

Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes
December 14, 2023
9:30am to 10:30am
Zoom

Present: Kelli Johnson, Pat Rajala, Maureen O'Connor, Christos Gkolias, Bradley Loliger, Mary Ellen Darling, Joe Campbell,

Absent: John Eberle

Staff: Kathy Houghton, Kitty Hotles-Samson, Mary Abousaid

9:32 a.m. Johnson conducted a Quorum check and called the meeting to order.

Johnson began the meeting reading the Literacy New York Mission and suggested that another Board Member read it at the next meeting.

Johnson led the Board in a phonological awareness ice breaker.

Johnson asked if there were any questions or changes to the Consent Agenda. The Consent Agenda included the December 14, 2023 Meeting Agenda, the September 14, 2023 Minutes and the Board Financial Report and Summary Report. No changes, questions or comments.

Johnson asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

Motion made by Darling

2nd by Campbell

Johnson requested vote.

All in favor, motion approved without objections or abstentions.

Stop Reading Challenge-Houghton

Houghton reviewed the events and how SRC events support the Literacy New York Strategic Action Plan. Houghton began by describing 4 regional events that took place across the state and Literacy New York's involvement. Events took place in Buffalo at Journey's End; in Utica, Utica College working with the Mid-Town Utica Community Center; near Plattsburgh, LV Clinton, Essex, Franklin hosted an event at a local corn maze and in Syracuse, an event with Pro Literacy and Literacy Rochester.

Houghton reviewed the monetary investment and the return on that investment. All events were successful. There was television coverage at various sites and Houghton was asked to share information about SRC on WIVB in Buffalo. Additionally, there was strong social media and print coverage. Abousaid spoke to the increased number of social media followers. Abousaid also shared information about social media impressions, number of people, reactions and how many watched the videos. Literacy New York closely monitors media data which has shown substantial increases in awareness and participation. Events were attended by NYS Assemblymen Dan Stec and Al Stirpe.

Houghton reported that this year's Stop Reading Challenge strengthened Literacy New York's relationship with ALE programs and Pro Literacy. There were also strengthened national conversations increasing Literacy New York's national exposure and profile.

The event in Utica introduced college students to the issue of illiteracy and volunteerism and several NYS Legislators saw in-person the work of ALE programs and Literacy New York. Houghton has already heard from other ALE funded programs that would like to host events next year.

O'Connor commented on Capital District involvement and Campbell commented on having local programs that have previously been involved with SRC offering more time and effort for next year's SRC activities. Houghton asked if there any questions. No questions were posed.

Update on Prior Action, Brokered CDs-Houghton

Board members received information about Literacy NY's investment in brokered CDs in the Executive Director newsletter of August 22, 2023. These CDs are a low risk investment, FDIC insured, and generate unrestricted income for LNY. Houghton will update the board in spring of 2024 when CDs mature and confirm reinvestment.

Update on State Grants- Houghton

Houghton reported that the RAEN RFP is expected to be issued in January and the ALE RFP is expected to be issued in March. Both are expected to be 5 year funding. Houghton feels that Literacy New York is well prepared to respond to the RFPs due to its increased data collection and maintenance.

Update on Continuity of Operations Work-Houghton

Houghton shared the work that has been done thus far on Continuity of Operations Planning. A link to the planning document will be shared with the board. We will continue to work on this project at the March and June board meetings.

Executive Director Report-Houghton

The Appley Center at White Eagle has been sold and the White Eagle Conference Center is no longer an option for Literacy New York's Annual Conference. Houghton reported that a new location has been found, Greek Peak Mountain, in Cortland, NY. It is affordable and centrally located. Staff will begin planning for the event in January. The June 7th board meeting will be held there.

Literacy New York will provide Digital Literacy Tutor Training for California, Michigan, Florida and Illinois (remotely) as part of its work with the Barbara Bush Foundation.

Houghton and Pryzbyl, Director of the Western NY RAEN, have been selected as presenters for the 2024 national COABE conference.

Johnson acknowledged upcoming Birthdays and Anniversaries.

Johnson asked for a motion to Adjourn.

Motion made by Rajala

2nd by Loliger

Johnson requested vote.

All in favor, motion approved.

10:32 a.m. Meeting adjourned.

Next Meeting: March 14, 2024 9:30am-10:30am, Zoom

