

# THE SHERMAN LIBRARY

## ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS

**Friday October 6, 2023, Annual Meeting of Members**

**ATTENDEES:** Howard Beaton (Member), Ashleigh Blake (Executive Director), Karen Borneman (Member), Alan Braverman (Member), Joel Bruzinski (Member), Pat Corrigan (Member), Amanda Croasmun (Trustee – Secretary), John Ehrenreich (Trustee), Elizabeth Garland (Member), Paul Garland (Member), Jeff Ginsburg (Member), Irit Granger (Trustee), Barbara Ireland (Trustee – President), Laura Jagodzinski (Member), Sharon Kleinberg (Trustee – Treasurer), Don Lowe, Jeff Matusow (Trustee), John O’Donnell (Member), Masumi O’Donnell (Member), Katy Osborn (Trustee Nominee), Charlotte Rutsch (Trustee Nominee), Horst Rutsch (Member), Christy Seewagen (Trustee), Elpidio Villarreal (Trustee), Stephanie Warren (Member)

Meeting Support: Monica Cichosz (Children’s Services Coordinator)

Board of Trustees Absent: Suzanne Tesley, Dee Ratterree

**REVIEW OF MEETING MINUTES:** Barbara Ireland, John Ehrenreich

**CALL TO ORDER:** Barbara Ireland, President of the Board of Trustees, called the meeting to order at 7:03pm and explained the meeting protocols.

**MINUTES FROM 2022 ANNUAL MEMBER MEETING:** Barbara moved, if there was no objection, to waive the review and reading of the minutes of the 2022 annual member meeting and accept the minutes through unanimous consent. There was no objection, and the motion was adopted.

**TREASURER’S REPORT:** Sharon Kleinberg gave highlights of the fiscal report that was provided in advance of the meeting. Revenues are higher (\$60,000), which represents a 17% increase over last year largely due to increases in fundraising. Sharon thanked the Town of Sherman and the taxpayers for their essential support granting a 10% increase in funding. Fundraising increased by 58% because there was no golf or gala fundraisers in the previous fiscal comparison year. Membership was down 7% largely due to a reclassification of funds. Gifts and grants increased by 105% as a result of some generous donations this year. Overall, budgeted revenues outperformed by \$46,000, a 12% increase.

Expenses increased by 15% over last year (\$53,743) in part due to some unexpected facility expenses as well as planned expenses for AV system upgrades, technology updates for monitor, laptop and the Owl virtual meeting system as well as planned increases in programs and outreach. Overall net surplus was \$11,793. There were no further questions on the report.

**INVESTMENT COMMITTEE REPORT:** Jeff Matusow reported that the investment committee spent the year adjusting the stocks to bonds allocation to account for the change in interest rates. The portfolio began with an allocation of 65% stocks to 35% bonds when interest rates were near zero and over the course of the year the account was reallocated to 47% stocks and 53% bonds. The portfolio dividends netted the budgeted \$35,000 and the newly allocated account is expected to generate returns closer to \$50,000 with less risk. The portfolio has grown by 5%. There were no further questions on the report.

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**PRESIDENT'S REPORT:** Barbara Ireland gave the President's report and began by thanking the Town, the library members and the community for their ongoing support of the library. Barbara shared three pillars of strength the library leverages to stay strong and relevant. The first pillar is the strong support of the Sherman community now and historically. Barbara gave a historical summary of the library and recapped the growth and progression from early construction all the way to our current content access, technology access, computer access, 24 hour Wi-Fi accessibility and outdoor charging stations. She reviewed the survey John Ehrenreich conducted in the community last year to assess program needs and wants and how the library has worked to meet those requests with more in-person, zoom and hybrid programs for both children and adults. The second pillar of strength for the library is the outstanding staff. Barbara gave acknowledgement of Ashleigh's return to the Executive Director position and the superior work she does to keep all facets of the library running smoothly and efficiently. She also acknowledged Karen Borneman's 21 years of service and welcomed new staff Derek Pearson, Technical Assistant and Monica Cichosz, Children's Services Coordinator. The third pillar of strength is the working Board of Trustees. Barbara gave a summary of each Trustee and the roles they play on various committees and fundraisers. There were no further questions on the report.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Ashleigh Blake presented the Executive Director's report and began by welcoming Barbara Ireland as the new Board President and wished Mariya Hurwitz well as she departed from the position. This year the library was able to return to all regular pre-pandemic fundraising events in person. The funds raised through fundraising events go directly towards operating costs for the library to serve the community with materials, electronic resources and great programming for adults and children. Ashleigh reviewed upgrades and improvements including the audio/visual system upgrades with improved sound and hybrid meeting capabilities with Owl Labs. Adult and Children's programs expanded and included topics in arts, culture, nature, literature, historic events, science, and technology. Programs are communicated through our wonderful website, weekly e-newsletters, events column in the paper and more. All programs are free to attend.

- Patrons borrowed 23,566 items from our collection and 4,717 through borrowIT loan system
- 1,333 new books, audio books and DVDs were added to our collection
- The library held 318 programs with 4,572 children and adults in attendance

Ashleigh acknowledged her wonderful staff of Karen, Derek and Monica, along with several pages, and the very important role they serve being the heart of the library serving patrons with care and dedication. Ashleigh thanked Linda Hubbard for curating all the wonderful art exhibits and presentations and thanked all the talented artists, speakers and authors who gave presentations. Ashleigh thanked the many volunteers who contribute hundreds of hours each year to the library. Many thanks to Marie Mulvaney for her amazing graphic designs with the Soiree and Gala invitations as well as the Annual Report. A special thank you to the fundraising chairs and volunteers and the members of the investment and facilities committee who lend time and expertise to the library. The dedicated Board of Trustees were thanked for volunteering their time to serve on committees, organize fundraising, implement the strategic plan, maintain policies, and ensure the library remains a valuable resource for our patrons. There was a special thank you to the Town of Sherman for their annual grant as well as membership contributions, gifts and grants, donations and sponsorships.

Ashleigh gave a special thanks for the gifts and grants from the Ada Howe Kent Foundation through Henry and Sabine Renard, the Kettering Family Foundation through Karen and Doug Cushnie and the Hoag Family Foundation through Barbara Hoag.

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Ashleigh announced the Volunteer of the Year recipient award to Laura Jagodzinski for her selfless dedication for many years to the library. Laura served three terms on the Board of Trustees and as the Board secretary worked to streamline and document policies and procedures that assure the smooth running of the board. While contributing to many of the Library fundraisers, Laura chairs the Soiree and has elevated this event to new levels year after year. Laura also provides many hours of support to the migration and implementation of the new donor software. Congratulations Laura.

**VOTING FOR TRUSTEES:** Barbara reviewed the voting protocols and then proceeded with the agenda. Barbara moved to approve the slate of Trustees: Sharon Kleinberg, Katy Osborn, Suzanne Telsey and Charlotte Rutsch for their first two-year term and Jeff Matusow for a second two-year term. Joel Bruzinski seconded the motion. Barbara opened the floor for discussion, there were no comments or questions. Barbara then called for the vote by a raise of cards. Amanda Croasmun and Katy Osborn recorded and tabulated the votes and provided the results to Barbara. Barbara stated that the motion to elect Trustees requires the affirmative vote of a majority of the members voting in person or by proxy. The motion passed unanimously, with 11 votes in person and 18 votes by proxy. Barbara congratulated and welcomed the new Trustees to the Board.

**UNFINISHED/NEW BUSINESS:** Barbara asked if there was any new or unfinished business. There were no further questions or discussion.

**MEETING ADJOURNED:** Barbara thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting at 7:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Croasmun  
Board of Trustees, Secretary