



ALFRED BOX OF BOOKS

AGENDA BOARD MEETING Tuesday, November 14th, 2023 4:00 PM (Parish House)

1. Approval of Minutes: October 10th, 2023
2. Treasurer's Report: October 2023
3. Director's Report: October 2023
4. Old Business
 - Director Evaluation
 - Director Job Description (vote) and Trustee Survey's
 - PTO Policy
5. New Business:
 - AU Lease???
6. Other:
7. Next meeting (Tuesday, December 12th, 4 pm – Parish House)
8. Adjournment



October 2023 Director's Report

Meetings Attended:

- 10/3- Budget meeting with Pat C., Allison S., and Lori B.
- 10/6- STLS Annual Meeting
- 10/25- Interview with Alfred State Student
- 10/30- Meeting for DAC Ingram Subcommittee (Paul Chapman, CCLD, Tina Dalton, Cuba, Mandy Fleming, STLS, and Brian Hildreth).

Activities/ FYI:

- Outreach to senior luncheon- created "Pop Up Library" to take to the senior lunch site (Union University Church Center. Box contains books checked out to "Senior Luncheon." Participants can take books and return to the box or to the library. Box also contains information on upcoming programs, a brief survey, BoB pens and magnets, bookmarks, etc. We switch out the box every other week. We shared this with Allegany county libraries, as there are about 8 other nutrition sites in Allegany county.
- Amazon Bill- Lori has asked that we use the debit card rather than pay by invoice method to purchase from Amazon. There have been significant delays with Amazon applying payments to our account with pay by invoice. This will result in more charges showing up on the bank statement, but will hopefully streamline purchases.
- First Festi-Fall was successful. We signed up 9 students for library cards. And the orb hunt was very successful! The scarecrow contest was also successful. We are hoping to repeat next year with more entries.
- Arts Council for Wyoming County final report (Fiber Arts) submitted.
- Interest in hosting another community read event with the libraries from Alfred State and Alfred University. Looking for grant funding that might support this project for Spring 2024.
- Staff evaluations and job description updates sent to staff.
 - Revisions to Rima's job description
 - Clarifying tech help for patrons- by appointment only; 1-3pm on Mondays.
- Hired Isaac Matson for snow removal, as we have lost David Steere.
- October Statistics completed for the month. Every October we record number of patrons entering the library, computer usage, fax/copier services, etc which are then multiplied by 12 for the annual report.
- Ingram is now charging \$.55 for MARC Records. Despite STLS attempts at negotiating this, Ingram is unwilling to waive these costs. How this affects the library system as a whole is a large

percentage of libraries purchase from Ingram because of the state-negotiated contract discount of 40% off cover price. Currently, that means if 20 STLS libraries purchase a popular title, 20 libraries will pay the \$.55 charge even though all cataloging takes place at STLS with ILS staff. Other vendors- Brodart/ Baker and Taylor do not offer as significant discounts and their shipping times are much slower- in some cases best sellers aren't received until months after their release date.

- The concern is that libraries will be reluctant to purchase unique titles from other vendors and only purchase popular titles from other vendors because a larger library has already purchased MARC records from Ingram.
- I volunteered to be part of the Director's Advisory Council to come up with solutions that might benefit libraries system wide.
- Mandy Fleming (ILS Manager at STLS) laid out several options that have been proposed to Ingram including working with NYS to renegotiate the contract with Ingram, or creating a separate contract with STLS.
- There was also options about STLS purchasing the MARC records and increasing cost-share and/or billing libraries. Cost share increases have been 3% or less for several years and that is Brian's goal. Billing individual libraries, is very labor intensive for both STLS accounting staff, and individual library bookkeepers.
- There were discussions of the Central Library taking on the brunt of MARC record purchasing, but again the labor of billing is intensive.
- Another possibility is to by-pass Ingram altogether and STLS would use SkyRiver a cataloging software to purchase MARC Records. This would be billed to individual libraries through cost share. There is not a significant cost savings. There would also be significant delays in cataloging. [In general cataloging turnaround is 5-7 days. This would significantly increase that turnaround time.]
- Another option was to obtain brief bib records, which are free. However, it takes significantly longer to load and clean up these records to match our ILS which would increase turnaround time.
- Options suggested by directors on the call: 1.) ask for a cap on MARC records for the system. The library as a system added 56,595 items last year, about 60% of which are from Ingram. This is roughly a cost of 15K for MARC records alone. Perhaps we could ask Ingram to cap MARC record cost at X amount to account for duplicates within the system. The problem is that Ingram does not look at libraries as their system affiliation. 2.) Ask about not paying MARC records for standing orders. Many libraries use standing orders for popular authors. This might help account for duplicate records.
- How does all of this effect Alfred? We currently are not paying for any MARC records. We simply submit our cataloging to STLS. Mandy explained the process on STLS Cataloging Team's end when they get request and no MARC record is provided: *when we get a Help Desk request, first we check WF to see if another library has a copy (just in case it's already in, or has been entered since you created the ticket), if not, then we check SmartPort (a cataloging WF wizard that allows us to see records at other institutions) using the ISBN. Often there are a number of possible matches and we look*

through all of them to find the closest match to what is provided in the Help Desk ticket. Then we import and tidy up the bib record, if needed - we make a few or many tweaks depending on the completeness of the best matching record. Finally, we check the item info to make sure it is correct (specifically Library and Call Number). This process takes even longer than working from a brief bib, so I'd say 1.5 to 5+ minutes, depending on the title.

- We have contact Ingram to begin paying for MARC records so that we are decreasing book processing time, decreasing staff work time on processing, and decreasing the library system staff's workload.
- Cuba said that they plan to budget \$300/year for MARC records. In 6 months we purchased 200 items from Ingram. This would be about \$110.

Programming Report

- True Crime Book Club: 6A
- Storytime: 22C; 14A (4 SESSIONS)
- Fiber Art Workshop: 13A
- Eclipse 101: 1A; 1C
- Eclipse Art: 5A; 6C
- Festifall- Orb Hunt- 15C; 8A
- Woven Indian Corn- 9A

Technology Report- Helped 1 patron with apps on iPad

Statistics-

Statistics not received. Help Desk ticket submitted.

	2023	2022
Circulation		
Holds Received		
Holds Filled		
Users Added		
Items Added		
eBooks		
Audiobooks		
ILL		
Magazines		

Goals for November

- Find and apply for funding that might support community read event
- Contractor walk through of property

Respectfully Submitted,

Melanie A. Miller

Background

1. After learning of a meeting between the village Mayor, Jim Ninos and Alfred University CFO, Tammy Raub regarding the village's proposal to purchase 1 West University (current location of the Box of Books Library) Mechele Romanchock, trustee, met with Tammy Raub to inquire about AU's process regarding decisions the sale of University buildings and to obtain a meeting with Alfred University and the Box of Books leadership specifically, Melanie Miller, Director and Allison Snyder Board President.
2. In this conversation it came to light that Tammy was not aware that the library had not been active partners in developing a concrete plan for the village to purchase the Box of Books building, and assumed the village was representing the Box of Book's best interest and stated goals in making an offer to purchase the building.
3. The decision to sell a University building belongs ultimately to the Alfred University Board of Trustees. Tammy Raub is the contact for negotiations of this type of sale and is the primary contact. It is her role to make and present such proposals to the Board for approval.
4. In this meeting, Tammy Raub gave Mechele Romanchock a copy of the appraisal Alfred University obtained on the property, which Mechele relayed to Melaine.

Meeting with Tammy Raub, CFO/VP Alfred University November 8, 2023 11:30am-12:30pm

5. On Wednesday, November 8, Allison Snyder, president, Mechele Romanchock, trustee, and Melanie Miller, Director met with Tammy to represent the viewpoint of the Box of Books Library regarding future plans for the building location and ownership. These topics included current space needs and limitations, facilities upkeep and what the Box of Books has been discussing as far as future plans for addressing these needs.
6. The village approached the University about the acquisition of the Box of Books, Crandall Hall, AE Crandall Hook and Ladder. Jim Ninos conveyed to Tammy that in a conversation with the Box of Books, we need more space, so the purpose of the acquisition would move the library to Crandall Hall and the Village would use the Box of Books space as offices. He conveyed that the village has grant money available for the improvement of properties, but that the village needs to own them in order to use grant funds.
7. The village (through Mayor Jim Ninos) has made a verbal offer to the University for the purchase of the Box of Books, Crandall Hall, and the fire department.
8. Allison and Melanie made it clear that Crandall Hall was not an option for the library due to the significant repairs that would need to be made, as well as the foundation replacement in order to house a library. Also the timeline to acquire and make renovations is significant and would be a significant burden to Alfred taxpayers as construction aid funds are 75/25 match.
9. We asked Tammy about the 1987 addition to the Box of Books, and how this is considered in the value of the property. \$20,000 was given by the Village to the Box of Books for the construction of the addition, and the library raised an additional \$18,000 to complete this work. Tammy explained that standard lease agreements would consider this "a leaseholder improvement" to the property, owned by the University. Unless the funds are given with restrictions, then a

property can be sold free and clear. Tammy stated that the Box of Books building is without restrictions. In a situation like the 1987 addition to the Box of Books (a lease holder improvement) is recorded as an asset belonging to the University (because they are the building owner). The University in turn would be responsible for insuring the entire improved space and maintaining the exterior (see next point.)

10. Tammy also explained that with an addition funded or organized by the leaseholder, the lease would typically be extended to a longer term. Because the library has a no cost lease (meaning pays no rent) this practice of the landlord providing an extended term no cost lease, covering exterior maintenance and insurance for the entire improved space is a mechanism for the lessee to receive value and benefit from the improvement/addition which they facilitated (and in this case the taxpayers, community and other project donors funded.)
11. Tammy explained that as a landlord the University is responsible for exterior maintenance of the property, while the library would maintain the interior. We explained that this is not the case, and our lease agreement says we are responsible for all maintenance. [#5 of lease agreement: "Tenant shall throughout the Term and at Tenant's sole cost and expense, make or cause to be made all necessary maintenance, structural, and non-structural repairs, replacements, decorations, interior and exterior, ordinary as well as extraordinary, foreseen as well as unforeseen, necessary to keep the Leased Premises in good and lawful order and condition."]
12. Tammy was stated that it is a typical practice for the landlord to handle exterior maintenance and recommends the lease be renegotiated with AU as the responsible party for exterior maintenance.
13. Tammy stated that AU selling the property to the Village and then the Village selling it to the Box of Books did not make sense and the University would sell it directly to us if we want it, now or in the future. Tammy made clear that AU is not trying to sell the Bok of Books and is willing to continue as landlord under favorable terms, and that AU was only potentially selling in response to an offer received under the assumption that the Box of Books was a part of that plan.
14. But she stated that purchasing it may not be in our best interest because then Box of Books would then be responsible for insurance and exterior maintenance. Also possibly rent from the village or for purchasing the building from the village-depending on what terms the village may come up with.
15. Tammy recommended that if we wanted to continue with the offer from the Village then only a guaranteed 99 year, no cost lease would make it worthwhile since AU (Tammy in her purview to do so) would offer a new lease under those terms. Therefore, it may not be in our interest to allow the Box of Books to be considered as part of this offer.
16. Tammy recommended that we renegotiate and amend the lease agreement with AU, if the timeline for the sale of the property does not fit our needs. She is willing to remove the library property from the offer provided to AU, but needs to know soon.
17. She needs a written recommendation from the library asking Alfred University not to include the Box of Building in the sale to the village.
18. She is also unsure whether the offer will be considered by the University's trustees because it is lower than the appraised value of the three properties.
19. Tammy has been stalling scheduling her meeting with the trustees in order to meet with us. But they will need to meet soon.

20. She recommended we meet with Jim Ninos as soon as possible in order to clarify the libraries position, to make clear that the timeline does not work for us, and leave it open that in the future the library may be interested in purchasing the building from AU. As soon as she hears our final decision after meeting with Jim, she will schedule to meet with the University's trustees on any building sales that will go forward and other matters.
21. Allison, Mechele, and Melanie agreed that other village trustees need to be involved in this discussion as well.

Village Mayor and Village Board of Trustees,

On behalf of the Box of Books Board of Trustees and our outstanding director, Melanie Miller, I want to address the project the Village plans to undertake. Let me begin by saying that we stand with you all in creating a beautiful community center and hope it will be everything you all dream it will be. The Box of Books Library has long dreamed of a place that could be deemed the heart of our community, and while we are with you on the long-term goal, our small library needs to represent the most significant interests of our community, which will always be our number one goal.

With all that laid out, we will have to respectfully decline the offer of Crandall Hall as the next location for the Box of Books Library. After touring it, the financial cost to the community to bring it to functionality as a library would be too great. A library needs a building with a highly stable foundation, and during the tour it was clear that a large chunk of money would have to be invested in just the foundation alone. We are forever grateful to you all for thinking of the Box of Books for that opportunity, but unfortunately, we do not believe that acquiring that building would be in the best interest of the library.

Melanie and I have recently had the pleasure of meeting with Tammy Raub, the VP of Business and Finance/CFO at Alfred University. This meeting was to ensure that the best interests of the library and the community were being represented at negotiations for the sale of the library building. Despite our efforts to request continued involvement and the establishment of a partnership working in collaboration with the village, we were stunned to learn that an offer to purchase the Box of Books Library building had been made. Through the meeting it was clear Tammy was unaware that Box of Books Library leadership was not part of the decision to make an offer to for the Village to purchase the building from Alfred University. Tammy has given us the opportunity to have our facility omitted from the verbal offer that will be presented to her, which she will in turn present for approval to the Alfred University Board of Trustees.

We have not been given an exact plan of what the Village has in mind for the library with regard to this purchase. We have seen no details regarding a lease agreement for the Box of Books Library should the Village purchase the building and act as landlord, or any details regarding transfer of the building from the Village to the Box of Books. We understand you are very excited about this project but may not have considered the impact on all the entities involved.

The University has told us that they are willing to provide the Box of Books Library with a lease on favorable terms and will sign a no cost lease up to 99-years with new stipulations: AU will oversee insurance and all exterior building maintenance, and the Box of Books will be responsible for indoor maintenance.

The Box of Books would like to allow the Village to consider their plans based on these new revelations. In order to proceed, we need to see in writing, the vision of the Village that reflects the Box of Books' best interests, otherwise we will accept the offer from Alfred University to be removed from consideration as a part of the sale of current University property to the Village.

We would prefer to take our time to decide on a matter of such great importance, but Tammy has informed us that time is of the essence. To continue with the Village's plans, we need to know what you envision now that you know Crandall Hall is not a feasible option for the Box of Books Library. If the

Village is to be our landlord, would you match the University's rent-free 99-year lease and provide exterior? Would the Village agree to maintain the outside of the building, including sidewalks? Would the Village be willing to transfer ownership of the building if that was something we were interested in down the line?

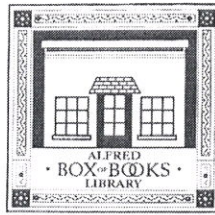
Another area of concern for us is our current agency of operations. Alfred University has never tried to insert itself into the Box of Books Library operational affairs. They have been silent landlords, and for us to continue to serve the community in the manner our staff and board of trustees see fit. We would need written assurance that the Village would maintain a similar tenant/owner agreement. The Box of Books Library has operated as an independent service to the community thus far; we need that to remain in place. If the Village were to purchase the building and serve as landlord would that mean that the Village would wish to have a say in the operations of the library? Additionally, we would need a written agreement to ensure that no Village official in the future would be involved in library operations. This is not the desire of the Box of Books Library, however because some libraries have a municipal entity to report to it is an essential question for us to ask.

With the Village understanding the concerns I brought forward; I would ask that you all reconsider if purchasing the Box of Books Library building is in the library and community's best interest. If you believe buying our facility is the best option, we ask you to submit a plan in writing, with a proposed agreement and terms matching or exceeding what the University is offering. Our board of trustees will meet on November 14, 2023 (4:00 pm at the Parish House); we welcome you to come to this meeting and share a plan with us. The University has asked us to provide them with our recommendation as to whether or not the Box of Books wishes to be included in the verbal offer provided by the mayor, reflecting our best interest at the end of our board meeting on Tuesday.

We thank you all for your time and your consideration of us in your project. We look forward to hearing from you.

Respectfully,

Allison Snyder
Box of Books, President



ALFRED BOX OF BOOKS

BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, November 14, 2023

4:00 PM, at the SDB Parish House

In Attendance: Allison Snyder, President; Deb Stephens, Vice-President; Pat Crandall, Treasurer; Megan Parry, Secretary (on Zoom); Kim MacCrae; Amy Powers, Mechele Romanchock, Carlyn Yanda.

Absent: Sam Frechette

Also in Attendance: Melanie Miller, Library Director.

In Addition: Tim Nichols, Alfred Village Board Member.

Because Tim Nichols was present, President Allison Snyder began the meeting to address his questions about the Village's proposal to AU to acquire the Library, along with the Fire station and Crandall Hall. Tim is on the Village Board, meeting this evening. Melanie Miller and Allison explained that the proposal was made without an agreement from the Library that it wished to be sold or donated to the Village. They added that Tammy Raub, AU's CFO, had advised them that they could renegotiate the existing lease with AU for better terms. The Library, so far, is not ready to make concrete future plans, beyond informing AU that it chooses not to be part of the Village's proposal. The conversation with Tim was cordial, and the Trustees emphasized the Library's determination to work cooperatively with the Village whenever possible. Allison moved that the Library opt out of the Village proposal to AU for the acquisition of the Library. Deb seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

After Tim's departure, the Agenda took over.

1. **Approval of October 10 Minutes:** Deb Stephens moved to approve, Carlyn Yanda seconded. Minutes were approved.
2. **Treasurer's Report, October, 2023:** According to Treasurer Crandall, the library has \$53,000 with tax money due soon. There was a short discussion about depositing \$8,500 into the Building Fund (a sum which had been approved previously), and possibly rolling over excess income into that fund. Carlyn moved to approve, Amy Powers seconded, and the report was approved.
3. **Director's Report, October 2023:** Melanie devoted most of her report to the fact that Ingram now charges \$.55 for MARC records. Because of arguments against using other providers (slow delivery, in particular), Melanie suggested that the

Library stay with Ingram. The Cuba Library plans to budget \$300 per year for MARC records. In 6 months, our Library purchased 200 items from Ingram (about \$110), so that budget could work for us, too.

Staff evaluations were great. Job description updates went out to staff.

Melanie will send the Board her revisions to Rima O'Connor's job description.

The Diversity audit showed a lack in LatinX authors and characters, and neurodiverse ones, also.

The Board voted to approve \$500 to pay for two workshops for Melanie. Pat moved, and Allison seconded the motion.

4. **Old Business:**

1. **Director Job Description.** Will be up for discussion and vote at the December meeting.
2. **Director Evaluation (Trustee surveys).** Allison is in the process of collecting these.
3. **PTO Policy:** The Board looked at three different recommendations and discussed pros and cons. Allison will put together some options for the December meeting.

5. **New Business:**

AU Lease: This discussion involved renegotiating the AU lease in order to continue with that arrangement. Most of it took place before the meeting began to convenience Tim Nichols. The Board seems inclined to follow Tammy Raub's advice, and draw up a new lease in which AU would maintain the exterior of the building, while the Library would continue to maintain the interior. Insurance terms would be changed. also *

At this point, Melanie's laptop ran out of power and could no longer host the Secretary on Zoom. Secretary left the Meeting.

8. **Adjournment.** Allison reported in an email to the Secretary that she adjourned the meeting at 5:50pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Megan Parry, Secretary.

Next meeting: Tuesday, December 12, 4pm, at the Parish House

*I think the insurance issue came up after I left the meeting, but Carlyn emailed me that a change was discussed. Please let me know if the wording seems wrong.