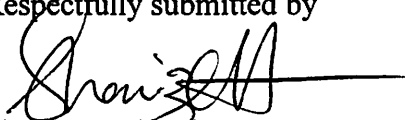
ways the project should be revisited. Ms. Marvell is happy to hear them in the upcoming weeks; because the farther along they get the harder it will be to tweak the project.

Ms. Hilton commented that the Library Board should go in front of the Village Board of Trustees and present the project again, because now it is a new project.

Connett Exterior: The engineer's office has finally made all the necessary changes and there will be a prequalification meeting for contractors because its historic money. That is happening in mid-April after that it will go out to bid. Best case scenario will be a summer start for the work.

The meeting was closed at 9:11pm.

Respectfully submitted by



Shanize Haddock