

Stewart Lang Memorial Library

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

October 7, 2019

**In attendance:** Gayle James, Jim Dillon, Jerry Hunter, Monica Krupa, Maryanne Adams, Anne Baldwin, Caryl Kinney, Kitty Hayes, Cathy Wood

**Absent:** all present

Community member: Pam Shane

**Secretary's Report:** July meeting

Motion to accept: Jerry Hunter Second: Monica Krupa

**Director's Report:** July meeting

Motion to accept: Jerry Hunter Second: Monica Krupa

**Secretary's Report:** August meeting

Motion to accept: Jerry Hunter Second: Ann Baldwin

**Director's Report:**August meeting

Motion to accept: Monica Krupa Second: Maryanne Adams

**Treasurer's Report:**

Motion to accept: Monica Krupa Second: Kitty Hayes

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Planning Committee:**Caryl & Kitty

**Finance Committee:** Cathy & Monica - Will meet in November to finalize 2020 Budget.

**Facilities Committee:** Jerry and Jim - The committee has recommended the replacement of the basement windows, outside painting work, and wheelchair ramp repairs @ a cost of \$2,820. Also, mortar repairs and painting were needed in the basement and stairwell at \$2,665, for a total cost of \$5,485.

Motion to approve work: Monica Krupa Second: Maryanne Adams

**Personnel Committee:** Maryanne and Anne

**Ad-Hoc Building Committee:** Gayle & Jim -A new schematic of proposed building was presented. Two other possible properties within the village were suggested for consideration. It has been agreed to by the committee and board to decline Dr. Ward's offer to move the library to school property. Reasons include: location, access, Lang trust concerns, public school rules vs library and general public, and restrictive 2025 building plan. A copy of the letter is attached.

Motion to decline school proposal: Caryl Kinney Second: Anne Baldwin Abstained: Monica Krupa

**Old Business:**

- Approved revised Computer and Internet Use Policy dated 9/30/2019.
- Approved revised Sexual Harassment Policy dated 10/07/2019.
- Approved Bed Bug Policy dated 10/07/2019.
- Collected annual Conflict of Interest Certificates of Compliance from members.

**New Business:**

- Approved the purchase of new computers.
- Approved adding September to meeting schedule.
- Discussed creating a standardized cleaning contract to clarify expectations.

Entered executive session – real estate and staff performance. No action was taken.

Motion to Adjourn: Jerry Hunter Second: Kitty Hayes

Time 9:15

Cathy Wood

October 07, 2019

Terry L. Ward, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools  
Cato-Meridian Central School District  
2851 State Route 370  
Cato, NY 13033

Doctor Ward,

We are writing to you on behalf of the Stewart B. Lang Memorial Library to express our appreciation for your suggestion that our Library might be relocated to the space currently serving as the Middle School gymnasium. We understand that this space would be vacated and repurposed as part of a capital building project to commence in 2025.

While your proposal is innovative and intriguing, we have concluded this option would not be in the Library's best interests, for a variety of reasons including:

- Although both of our organizations are fundamentally focused on education, we have different missions and constituencies. While the School primarily serves the educational needs of its students, the Library's mission is to provide opportunities for learning, personal growth and community engagement for all ages and populations.
- We believe that, over a period of time, a close physical and financial relationship with the School District could unduly influence the Library's policies and operations, potentially affecting our autonomy and independence. Areas of friction could include operating hours, material selection, control of access, and oversight by the School administration and board.
- Ease of access is vitally important to our success in serving our patrons. The school property presents significant access challenges. For example, we don't believe that close parking within short walking distance can be guaranteed; access limitations during school events and during bus pick up and drop off times would be very disruptive; and travel paths from parking to the current gym floor would involve using either an elevator or a long ADA-compliant ramp.
- Certain groups would be denied access if our Library were located on school property. This would include, for example, non-custodial parents, registered sex offenders, and people possessing alcohol, tobacco or firearms on their person or in their vehicles. These access restrictions would violate our legal obligation to provide unrestricted access to all.
- Our long-range plan envisions construction of a new library within the next two to three years. Waiting until the year 2025 is not consistent with our vision, especially given the potential political and regulatory uncertainties that the School/Library arrangement might entail.
- A substantial portion of our current operating income comes from a trust established by a local family. Relocating to a school-owned building could adversely impact that income.
- Locating our Library in the existing School would adversely impact our visibility, as compared to a distinctly designed stand-alone building located close to a main road.

Continued

- Tragic events that have occurred in a number of schools as well as people's individual life experiences may deter some community members from visiting a library on school property.
- It appears that we might be the first free association library in New York to relocate into a public school facility. We don't think it would be in the best interests of our association members or patrons to be a pioneer in this arena.

While we are very grateful to you for approaching us with this idea, we have decided to respectfully decline your proposal. We wish you the best of luck with your planned capital project, and we look forward to continuing and strengthening our partnership with the Cato Meridian Central School.

Sincerely,

---

Gayle James, Library Director

---

James Dillon, Library Board President