

**Castleton Public Library  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
Held virtually via Zoom, 8/17/2020, 7:00 p.m.**

**Meeting Transcript**

**Shane Mitchum:** All right, so it's 7:02 and let's call the meeting to order and start with the pledge.

*[Attendees recite Pledge of Allegiance]*

**Shane Mitchum:** Awesome. All right, let me share my screen. And I will put up the board. So for roll call, it looks like we have everybody here except Jacki and her absence is excused. She did email all of us and say she was going to be unable to make it tonight. I'll give everybody a chance to take a look at the agenda. Is there a motion to adopt the agenda?

**Laurie Knaack:** Laurie motions.

**Shane Mitchum:** All right. Is there a second?

**Nathan Hans:** Second.

**Shane Mitchum:** All right, Nathan. I think I heard you second. Maria?

**Maria Marcucci:** Yea.

**Shane Mitchum:** Okay, and Mary Claire?

**Mary Claire Aitken:** Aye.

**Shane Mitchum:** I'm also an aye. So, all are in favor, motion carries. Moving through this -- Public Comment. I don't think there are any members of the public here tonight. So, we will move through that into the abbreviated business section. Starting with the review of minutes and transcripts from last [month], I'll give everybody a couple minutes just to take a quick look through that if you didn't get a chance to. Is there a motion to adopt the minutes from last [month]?

**Laurie Knaack:** Laurie motions.

**Shane Mitchum:** Is there a second?

**Nathan Hans:** Nathan seconds.

**Shane Mitchum:** All right, Maria?

**Maria Marcucci:** Yes. Approved.

**Shane Mitchum:** Mary Claire?

**Mary Claire Aitken:** Aye.

**Shane Mitchum:** I am also an aye. So the motion carries. Minutes are adopted. Now we have to vote on the transcript, as well. Is there a motion to adopt the transcript from last [month]?

**Laurie Knaack:** Laurie motions.

**Shane Mitchum:** All right. Is there a second?

**Nathan Hans:** Nathan seconds.

**Shane Mitchum:** All right, Maria?

**Maria Marcucci:** Aye.

**Shane Mitchum:** Mary Claire?

**Mary Claire Aitken:** Aye.

**Shane Mitchum:** I am also an aye, so all are in favor, the transcript is adopted from last [month]. And then review of the check detail for July. I'll give everybody a minute to take a look at that as well. Is there a motion to adopt the check detail from July?

**Laurie Knaack:** Laurie motions.

**Shane Mitchum:** All right. Is there a second?

**Maria Marcucci:** Maria seconds.

**Shane Mitchum:** All right, Mary Claire?

**Mary Claire Aitken:** Aye.

**Shane Mitchum:** Nathan?

**Nathan Hans:** Aye.

**Shane Mitchum:** I am also an aye. So, all in favor, that motion will carry. Moving through this pretty quick tonight. Next up on the agenda here is the Long Range Planning, impact of coronavirus discussion with Tim Burke from Upper Hudson. Tim, I appreciate you being on tonight and taking the time out to speak with us.

**Tim Burke:** My pleasure.

**Shane Mitchum:** The floor is yours.

**Tim Burke:** Thank you guys for the invitation. I've been to a handful of virtual meetings over the last four or five months. And I will tell you without trying to butter you up that yours is the most organized and carefully operated meeting I've seen yet. So thank you for embracing it. Thank you for doing the approval of the transcript, that's a new one I hadn't seen yet. So you guys are unique and special for that alone, and you're unique and special for so many other things. The other thing I'll say before we start talking about planning is I just want to congratulate you guys, the Castleton Public Library Board, on a safe, smart, gradual, flexible reopening of your library. This hasn't been easy on anybody. It's been a real challenge to library boards, library trustees, library staff, library directors, library systems. We're nowhere near done with this yet. But you guys are doing it the right way, you're keeping your staff safe, you're keeping your users safe and you're keeping your community safe, but you're still trying to balance service and safety and it's a hard job, there's no right answer for it, but you guys have done a really good job. You're fortunate to have Melissa as part of your team, for sure. And that certainly helps, but the director can't do it alone. They need leadership from the library board. So thank you guys for doing that. I appreciate it. So, long range planning. When I got the call from Melissa to talk about this, I went back immediately to check your long range plan, which you have on your website, as a good library should. You still have more than a year, year and a half, year and a third on the current plan. So it's a little early yet to plan, but not too early. But obviously, a lot has changed in our worlds and specific to this library in this community. So before I start talking, or keep talking, I'd like to hear what you guys are thinking about, what are your concerns, and what's on the top of your mind when you think about planning for the future of your library. Let's start with that conversation a little bit.

**Laurie Knaack:** This is Laurie. I'll start. One of my biggest concerns is just how much focus we had on our physical space and in-person activities before, and not knowing how long it may be before we can safely resume those or if we, maybe for a very long time, will need to be prepared to close down our services, what's offered in person, makes it tough to plan for renovations of the space, expansions of the space. Equipment, shared toys, things like that, that really were a cornerstone of what our library provides to our small community. A place to go and play and go for events. And that kind of thing was a big part of the draw of our library. And I know our patrons love our services, and love being able to come in, now, again to pick up their books or do curbside. But for a very long time, our services aren't going to be the same as what they used to be. Libraries aren't going to be able to operate with the same community

and people in the space as they used to be, and that's a big concern for me that that was part of what was a vital cornerstone of our little village.

**Tim Burke:** Okay. What else, what are people thinking about?

**Shane Mitchum:** Another big one for me, I think, is another thing that's on the plan itself -- is just the funding, sustainable funding piece of it, making sure that we are going to have the money to do the things that we do and offer the services that we offer to the community. I think that's a big, big thing that's on my mind, especially with seeing what's happening with a lot of different school districts, a lot of local county governments, and so on. I want to make sure that we're in a good spot from a financial standpoint.

**Tim Burke:** Okay.

**Nathan Hans:** Yeah, piggybacking off of what Shane said in terms of funding. You know how the Town of Schodack splits this between Castleton, East Greenbush, and Nassau is always a concern, and an area where we have to be very political and make sure we're all working together, but we're all also looking out for our own best interest as well. So sort of that fine line that we have to walk is always a concern for me.

**Tim Burke:** Anything else from anybody? Again, I read through your plan the other day, and refreshed my memory on it. It's a good plan. You guys did it the right way. You followed a lot of those basic principles that we laid out, but you also used your own best judgment to create that plan. And those basic principles of planning going forward are always going to be enforced, regardless of what the current situation in the world is. When I talk to libraries about -- especially libraries that have already been through a good robust planning process. Put a plan in place and allowed it to move through its life cycle. The first question when it comes to "what do we do for the next plan?" is to look at what's in your current plan. What do you absolutely need to keep, what hasn't changed? What things have you checked off? It's absolutely a really important thing as a group to look through that plan and pat yourselves on the back when you can cross things off. And what I know about your library, looking at the current plan that's in place -- there are a number of things you can cross off, because you've accomplished them, because you've got started on them and they're moving along. Just like any other library plan, there's always going to be a couple of things on there that -- I hate to be too gloomy -- but are always going to be planning issues for your organization. And that has to do with -- in some libraries it's funding, some libraries it's facilities, some libraries it's staffing -- so there are going to be some perpetual placeholders on every one of your plans, long after you guys are off the board and other people are on there, Castleton Library is going to be talking about some of those things. And it's okay to take some of those and say, we did some work on them or we didn't get as much work as we wanted on that, and maybe those things move up to be a little bit of a higher priority. Thank you, Shane for putting that up. And again, Melissa and I had a quick phone call Friday, I think, about the plan, and we were looking at the plan. I was looking at the plan with her, and I don't see a lot on this that you're going to want to say, "okay, we don't need to worry about that anymore." With Laurie's exception, there is a pretty high focus on the facility, because that was absolutely important. It still is important because at some point, I do believe we're going to go back to some kind of closer level of normalcy, where the library facilities are an important piece of what you do. But that may be something that, in the next plan, takes a little bit of a backseat. And you just say, we have to concentrate on some other things. The other thing to think about when you're looking at your plan as it stands now -- what's new, what's different, that wasn't a concern or a consideration or a high enough priority to make it onto the plan now, as opposed to a couple of years ago. And obviously, I'll admit certainly that the pandemic is a huge impact factor on every library. Your library is no different. And the ripple effects from the pandemic arguably are going to be the more difficult ones to navigate. The one I think about particularly is the funding piece. Shane alluded to this earlier. The ripples of the economic hit the pandemic has put on everybody are going to be felt for a while yet. And I don't -- and Melissa has heard me say this to the member libraries on our directors calls -- we're probably another six or eight months before the libraries really start feeling that economic hit, that ripple effect. Your funding sources are taking a beating in terms of state funding, in terms of sales tax revenue, all of those things. And again, you guys read the paper, so I didn't need to go through all that. But those things ripple down to communities, municipalities, and your library is funded, primarily, by two municipal tax levies from Castleton and from Schodack. Those funding sources are going to be a challenge, and the challenge to the library is to reiterate, reinforce, strengthen your value proposition to everybody. I still maintain, pandemic aside, that's always the best way to secure your funding -- however your funding model works -- is to be the best library you can be for your community. You guys do that. You have a great director, you have a great staff. I know what you've been doing during the pandemic; you've done what you can do, given your resources, given the public health situation, to provide services to your community. I believe that if we asked people in your community, they would -- they haven't forgotten about the Castleton Public Library, they know you're still there for them. They know you're still working for them. I guess my question for you guys, I'd be curious to hear whether you think -- and I don't know the answer to this question, that's why I'm asking -- whether you think the Castleton Village leadership fully appreciates what you've been able to do and the services you're offering now and how you've stepped up, if you will, during the pandemic. So what do you think about that? Do you think the Village is aware of what you've been able to do in terms of that value proposition?

**Melissa Tacke:** I would say -- I'm probably the person that's had the most contact with the Village government during all of this -- I would say that they do have a good understanding. And they also -- as I was putting together our Reopening Plan, I was talking to them a lot about safety measures, and they really appreciate it, and commended everything that we're doing in terms of safety, so they understand that public health piece. And I think it helps that the Mayor works for the State Department of Health, so he knows why it's important. So I think they have a good understanding. As far as the Town is concerned, I've had less contact there, and I'm a little bit less sure, but we've tried to keep them apprised of what we're doing. But there's been less contact with them than with the Village.

**Tim Burke:** Anybody else want to weigh in on that question about whether the leadership at the Town of Schodack and the Village are aware, appreciate what the library has been able to continue to do during the pandemic?

**Nathan Hans:** Yeah, I think -- this is Nathan. I think the Village is appreciative, and I think the Mayor is appreciative. I've chatted with him a little bit recently and he reiterated how thankful he is for the work that we do, in the work that Melissa's done, during the pandemic and helping -- I think she's a real leader in the community, and I think they appreciate having that someone else there that's not just them to help rely on and work together, and I think it helps them a lot. I think they realize and appreciate that from us. I can't really talk for the Town, unfortunately.

**Laurie Knaack:** This is Laurie. I think I can say similarly about the Village with the little interaction that I've had with the Mayor. The emphasis among the Mayor's campaign materials and everything, too, on revitalization for Castleton doesn't ignore the library and Village Hall and Main Street as a whole as an important part of the Village. And so I think they appreciate in general, not just in our current pandemic situation, the value of the library being there, but I don't know the perspective of the Town leadership very much.

**Tim Burke:** I guess the corollary to that is -- and obviously it's important that the people that are making those funding decisions have that direct appreciation of the value, because that makes it easier for them to put the library higher than some other service or to say, we can't reduce this, we have to support this important service. I'll ask essentially the same question by population. So, the population of the Village, the Village community. Do they value what the library brings to the community, every day, even in the pandemic? And what about the Schodack community?

**Maria Marcucci:** Tim -- and this is Maria -- if we can just roll it back, just a little bit. I just want to share with you. Prior to the pandemic, Melissa spearheaded the board's involvement with the monthly meetings with the Town of Schodack, so we were able to get front and center with them. I know it's been a while since we've been able to do that, but I will say we were very well received each time. I think all of us were able to get there at least once, if not twice. So I do think we have some friends in Schodack, in the Town. And I do feel that they look at us in a positive light. I don't know what the history was prior to that, but I can say with some certainty that this point forward, that we are viewed positively.

**Tim Burke:** Okay, well, and that piece of the plan that I know has been ongoing for you guys that once a library does it, it seems so simple and obvious to have a regular presence at the leadership meeting where funding decisions are made, but not just when those funding decisions are made, but year-round, because it gets you the opportunity to say here's what the library is doing right now. Here's why the library is important. And it keeps the library on the front of everybody's mind. It's just basic 101 Advocacy, but you guys have been doing a good job with that and that stuff is important, and I would suggest that you do a little bit of digging and -- it's a public meeting so you shouldn't have to dig too much -- find out what the Schodack [Town] Board is doing for its virtual meetings and get on the agenda there too, because it's the same thing. It's really just saying, "the library is here." And arguably, you could say it's even more important to do it now. Because it's easy to lose sight of what's there when you're dealing with all the stuff that these municipal boards are dealing with. And it's huge. I would never want to minimize that. So if you've taken a little hiatus from that because of the virtual meetings and all of that, maybe dust that off and try come September. Start doing that again with both groups because it's important. Melissa, do you have statistics on pandemic usage between Schodack and Castleton, and I know that's a little granular. I'm not even sure if that is a thing --

**Melissa Tacke:** Yeah, I don't know them off the top of my head, and they're something that I need to just gather. Clearly the physical circulation is way down, but we've seen big increases in the eContent use.

**Tim Burke:** So, I think in terms of the funding piece. I know your budget request goes in in October, is that correct?

**Melissa Tacke:** Our request itself, I just submitted. It's almost always due during the first or second week of August. So that's been submitted. We've asked for flat funding, as have East Greenbush and Nassau. I did talk to those directors, and we all agreed that was good plan. And then what happens is, traditionally the three directors have presented at a Schodack Town Board meeting. It used to be more in the summer. Now it's -- the last couple of years it's been the September meeting. One of their regular business meetings. They have two in a month. And then after that, they make final decisions. They don't actually finalize the year's budget until November, and I

think one year it was even later than that, they didn't finalize it until December. So we really didn't find out what was happening with our funding until right before the beginning of the next year.

**Tim Burke:** Okay. I think we should all expect some delays in a lot of decision-making. If you put in your request already, that's good. Melissa and I talked a little bit about the flat funding. I think that's a strategic move. It shows you as reasonable, but it doesn't undercut any of your needs. Yes, if they gave you more money, there's plenty you could do with it. But that may not be in the cards for a little while. And I assume the funding conversation with the Village is a little bit different than it is with the Town, is that correct?

**Melissa Tacke:** It's been less of a formal presentation. We did do more of a formal presentation when we had jumped from asking for \$10,000 a year to \$13,000, and after that we've either stayed flat or we've asked for a small increase. So right now we're at \$14,000 from them. We just got our money from them; their fiscal year is different from ours. So they pay it at the beginning of theirs, but in the middle of ours, so we'll be going to them again. But I think it'll be a similar kind of process where there's not as much of a presentation as there is to the Town, although certainly I'm open to putting something more elaborate together for the Village.

**Tim Burke:** So, in terms of the funding piece, I think one of the things all our libraries should be doing -- and we've been talking about this a little bit -- is, again, going back to that value proposition. We have plenty of statistics about what's offered, expansion of services in a virtual environment. How many things are being used, in what kind of capacity? All of that stuff is really important to pull together and have ready to go. You likely will be either expected or need to make a stronger case for the value of the library to your funders, even if they agree to flat funding this year, next year might not be as easy. These ripples could be going out a couple of years. And the other thing that I think is really important, and the reason I asked about the community use piece, is in anticipation of potential funding cuts that could be significantly negatively impacting your library and the services it can provide, I would start lining up your supporters in the community. And again, this is not -- I don't want to sound, again, to doom-and-gloomy, but I think being ready for a fight for funding is not a bad position to be in. Being ready. If you don't have to put it into action, great. You don't have to worry about it. And maybe flat funding isn't the time to advocate and beat the drums and say, "we need more money." But if that funding cut comes -- and Melissa knows this, I'm speaking from some direct experience -- Upper Hudson is 80% funded by New York State. And we've already been told that there's a 20% holdback of state aid for us for this year. So, put it in your budget's context, and your funder says "we can't afford it. We don't have enough money. We're going to cut everybody by 20%." What would a 20% cut mean from Schodack? That's a significant hit. Even 20% from the Village. I know it's a much smaller total, but that's still significant. And I'm not trying to scare anybody, but those are plausible scenarios, depending on how things play out. And we've all heard that the state is kind of playing chicken with the federal government, waiting for something to happen at that point. And that may happen, and that may soften the blow a little bit. Usually the state's projections are a little on the gloomy side, and usually things perform a little bit better. So, again, I'm not trying to be too negative, but I do want you to be prepared for it. The good news is your library doesn't have to do anything different in terms of service to do this. You literally just have to think about your advocate list and come up with those names, and going so far as to ask some people to pen a quick paragraph about what the library has meant during the pandemic to their kids, to their parents who are shut in, to people that are in quarantine, virtual stuff, the support for kids in the summer slide during summertime. I know some of you guys are parents, so you're experiencing it. And actually have them go through the act of putting it down on paper and giving it to you. Then it's literally ready to go. Having a mental list of names is really fine, most of the time. But here you might want to go a little farther and have that list written down and know who's going to contact each one of those people, and maybe go through and just grab the really key ones. And get that in writing from people, and you can tell them exactly what it's for. It's -- we want to make sure we're prepared to make the best case for the importance of the library, the value proposition for the library in this community, and we know you're somebody who can speak to that. And we'd just like you to help us be ready to do that in case we do. And if you've gotten some people to do that, to write the paragraph and give it to you -- I hate to sound too Machiavellian, but you've got them by the hook. You know who they are, that they're committed. So if you have a budget hearing where there is talk about a 20% cut, you can pick up the phone and call that person and say, "hey, next Tuesday at seven o'clock. We'd love to have you come and speak." And again, this is Advocacy 101. Most of our libraries don't need to do it most of the time. But you may want to be prepared to be able to pivot to this pretty quickly. Until you know more about funding, I wouldn't make Melissa go through the challenge of developing contingency budgets. Nathan, are you still the Treasurer?

**Nathan Hans:** Yes, I am.

**Tim Burke:** Okay. You've been doing this for a little while. You know the library's numbers pretty well. Having a little planning session, you and Melissa, just to tease out a couple of potential cuts and if the worst happens, you're ready. And if the worst doesn't happen, then everybody has an appreciation for it. So again, a lot of this is just -- I hate to use the word disaster, but disaster preparedness. So you're ready. So, the facilities piece -- I think some of this stuff absolutely can be done now as part of the current plan. Spending a lot of time and energy and money to do any more improvements as an interior space during this time is probably not good optics, because you're not using them, so I would back off that part of it. But has there been some -- I mean, we all know from our outside lives, how many eyes have been opened about the ability and the adaptability and the accessibility of virtual communication and virtual learning

and virtual working -- has anything happened at the Village where their eyes are open a little bit and say, "well, maybe we don't need all that space for Village stuff." Is there an opportunity there to ask again about some other space? Future planning. All you're trying to do is get somebody to sit down at the table with you and talk about it. The idea of partnering with the schools. I think leaving the schools alone now would be a really good idea. You're liable to get your head bitten off, understandably! But I don't think anything on this list -- maybe it drops off the top of the priority list, and you leave it on there and think about it later, because there's no way that when things normalize, the Castleton Public Library isn't going to need more space. That's just a fundamental fact. I know it as an outsider. You guys know it as people who live. The space is beautiful. You guys have done everything you could possibly do to it, but there's not enough of it. And keeping that conversation going is a good idea. Maybe that's -- with the Village, maybe that becomes -- and again, this is very Machiavellian, I'm sorry -- maybe that becomes some kind of negotiation or bargaining chip in a conversation about funding. When they come back and say, the Village says, "gee, you're at \$14,000 and we're taking such a hit that we've got to drop you down to \$10,000," which is a huge cut, do you play the sympathy card a little and see if you can get some action on some space? Again, I don't know the dynamics specifically and how easy or hard that would be to do, but being prepared for those kinds of eventualities is not a bad thing. This is just, again, Organizational Dynamics 101, working with other organizations. Laurie, do you have any specific thoughts about the facilities piece, other than, you know, it seems the optics are bad to focus too much on it now because we're not using it?

**Laurie Knaack:** We had hoped to do lots of things, like improving our hallways and the art display cases that could let us share exhibits across the school. Those things would be a physical representation of community engagement, and without those being much of a real possibility or being something we would want to spend any funds on right now, we haven't really planned for what we do instead to keep doing that outreach and that cross-community engagement with the schools. Obviously everyone is stretched thin there. We had things like mascot contests, or other engagements. So what can we be doing for the next few years to think about when we return to our space, how to use that effectively and how to do some of the things that we would have done in our space in a different way and be more adaptable without making investments in space renovations or materials that can't be used very well in our current environment.

**Tim Burke:** Well, I fully and freely admit that it is nowhere near as simple as saying everything that was in-person is now virtual. It's not that simple. But could there be on the Castleton Library website a virtual hallway where you put a bunch of artwork up, community artwork. Obviously people don't get to see it and experience it in person, and much of even two-dimensional art needs to be experienced in person. But you can't do that now. But you can show a picture of it. Is there a virtual art gallery? And again, I'm just throwing out ideas without a lot of thought about the work behind it and I understand that, but just to throw a couple ideas at the wall. Do what you thought was important for the community and for the library in normal times. Is there a way to do it virtually, even if it's not as effective? Does it plant the seed? Does it make it easier, when things normalize, to pivot to that gallery space in the hallway? Does it make it easier for the Village to buy in if they've already been seeing it online? And some people say, "oh, it was so great to have my pandemic paintings all shown on the library's website." I think those kind of community building ideas -- be a little -- I mean, this is a really good time to be creative about certain things because nobody's beating anybody up if they fail. This is a great time. So you try it and see if it works. Is there a way you can bring the school into something like that? Now, certainly, the school has a website. I don't know if they're doing anything like that. Can you share anything with them? Good partnership stuff. I think the StoryWalk that your library did with Upper Hudson is a good example of an idea that works in a pandemic. It brings a little attention to the library, it's outside, it's safe. Literally, nobody can accuse anybody -- except maybe if the kids touch the laminated plastic without wiping it down. But those kind of things -- and as we said at the very beginning, I do think we're going to be in much of this situation for a while. I know we all thought in May that by the end of the summer, everything will be fine and we'll be kind of back to normal. Obviously, that hasn't happened. Will it be normalized by the end of the year? Maybe, but I think given the experience we've just had, I'm not optimistic for that. And I see Laurie shaking her head. So I think taking the time to invest a little gray matter in how can we, what else can we do within our capacity, with our resources that's going to make an impact on the community? And that goes back to the funding question, because if you make that impact on the community, you have more people that are willing to stand up and say, "I can't imagine our community without our library," and that includes the Schodack people. Is there a specific outreach to Schodack that you can do? I know you've been exploring that for a while now. It's a little hard when you guys are all the way at the very end of Schodack. You're all the way at one end and I know it's a little hard for that. But I think the focus there and Schodack is really that Town leadership, first and foremost. They'll listen to voters and testimonials. But staying in touch with them, making sure they know what the library is doing. And that the library is -- what your funding situation is. Those are important conversations to have, and as you get a little closer to the funding decisions with Schodack, reach out to them. Maybe Shane picks up the phone and calls the Supervisor and says, "we've already given you our request. Do you have any questions? Do you need us to provide any other information? Can we have a meeting? We're happy to come and sit down with you if you'd like." Again, not to look needy, but to be proactive and not be able to have them say, "well, we didn't hear from you. So we figured it wasn't important." But, again, I also know that you guys know this. You're good, smart trustees. You're a good, smart board. So you're on those things. The other thing I would say about the planning process: the only state requirement is that your library has a written long range plan. That, literally, is the only state requirement, that you're meeting in terms of planning. What the plan looks like, is yours. How long the plan is, is yours. How you choose to develop your plan. The only thing the state asks is that you write it on a piece of paper. So if the board wanted to -- in light of the pandemic and the

way things are going to change for the foreseeable future, certainly for the life of this plan and maybe a little longer -- if you want to really take a red pen to this plan and say, "there's so much disruption, so much uncertainty. We don't want to start a new plan now. Planning into the void. What we're going to do is, we're going to take a red pen to this, we're going to strip out some things that we just don't think are going to work for the rest of the plan, and we might tweak or revise some of these things based on the current public health situation, the current library service situation we're in." And what that does is maybe takes a little pressure off the board to feel like, "oh my gosh, we're not going to get our plan done." That's okay. And it also shows the board is being realistic and adaptable to the current situation. You're not backing off anything, you're not saying, "oh, we couldn't do that or we aren't going to do that." You have perfectly valid reasons for adjusting the plan, revising the plan. And I'll reiterate again: it's absolutely your plan, it's the board's plan, so feel free to take that red pen to it. In right in the middle of the, you know, in the beginning of the third year of the plan. That's absolutely okay.

**Shane Mitchum:** Quick question for you. So, this plan that's up here. Obviously we've finished some of these action steps. Is this something where we should update to say "completed" and repost that up? Is that something you'd recommend us doing?

**Tim Burke:** I think it's a good idea. I mean, always celebrate your wins. That makes everybody feel good, gets a little endorphins flowing. That's always a good thing. I wouldn't take it off the list because you've completed it. Then other people don't see it. So normally -- again, pandemic aside -- I would absolutely answer that question by, sure, anything you achieve, you put a big red completed next to it and put that on the website. So if somebody looks at it, they know that you're taking it seriously and you're accomplishing your goals. If you choose to dig into this plan a little and tweak it and revise it, I would leave it on and just do some redlining and have some notes that say "postponed due to the pandemic." You're just being realistic. That would be my suggestion to you guys. If you want to really think about how -- long range planning, how your plan might look different. Your planning, you don't have to wait until the end of 2021 to sit down and do this. Let's do it now, and I'm happy to help in any way -- virtual meetings, conversations, handing documents back and forth. Whatever you guys need to do that, we can do. The only other thing I would throw out is if you are going to just take this plan and kind of tweak it a little and change it and say, "we're going to ride this out until 2021 with these changes and when we get a little closer, we're going to think about the next planning process" -- and that's a perfectly reasonable solution. If you were just going to do it until the end of 2021 I probably wouldn't suggest any elaborate community input part to the planning process. The community input piece is really important to any plan. It makes a plan better and it's current community input you always need. Surveys are relatively easy to do, relatively quick to do. Maybe that's another piece of your planning conversation is you look at this list and say, "what are the things we might like to get a little community input on, given their pandemic experience?" That could be done, a couple of short surveys, a little more elaborate one, that could be done. I will tell you that we have done some virtual focus groups with community members. We do the in-person focus groups, that's one of the things we do to help our libraries do their planning. But since the pandemic, we've been able to do some virtual ones, and I find it a little clunkier, it's a little hard to connect with the people in the room when they're not in the room. But it can be an effective tool, and it's one other way to get that community input. So again, depending on how much time and effort you want to put into it. Think about some kind of small level of community input that's current. So when you roll out a revised plan or a pandemic plan or an interim plan, you can look the community in the eye and say, "yep. We have community input in this too." Don't just have the board, you know, dig into it with me and Melissa and we are the people who say this is what everybody needs. Because we should be asking the community on a regular basis. That community input piece, it's always going to be a component of good planning, even in this kind of truncated situation. I think it's something that we could figure out a way to do. And again, we're here to help. That's our job to help you guys do this. I'm going to stop talking, because I've been talking for a while, I apologize. But questions that people have? And I know you probably need a little time to digest some of this too. But any questions from anybody? Comments?

**Laurie Knaack:** This is Laurie. It sounds like a reasonable thing to do would be to not start yet on a completely new three-plus-year plan, but to publish a revised version of this one. If perhaps we can get some community involvement with a survey tool or something like that, at least to get an idea of their priorities and what they've benefited most from from the library during this time, and what they're hoping to have in the near term. And then publish a version of this with a few stamps on there for the things that we got done, and a few marks for things that are deprioritized, not maybe totally stricken from the plan, but that are less of a priority currently versus a few things that are the highest priority that we heard from our community for through the end of when this plan was supposed to go through. And then going into 2021, later into 2021, as we get ready to totally redo the plan, get a focus group, get more community involvement in the next three-plus-year section. That sounds like what we should be doing, basically.

**Tim Burke:** Laurie's already got you halfway done! Good for you! That's good. I mean, I talked for a half an hour and you only talked for a minute and said it completely. Perfect!

**Nathan Hans:** I'd like to jump in. This is Nathan. We have some challenges now, but I think there's also an opportunity. We talked about expanding the library space and library space isn't just physical. It's also virtual, and we have four I.T. workers on our board, so we're probably a little more tech-savvy than most. And as Tim alluded to, we do the Zooms pretty well. And thank you, Shane, for that.

You make us all look good. So things that we can do with -- by ourselves and with other small libraries also -- to utilize technology to expand our virtual space, so to speak. Ways we can do what we used to do, or have to go into the library. To do that, we can still do online. Like Tim said, exhibiting art, you can still do that online and you can even have an art discussion group or a book club. Same thing online, just like this, talking about a book. Instead of having, say, music night at the library, you can move music night online and people could attend from home, it's still safe, but you still get that community interaction. You might be able to get some bands you wouldn't normally be able to get, because they don't have anything else to do right now. So, things like that. I think we have an opportunity to sort of figure out how to navigate in the new virtual world where, before we were -- had a lot of physical stuff to do. And Melissa, I know you still have a lot of physical stuff to do, and manage. But maybe if we can think of some of those things that we have for another year, year and a half, maybe take advantage of growing some skills, while we have the opportunity.

**Laurie Knaack:** Tim, I know you don't have information on this in our current environment so much yet, but in the past, if there are a few things that a library can be doing to publicize -- like, what are the most important metrics of how we serve our community? How do we drill down to what are the things that our community is most likely to want to know about us, or it doesn't know about us, that they should understand the importance of the library.

**Tim Burke:** That's a good question. I'll have to think about that one. Because the -- again, a value proposition is an individualized thing. Everybody's got a different metric to measure that value proposition for what it means to me. Obviously circulation doesn't do any good. Well, circulation is always good, you guys are circulating material now. All the numbers for everybody are lower, so it's not as impactful or impressive a number. But virtual circulations are an important one to use. And to make it clear to the decision makers, when you give them that number, that these are people who are doing it from their phones or their cars in the parking lot or at home on their iPad. I think those virtual numbers are -- especially now, because so many of us are much more focused on that virtual connection piece. Keep your relationship up with the schools. The schools are struggling now for a lot of different reasons. And things that the library can do to help, especially when -- and I have no idea what your school district is planning, the specifics -- but if it doesn't work, and things start moving back to a virtual platform completely, what can the library do? Again, think in terms of virtual -- I didn't realize that four of you are I.T. guys. So there's a lot of gray matter there and experience where you can just say, "yeah, what about this?" and sometimes when you put those ideas out for a group of people, if there's not some experience with it, it's easy to say, "oh my gosh, we can't do that. We don't have the money. We don't have the time. We don't have the expertise." You guys have that. So I'm not sure what the exact metrics are people are looking for, because everyone's going to be a little bit different. But maybe that's a question to ask the community. Maybe that's the question, early on, to ask some members of the Village Board and the Town Board. The Town Board -- I understand that relationship is a little bit -- it's more formal and a little stiffer and a little more guarded, and for good reason. But --

**Nathan Hans:** I would suggest some of the virtual metrics as well. I know last time we did the survey, a couple years ago, when we were thinking about this long range plan, right after we sent out the survey, we saw a real uptick in activity, which obviously hasn't died down since, which is good. But I think sometimes folks don't know what they don't know. So telling them that these are all of our virtual [services], so maybe doing something like that either a postcard or a couple postcards and, you know, we have OverDrive, and we have Hoopla and we have audio books. We have different ways that you can still connect, using the library, but to get different resources. The other night there was a movie that I was looking for streaming and it wasn't on any service, but it was on Hoopla, so I could get it through the library. Sharing that sort of information. I know when I searched for that I used justwatch.us. So sharing that information. So this way folks know how to go about getting those sorts of things.

**Tim Burke:** And maybe do that as a kind of a little educational testimonial, if you will, where you have that two or three sentence testimonial from somebody who's not Nathan saying, "I was looking for this thing and couldn't get it anywhere but found it on Hoopla." So make sure you check your -- I think that those kind of things could be easily added to the website somewhere. Maybe up on the front page somewhere initially and start building up a little series of those and maybe people will start logging on to see the next one that comes out every week.

**Nathan Hans:** Yeah. Also, I would like to see what they think of our website and what their reaction, like how -- Melissa, I don't know if we keep track of what pages they go to, or if they just go to a particular page or if they come on to a particular page. Those things would all be good. How do they access our virtual space, and how do they interact with it, and how can we improve those interactions? Do they stay for a long time, is it really short?

**Melissa Tacke:** We're able to see the statistics we get from Weebly, but because we have a free account it only shows us like the last 30 days or so. So that's what I can see, but I can't go back further than that but I can keep track of that.

**Tim Burke:** I'm sure there's some backdoor one of you guys could find.

**Nathan Hans:** We can find a way. I need to grab a charger. I'll be right back.



**Tim Burke:** Again, I want to reassure you that -- I'm impressed, you are the first library who has identified that reality-based thinking of, wow, things are going to be different for a little while. How do we plan in this new space? So kudos to you guys, again, for thinking about this and speaking up. And again, I think this exercise of looking at where you wanted to be in the plan, where you actually are, and what new forces are impacting us, and then having the awareness of the reality to change it, is -- good for you guys, because that's active planning. And we're happy to help in any way we can. Whatever we can do to help you guys do that. Happy to do it. Sounds like Laurie's got it all planned. And we recorded it, so you can't deny it now!

**Shane Mitchum:** All right, well, any last questions for Tim?

**Laurie Knaack:** No, but thank you so much for joining us and speaking to us, Tim.

**Tim Burke:** My pleasure. It's nice to see you guys again, and keep up the good work for sure.

**Nathan Hans:** I'd be interested to hear Maria and Mary Claire's thoughts. I know they've been very quiet.

**Maria Marcucci:** I'm just nodding in agreement. I think it all sounds great. The virtual piece, I'm just loving the art display and putting that online. That is fantastic. It's all good.

**Mary Claire Aitken:** I'm trying to unmute myself. I'm sorry. I'm agreeing with Maria, all of these ideas are great. I think that if we could, as the Outreach Committee, join the virtual meetings for the Town, I think as Maria said, we've always been very well received and it only behooves us to make that connection as much as we possibly can.

**Maria Marcucci:** And on a side note, I just want to add: thank you, Nathan, for sharing that information about downloading and streaming and stuff like that. I, not having an I.T. background, will say that would -- as a consumer of the product, I would be ecstatic to hear that or see that on either our Facebook page or on our website, whatever, to do those outreaches to families because there are still families that are pretty much locked in and aren't going anywhere. So they would very much value knowing that they can stream and download and some of the materials from the library, especially movies for the kids.

**Shane Mitchum:** All right, great. Well, Tim, thanks again for the time. This is very helpful. Very informative, really appreciate all the feedback.

**Tim Burke:** My pleasure. And I'll drop off. I'm not going to wait for the second public comment session. I'm kinds of curious as to what someone might say, but I won't wait for that. But again, the door's always open. The screen is always open, the phone is always open. Let us know what we can do to help you guys plan for your library's success. We're here with you, okay?

**Shane Mitchum:** Awesome. Thanks.

*[Attendees give their thanks to Tim Burke]*

**Shane Mitchum:** All right. That was great from Tim. Just taking a look at the agenda. A few more things -- announcements up next. I would say, kind of a follow up from Tim's talk, Melissa. Maybe we look at trying to schedule some committee meetings that have action items that come out of that, I think it'd be good for the Finance Committee to meet. Maybe the Community Outreach & Visibility one to meet online, along with a few others just to -- all this stuff's fresh in our mind -- get back in a more regular cadence, even if it's not once a month, if it's once every other month or something like that, just to make sure we're staying on that, but I definitely think it might be relevant for us to get together and talk about a few things.

**Melissa Tacke:** Oh yeah, I agree. Definitely. I'll email the committees.

**Shane Mitchum:** All right, perfect. Any other announcements? Nope? All right.

**Nathan Hans:** Sorry, I just want to note that we're still down a trustee. So if anyone knows anyone, just reach out. I know it's not on here, but maybe, Melissa, maybe we can add that back. Usually when we have a vacancy we add it, but we forgot this time. So I just want to keep that on everyone's mind.

**Shane Mitchum:** Yeah, it might be worth even putting that on Facebook again, or something. Melissa, with people being home, maybe they're looking for something to do. It might be a good time to try and find someone.

**Melissa Tacke:** Sure.

**Shane Mitchum:** All right. There still are no members of the public on the call. So I don't see a need for Public Comment. No need for an Executive Session, unless anyone else has a reason to go into Executive Session. Okay. Is there a motion to adjourn?

**Laurie Knaack:** Laurie motions.

**Shane Mitchum:** Is there a second?

**Nathan Hans:** I second.

**Shane Mitchum:** Maria?

**Maria Marcucci:** Aye.

**Shane Mitchum:** Mary Claire?

**Mary Claire Aitken:** Aye.

**Shane Mitchum:** I am also an aye. So it is 8:14 and the meeting is adjourned. Thank you.

*[Attendees say thanks and goodbyes]*