

January 17, 2022
Altamont Free Library Monthly Meeting

Meeting Start Time: 7:05

Attendance: Melanie Shatynski, Katherine Nelson, Amanda Beedle, Tracy Mayer, Jason Cooper, Shannon Duerr, Christine Carpenter, Amanda Beedle, Deb Katz, Paul Scilipoti, Joe Burke

This meeting is being streamed on Youtube live

Joe's Introduction of Natalie Hurteau: The board has been discussing going fine free. Tonight we are talking about the process of going away with overdue fines. In 2020 we went away with children's materials. It is Joe's hope that in the near future we will be able to do away with all overdue fines. Voorhessville and Guilderland have joined the fine free libraries in the last year. Natalie from the Upper Hudson Library Adult Service Manager, will be giving us a presentation about fine free. Joe sent out a packet from Natalie earlier today. Caution: If you vote today to go fine free it doesn't mean you go fine free tomorrow. It gives the library as much time as you need to plan out how to go about being fine free and planning what fine free means to you.

Natalie is leaving it open to questions:

Question from Shannon: How do we put out the message about being fine free? This can be as big or small you want it to be. Most likely we would be partnering with GPL.

Shannon: If we collect books that are fined from another library - we (AFL) keep the fine?

Joe: The UHLAN agreement - patrons can pay overdue fines at any library and that library can keep the money. If it is a lost item, the money goes to the library that the materials is lost from.

Shannon: Can we choose to not collect fines from other items?

Natalie: Yes, as long as it was not a billed item.

Shannon: How do we let people know what the exceptions are?

Natalie: Simplest way to explain it - is the building is fine free, not the materials. As long as you are in a fine free library, the materials you check out will be fine free.

Tracy: If a patron has a fine and pays it online. Where does the money go?

Natalie: If you pay them online, it does disperse them online and goes to the borrowing library. It is important it is the building not the materials. Whatever library you go you are subject to the libraries rules.

Amanda: Is there anywhere you can find a list of the libraries that are fine free?

Natalie: 20 out of the 29 libraries are fine free.

Amanda: Can we make that public?

Natalie: No that probably doesn't make sense. There are lots of reasons why libraries aren't fine free yet.

Joe: I've been reluctant to do this at AFL because I feel it should be done on a system level. I have pushed for this at director meetings for years and years, but we just aren't getting there. I don't want anymore time to go by not doing something I believe very strongly in.

Natalie: In terms of marketing - cute interview with Altamont Enterprise. Example "Hey can you believe that 20/29 libraries are fine free and AFL is joining that list." I could see it much more harmless to go that route. Have flyers and cheat sheets to say it's the library that is fine free not the materials.

Joe: Points I would like to have made for the record. This is increasingly the mode of doing business in public libraries. Overdue fines have been a significant part of our revenue streams - we would take in \$2500 that has dwindled dramatically due to COVID and the onset of auto renewal all library systems will see a substantial decline. Bethlehem's recent report showed that most patrons return their books within 3 days on their due dates. We can take the hit. This is an intrinsic good. It goes towards our mission in increasing access. The community has already paid for the collection so they should already have access to do it.

Deb: I think we have a really rich set of data of points. We have different ways to educate the community.

Joe: Thank you Natalie

Deb: At 7:34 Call to Order for the January 17th 2022 Monthly Meeting and any additions to the agenda

Motion to Call the Meeting to order at 7:36 - Amanda, 2nd Melanie
Any additions or changes - None

Review and Accept the minutes of December 20, 2021 Meeting
Any questions or changes -

Motion to accept - Paul, Katherine

Minutes accepted for December

Treasure Report for December 2021 - Melanie

2nd State of Financial position - Not much change - biggest change is from checking account and that is just regular business

2nd Annual Meeting - We don't need to go over again, but they do need to be approved.

Profit vs loss comparison and our Budget vs annual for December 2021

Motion to Accept - Tracy 2nd Paul

Directors Report - Joe

It was a long month. Total circulation for the month 1708. The biggest thing over the past month has been dealing with COVID related issues. Several staff members had family members who tested positive. In those cases we had those staff members stay at home. Could return to work after staying at home for 5 days and then have a negative COVID test. Supervisor Barber gave AFL 20 at home test. These tests are for staff of the library not community (some confusion in message from the Supervisor) but AFL has offered to be a distribution point if that is needed in the future. It's been a tough week filling in the gaps. We have also seen an increase in patrons picking up materials from the vestibule. We are reminding the community that we can still do that. We are doing everything we need to do to maintain the safety for our patrons and our staff.

We have approved auto renewal. Auto renewal is exactly what it sounds like. If an item can be automatically renewed two days prior to the due date it will be renewed. There are some cases where it can't be renewed (fines due, another patron has a request, or there are rules that it can't be renewed ie museum passes). We will be flipping that switch by the end of the month. All libraries in the system are going to be doing that on the same day.

Deb: Thanks for putting in the week you did. It is very much appreciated. Anything we or the board can do to offset you we are here for you.

Committee Reports:

- Building Committee – LED lighting conversion
 - We have two projects we can spend money on
 - One will replace CFL lighting fixtures with LED - total project cost for not more than \$3000
 - Paul Question - I saw the proposal and I wanted to make sure that we are aware of the lightning that is going to go in - warm vs. bright light - we need to be aware of it being written - Joe spoke with the contractor - there are a couple of different “warmth” options - the lights we have now are a bit of a harsher/brighter light that is different from different lights we have had in other parts of the building. If we

go warmer than where we are now, I think that would be good. If we get visual representation on which of the lights can go in I will send it to Paul.

- Paul - We have had discussions about the platforms. I am putting together some +/- about what type of platform. Then after we look at those we can find a contractor.
- Finance - Jason was thinking about putting together a financial 101 so that everyone will be more aware of what is going on.
- LRP - Did not meet - We will probably want to meet no later than February
- Personnel - Did not meet
- Policy - Did not meet - We've taken a two month break. The next two policy 1) circulation (this may change if we decide to go fine free) 2) material selection - I took a webinar about material challenges and I would like to make some changes to our policy to address that
- Program - Did not meet

Old Business

- Additional Discussion about Fine Elimination - Shannon - Are there any reasons for keeping fines?