

Trustee Newsletter

November 2018

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FLLS Family Literacy Mini-Grant applications are due on Friday, December 14th.

Welcome to the Trustee Newsletter!

Welcome to the first edition to our Trustee Newsletter! We plan on sending an e-newsletter once a month for library trustees to learn about key issues impacting library trustees, to hear about upcoming workshops or trainings, and to highlight important sections in the *Handbook for Library Trustees of New York State*.

The role of the Finger Lakes Library System when helping library trustees is much like the *Handbook for Library Trustees of New York State* – to assist both the new and experienced public library trustee to better understand their job and



to present the basic information they need to provide quality library service to their community. The Finger Lakes Library System already helps all our library trustees in a variety of ways including trustee training, policy guidance, strategic planning help, long range planning, help with evaluating directors, budget and financial reviews, referendum funding help, advocacy help on local, county, and statewide issues, and mediation between directors and library boards. If you or your board need help with any of these issues, or any other matters, please feel free to reach out to me by phone or email at any time. Our public library system is here to help and guide all library staff, directors and trustees in our service area.

As we start this newsletter, I would like to first thank you for your personal commitment to your library boards as a trustee. Being a trustee takes time, energy, knowledge, and an openness to change.

Welcome, continued on page 2

Welcome (cont'd from page 1)

Your responsibilities include things such as developing the mission of the library and securing adequate funding for your library, but it also includes being active and informed about library matters and being prepared to participate knowledgeably in your monthly board meetings.

One of the most important duties of a library trustee is being an advocate for your library in every manner possible. Advocacy can take many forms, from speaking in front of your county legislature so they are aware of the importance of library funding, to making the decision to ask for a sizeable increase in your referendum funding on the school ballot. It can also be explaining to community members, friends or neighbors why your library is an important community anchor, or taking part in the statewide Library Advocacy Day on Wednesday, February 27, 2019. Watch for advocacy tips from us over the next few newsletters as we prepare for the state budget cycle.

Sarah Glogowski
Executive Director

Reminder: NYS Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy

New York State has passed a new law requiring all organizations to have a sexual harassment prevention policy on file. The deadline to have this in place was October 9, 2018. You should have already approved this new policy at your last board meeting. To make sure that you are meeting the requirements of this new law, please go to <https://www.ny.gov/programs/combating-sexual-harassment-workplace>. This not only gives you a template with specific wording, but also the form required to be available to all employees. Also, please note that all employees, volunteers, board members, etc. MUST complete sexual harassment prevention training by 10/19/2019, and then retake the training every year after that. FLLS is working on providing you with resources for the training. Please contact Kristi Downham with any questions in regards to this at kdownham@fls.org or 607-273-4074 ext. 228.



Jenny Shonk from FLLS and Brandi Rozelle from the Waterloo Library presented to over 120 people at the 2018 NYLA Annual Conference.

It's Budget Time!

By Sarah Glogowski

The majority of our libraries follow a January – December fiscal year. If your library follows this schedule, please be aware that you should have a tentative budget prepared and ready to be voted on by your January meeting. Public library boards are legally responsible for the library's finances and financial management. As custodians of public funds, trustees must be accountable in their management of the library's money. If you have the paper version of the 2018 edition of the Handbook for Library Trustees of New York State, pages 50-58 discuss budgets and finance.

As the Handbook points out, every public and association library, regardless of size, is required to prepare and adopt a written annual budget. In addition, your library's annual operating budget is required to be easily accessible to the public and posted on the library's website.

Directors must be full partners in the budget development process in libraries of all sizes. In larger libraries, budget preparation is primarily the responsibility of library management. Regardless of size, directors need to be involved in the budget development as they are the ones who manage the day-to-day running of the library. The Board of Trustees defines the library's mission and approves a plan of service and the director translates that mission and plan into programs with specific costs that form the basis for your library budget. A director should never be put in a situation by a library board where they do not have full input and knowledge of their library's budget.

During the development of the upcoming budget, the director should work closely with the Board President, Treasurer and/or the Finance Committee. The entire board is then responsible for reviewing and discussing the library's budget before it is approved. Boards should be reviewing monthly financial statements at each board meeting and should be mindful how the expenses fit into the overall budget they approve.

For example, at FLLS, the budget is prepared by the Executive Director and the Business Manager. We have frequent meetings about the budget, as well as meeting with our Board's Finance Committee several times throughout the year. Management also receives input from our department heads and staff about their upcoming needs. We start crafting our budget in October for the following year and first meet with the Finance Committee for tentative approval. Once they sign off on it, we bring it to our full Board as a draft budget in December, with the final budget approved in January. We also do a mid-year budget review in July each year. While budgets should be reviewed frequently, remember that a budget is a flexible and fluid document. Circumstances change throughout your fiscal year, and your board has the authority and the responsibility to revise a library budget to accommodate unplanned or new situations.

One last item to consider when creating a budget is detailed on page 55 of the 2018 edition of the Handbook. Libraries of all types that have their own board of trustees and have a public vote on their tax levy are subject to the Local Government section of the NYS Property Tax Cap law. During the course of the board's budget deliberations, you may determine that your library may be justified in asking for more than the tax cap amount. The majority of our libraries in the FLLS area ask above the tax cap amount.

Budget, continued on page 4

2019 Construction Grant Applications Summary

From Kristi Downham

Auburn: \$64,253 Renovate office space to a flexible classroom/learning lab. Total project cost \$85,671. This is a 75% project fulfillment with the remaining 25% match coming from the library.

Aurora: \$17,707 Reconstruct/Replace Stage Doors Improve East Wall weather/moisture seal in foundation. Upgrade furnaces to high-efficiency. Total Project cost \$23,610. This is a 75% project fulfillment with the remaining 25% match coming from the library.

Cortland: \$191,706 Improve ventilation, upgrade lighting, rehabilitate art gallery, install 2 chair lifts for accessibility, repair sidewalk and parapet for safety. Total project cost \$255,609. This is a 75% project fulfillment with the remaining 25% match coming from the library.

Newfield: \$16,733 Replace roof on upper section of library and repoint masonry in foundation wall and along front walkway. Total project cost \$22,310. This is a 75% project fulfillment with the remaining 25% match coming from the library.

Ovid: \$600,684 Final phase of expansion and renovation project including demo and abatement, site work, elevator installation, concrete, masonry, waterproofing, and final cleaning. Total project cost \$1,297,579. This is a 46% project fulfillment with the remaining 54% match coming from the library.

Seneca Falls: \$26,331 Upgrade parking lot drainage, and install permanent sign to promote programs. Total project cost \$35,109. This is a 75% project fulfillment with the remaining 25% match coming from the library.

FLLS: \$7,925 Insulate sorting room and hallway. Total project cost \$14,618. This is a 50% project fulfillment with the remaining 50% match coming from the system.

Recommended funding amounts are above in orange. Total funding equals \$925,339. This is what we were allocated through the NYS Public Library Construction Program this year. Everyone that can be funded at 75% will be EXCEPT Ovid who will be funded at 46% but will be receiving the majority of the funds. Every library that wanted to apply this year did. If additional funds are allocated due to other systems not using all of theirs, we can give those to Ovid as everyone else who applied has received their maximum allowed funding amounts. These 2019 Construction Grant funds will be awarded in 2019. The next Construction Grant cycle will be for 2020 and the application opens in June of 2019.

Budget (cont'd from page 3)

To accomplish this, the board must pass a tax cap override resolution prior to the public vote on the library's tax levy. This resolution must receive an affirmative vote by 60% of the library trustees.

If you have any questions on library budgets, who should be involved in the creation of a library budget, or would simply like our staff to look over your budget, we at the Finger Lakes Library System are more than happy to help you at any time.

FLLS 60th Annual Meeting Recap

By Sarah Glogowski

On Friday, October 12th, roughly 100 library trustees, directors, and staff joined us to celebrate our 60th Annual Meeting. Our Annual Meeting is always a special time of year when we celebrate with our member libraries, but this year was especially exciting as it was our 60th anniversary of receiving our charter. While many things have changed over the past 60 years, our commitment to providing our member libraries with the resources to help them be better libraries remains strong.



Our goal is to have an Annual Meeting that fulfills our role in having an annual business meeting for our membership, but also to provide a speaker that highlights a particular need for our public libraries. Over the past year, we have heard from many of our libraries that they are looking to put more of their library budgets on a referendum vote. We have found that both directors and trustees usually need more information on whether that is feasible for their communities. Because of this, the staff at FLLS and our board decided on a different format for our annual meeting this year, and offered a two-hour workshop focusing on this topic.

Brian Hildreth, Executive Director of the Southern Tier Library System and Margo Gustina, Deputy Director of the Southern Tier Library System led an interactive workshop on funding referendums for small and midsized libraries. They started the morning with an exercise between library directors and fictitious town supervisors where library directors were tasked with trying to receive more money for summer reading programs and town supervisors had a need to fund a new ambulance. While this was clearly role playing, this is often how library directors need to think when asking for village, town or county money.

We also learned from Brian and Margo the difference in referendum votes, heard about their successes on obtaining large referendum increases for their libraries in the Southern Tier Library System, and gave our libraries a helpful timeline on how to lead a grassroots initiative for stable public funding in the future. Please remember if your board is looking to increase their referendum funding, both Sarah and Nora would be happy to come out and meet with your board and library to discuss your funding options.



The Board of Trustees at FLLS is looking for library trustees to take part in a committee to evaluate and give advice on our annual meeting structure. If you are interested, please contact Kristi Downham at FLLS for more information.

Upcoming Events

How to Plan a Record-Breaking End-of-Year Fundraiser

- ◇ **Tuesday 12/4 at 11am**
- ◇ Webinar from TechSoup
- ◇ <https://page.techsoup.org/how-to-plan-end-of-year-fundraising-webinar>

FLLS Board of Trustees Meeting

- ◇ **Wednesday 12/12 at 5:30pm**
- ◇ FLLS conference room
- ◇ Open to the public. If you plan to attend, please let Diana know (dleigh@fls.org).

Learning Opportunities

Disaster Planning and Community Resiliency at Your Library

- ◇ **At your convenience**
- ◇ Archived webinar from NYLA
- ◇ <https://bit.ly/2lmdzJk>

Getting Unstuck: Help Your Board, Staff, and Town Talk about Library Funding

- ◇ **At your convenience**
- ◇ Archived webinar from WebJunction
- ◇ <https://bit.ly/2L7Wp2l>



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Fun!

Looking for a gift idea for younger children? Check out the New York Times'/New York Public Library's 10 Best Illustrated Children's Books of 2018. <https://nyti.ms/2yLLXXa>

Need a new book to read? Try one of these suggestions from BuzzFeed. <https://bit.ly/2qZepAj>

Netflix to Produce Multiple Roald Dahl Streaming Series <https://nyti.ms/2DNKE1N>



The Finger Lakes Library System will be closed December 24-26 for Christmas.