

SOLDOTNA LIBRARY FRIENDS – BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Annual Meeting Minutes January 11, 2023 at 10:15 am

Attendance: Joan Merrick (President), Barbara Olson (Vice President, Acting Secretary), Pam Joslin (Treasurer), Michelle Blackwell, Vicki Johnston-Freese (Book Sales)

Absent: Wendi Dutcher (Secretary), Mary Lou Wilcox, Heather Rausch

Guests: Rachel Nash (Librarian), Maria Dixon, Romi Haseo, Jane Gabler, Jackie Knutson

- 1) **Call to order at 10:21 am:** Joan Merrick, President
- 2) **Approval of agenda:** Motion to approve by Pam; second by Vicki
- 3) **Treasurer’s Annual Report:** Pam
 - See attached Annual Treasurer’s Report
 - 2022 was a productive fundraising year for the Friends, and as a result we were able to fund Library programs more than our original budget. Our operating expenses were \$498 less than budget. We spent more than budgeted on signs, however, it was a much-needed improvement.
 - Contributions to the Library totaled \$8,900, including \$500 for Summer Reading Program, \$200 for story walk, \$1,050 for designated donations - Rosie Reeder fund, Pioneers of Alaska Senior Assist Program, and Schwab/Mitchel children and youth support program - \$5,750 to fund the connectivity program, and \$1,400 for purchase of 7 sewing machines for “Sew Fun at the Library Program”.
 - Our year end Book, Bake and Art Sale did very well, as did our monthly book sales.
 - In total, we began the year with \$26,963.70 in the bank, received \$17,126.36 in Revenue, expended \$11, 855.71 and ended the year with \$32,234.35 in the bank, plus \$120 cash on hand.
 - Individual revenue items show monthly book sales earned approximately \$6,500, bookshelf sales earned 1,315, cash donations were \$1,400, art sales earned \$2,800, and bake sales earned around \$400 although the art sales and bake sale cash box was combined so it’s difficult to break out those earnings. PickClickGive brought in \$1,875. Special designated donations were \$1,650 and memberships generated \$1,090.
- 4) **Membership Report for 2022:** Barbara
 - See attached Membership Report.
 - There has been a steady increase in the number of members and records in our database.
 - The web site has been redone. It would be helpful for the board to use the web site looking for things that need to be corrected or embellished.
 - Discussion about “Why Join” took place. Vicki’s idea of giving out \$5 Book Sale Coupons to new and renewing members was well received. January is a great time to start this. This will be discussed at our regular meeting following this annual meeting.
- 5) **Holiday Event Report:** Michelle/Barbara
 - See attached “Notes from Holiday Fundraiser”
 - The fundraiser was very successful thanks to Elaine Woodburn (art sale chair) and Jane Fuerstenau (bake sale chair). The live music was a hit and all musicians were awarded a free annual membership. The sale of jewelry was particularly successful. Vicki would like to load all the listed supplies to a tub so that it is all ready for the next fundraiser.
- 6) **Book Sale Recap for 2022:** Vicki
 - See attached “Fundraising Event Recap for 2022” to see how many people attended each of the events along with how much money was made broken down by books, art, and bake sales. Vicki has

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a fantastic group of volunteers who keep the book donations organized, sets up each sale, and does cleanup at the end. The main group is Maria Dixon, Barbara Jewell, Christine DeCourtney, and Mike Morgan. If we have books that we cannot use, Mike has places he can pass them onto. Vicki was given a round of applause in appreciation for all of the incredible work she puts into keeping the basement bookstore organized and managing the volunteers.

7) **President’s Report:** Joan

- Accomplishments for 2022 include funding:
 - Summer Reading Program
 - Story Walk at Parker Park
 - 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten
 - Mobile Hotspots
 - Donations for Alaskan books, books that support diversity and tolerance, and large print books
 - Sewing program that will start in 2023 with 6 sewing machines for classes and 1 sewing machine for checkout.

8) **Presentation of Sewing Machines to the Library:** Joan

- See attached letter to Rachel Nash
- Formal turnover of 7 Janome My Style 100 Sewing Machines to the library. These were purchased through donations from the Soldotna Elks Lodge 2706, Soldotna City Council Member Linda Hutchings, and from our organization the Soldotna Library Friends.

9) **Librarian’s Report:** Rachel

- See attached “2022 Year in Review”
- Year 2022 is the most normal year we’ve had since 2019. Checkouts are increasing and are expected to be higher than ever in 2023. Digital checkouts continue to increase. Expecting program attendance next year to be higher than ever.
- Grants were used to provide mobile hot spots and chrome books for people without internet access. That program expired in September. Because it was so popular, the Friends was asked to fund the program until it could be added to the library budget through the City beginning July 2023.
- Grant money allowed the purchase new Awe Early Literacy Stations for checkout
- Covid mitigation money allowed the purchase supplies for outdoor programming, take-it/make-it projects which have been very popular, stem kits for adults (such as star gazing).
- The fun polls taken at the Circulation Desk were so well received they will continue monthly.
- Banned Book Club was initiated by community members, and has evolved into a regular book club where the group picks the next book for the group. This provides a safe setting for group discussion.
- Programs for all ages include paint your pet, pony bead keychains, fermented veggie workshops.
- The self-checkout app is still highly used. The outdoor storage lockers are popular so people can pick up books 24/7.
- Discussing revamping early reading program.
- They are researching software for online room reservations that would make it easier for the public to see when rooms are available and to go ahead and reserve them online.
- Summer reading program theme for 2023 is “All Together Now” with topics on friendship, kindness, and working together.

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- Romi Haseo discussed experience in Canada with a library’s multilingual collection built with donated books. This made non-English-speaking people more comfortable coming to the library. These books were made available on the honor system. She has many Japanese books available and asked if this is something that could be done here. Rachel responded that since we are connected to the university library and the Anchorage Public Library, we have a very robust selection that can be accessed. She said if there was enough interest in the community this is a possibility.
- Questions about renovating the inside of the building and the outside. This has been bumped up from FY 2025 to FY 2024. In July 2023, the design phase will begin and there will be a needs assessment.
- The City Council did approve reclassifying the part time Clerk I to a full time Clerk II position which will allow them to have a program coordinator and a marketing coordinator.

10) **Member of the Year Presentation:** Barbara

- See attached letter to Jane Fuerstenau
- Jane Fuerstenau has been chosen as Member of the Year and has been awarded a Lifetime Membership to the Soldotna Library Friends.
- See attached “Appreciation of Book Sale Volunteers”

Next Meeting: Regular Monthly Meeting is January 11, 2023 immediately following the annual meeting

Adjournment: 11:19 am