

Item 22-1612 Friends Annual Overview

Library Board

Tues, Dec 20, 2022 4:30PM

Nancy Scheuerman (Library Board President) 44:59

Next on the agenda is the friends report and I believe Kara's here. So you'll need a mic. Yep. It's active, that other one's active now. Should be.

Kara Sullivan (Executive Director, Friends Of Appleton Public Library) 45:14

Last time I tried to do this...Okay, can everyone hear me now. Okay? Okay, so most of you know me. I'm Kara Sullivan, I'm the executive director of the Friends of Appleton library. And I thought that I take this opportunity—I don't like to call this a pause what we're working on with the redesign and modification, more of a breather, but I thought it would be a great opportunity to give all of you kind of a refresher on Friends. So I apologize to those of you who this is old news, I know all about friends and what it does. But I do know, there's a few new members on the trustee board, so I thought this would be a good chance for me to talk a little bit more about what Friends actually does.

Kara Sullivan (Executive Director, Friends Of Appleton Public Library) 46:03

Before I get into my slides, I wanted to give you a very short abbreviated history of friends. So the friends organization actually started in 1975. And the reason was, they were advocating for a new building, ha-ha, and not the one—not the one we're working on now, but the one on the Oneida Street location. And so they accomplish that goal in 1981, when the new building actually opened up at 225 North Oneida Street. And the friends operated as a grassroots member organization for several years. And then along in 1985, the foundation was formed, a Library Foundation, and the goal of the foundation was to create a \$1 million endowment, which would then help enhance library programs and services.

Kara Sullivan (Executive Director, Friends Of Appleton Public Library) 46:54

So the foundation ran separately from the friends organization. And the foundation reached its goal in the mid-1990s, and created the Library Foundation endowment, which now sits over at the Community Foundation, and we still manage that endowment. So they did reach their goal of creating that endowment.

Kara Sullivan (Executive Director, Friends Of Appleton Public Library) 47:14

And so those two organizations existed separately and independently from each other. And then in 2009, they decided to merge. The boards of both of those organizations voted to merge the two together to form what is now the current organization, Friends of Appleton Library. And the reason was, the mission was essentially the same. It was to fundraise for the library to enhance programs and services beyond what the city pays in tax dollars. And so that's where we are now. So I hope that was the abbreviated version of the of the friends.

Kara Sullivan (Executive Director, Friends Of Appleton Public Library) 47:49

And so the library benefits from a public and private partnership. The tax dollars provide the public support, and the friends funds comes in and provides a private support. And I always like to tell potential donors, people who are interested in learning more about the friends, we really get to do the fun stuff, right. We come in and funds above and beyond what tax dollars will fund. And the other example of this are schools. Increasingly, schools are asked to supplement say, your music department. Or you run a bake sale to pay for field trips. So that's another example of a public and private partnership.

Tues, Dec 20, 2022 4:30PM

Kara Sullivan (Executive Director, Friends Of Appleton Public Library) 48:29

Next slide. So we are—very simply, we have a dual mission, we fundraise and we advocate for the library. And I'll talk more about the advocacy piece, especially after we just got done with budget season.

Kara Sullivan (Executive Director, Friends Of Appleton Public Library) 48:42

Next slide. So all libraries, programs, events, classes, services are free to the public, but that doesn't mean that they cost nothing. There is an inherent cost to that. And that's where really friends could come in and help with those costs.

Kara Sullivan (Executive Director, Friends Of Appleton Public Library) 49:00

So what do we fund? Let's take a look. So stipends to presenters for high quality programming. And on the right hand side, you'll see some of the programs where friends funds has paid for a presenter to come in and do a program. You know, we like to think that everybody will volunteer their time and provide these free of service but you do need to compensate the people for their time and to really keep the quality high. So we do step in, friends funds does step in and helps pay for a lot of these great programs.

Kara Sullivan (Executive Director, Friends Of Appleton Public Library) 49:34

And then supplies. You know your food, your crafts, your paper, your paints, your crayons, those are those are things that seem to be little but in the aggregate really add up, and these are some of the programs where we help pay for some of these supplies of these great programs.

Kara Sullivan (Executive Director, Friends Of Appleton Public Library) 49:57

And then technologies. So you know we—the online hosting platform, if anybody's checked out flipside, that's a that's a friend's funded platform to deliver that music. The Constant Contact newsletter that Tina sends out. Online subscription services. I know in the pandemic hit, we had to pivot, you know, very quickly. And so we needed some video editing subscription services and graphic design services. And again, pandemic video recording equipment, so the friends can step in and provide those funds to pay for those technologies.

Kara Sullivan (Executive Director, Friends Of Appleton Public Library) 50:35

And then, you know, this is kind of a grab bag of what the friends can fund. Licensing fees to show movies. The annual report, that's a new addition. We help pay for the graphic design to put that together. Community Partnership library assistant position. We just had the holiday brunch for APL staff. It's a wonderful annual tradition and the friends pays for the food to put on that great event. A few years ago, we created the—and maybe we still do. I don't know if we do. Did we do a T shirt this year for summer library program? We did. Okay, so in the past, I know that the friends has created (I still have mine) Create Your Future, the gray t shirt that Tina worked really hard on. It's a great, a great addition to the summer library program. And then the bus fare for the ride and read program where if you show your library card, you can get a free ride to the library in the summertime.

Kara Sullivan (Executive Director, Friends Of Appleton Public Library) 51:32

So let's talk about though where does the money come from. Two main, two main sources of where the money comes from. The friends fundraising activities, and the endowment that we hold at the Community Foundation.

Kara Sullivan (Executive Director, Friends Of Appleton Public Library) 51:46

So our fundraising activities. Biannual appeal. We do two appeals, we do an end of year appeal and a Spring Drive. I love my library event which used to be in February, but we've since moved it to June. Biannual book sales, those are on pause because we don't have a location anymore. But typically, those happen in the spring and the fall. Facebook Giving Tuesday and other small events like [indiscernible] for the library, trivia night, etc.

Tues, Dec 20, 2022 4:30PM

Kara Sullivan (Executive Director, Friends Of Appleton Public Library) 52:15

And then the right hand side these are this is a list of all of the endowments we hold at the Community Foundation. And just to recap what an endowment is, because you know, even I needed a reminder. The endowment is you put your money into the Community Foundation, and the principal is protected in perpetuity. And then we get the investment income from those endowments. So the Community Foundation has a 4.5% distribution right now. And our endowments will—we get a distribution every year from our endowments at that rate.

Kara Sullivan (Executive Director, Friends Of Appleton Public Library) 52:54

And then where does the money go? It goes to grants to the library, woohoo. And then it goes to friends operating expenses. And we try to operate as lean as possible. We're a very small organization. We try to do a lot with a little.

Kara Sullivan (Executive Director, Friends Of Appleton Public Library) 53:11

And then the other piece of our mission is advocacy. And so we really do—there's really two ways that like to think of how you can contribute to friends: with your time or with your treasure. And a lot of people choose to donate their time and being an advocate for the library. And there's two times a year where we really do advocacy in support of the library. One is around budget season, and one is around aldermanic election season. And as a 501c3, we are not allowed to advocate for a particular candidate. But we can advocate for an issue. And our issue is to make sure the library is funded as fully as possible, and to be a supporter for the library.

Kara Sullivan (Executive Director, Friends Of Appleton Public Library) 53:52

And so just recently, at budget season, we tapped into our community captains, our Advocacy Action Network. We got a lot of great speakers, 12 in fact. I don't know if anybody had an opportunity to watch the video or attend in person but at the public input session, we had advocates coming from all different diverse backgrounds speaking in support of the library. It was really heartwarming to watch. And it just really reminds our elected officials that the library is important to our community.

Kara Sullivan (Executive Director, Friends Of Appleton Public Library) 54:22

Another way that we advocated recently for the libraries is, I don't know if anybody remembers the Library Step Up campaign right after the pandemic? We did those little postcards where we reminded our elected officials in what ways that libraries helped our communities during the pandemic. And so we really relied on our advocates and our advocacy Action Network to write those postcards to their elected officials.

Kara Sullivan (Executive Director, Friends Of Appleton Public Library) 54:50

And then what is, what—you know that what else does friends do? We serve as a fiscal agent to administer grants to APL. And so a couple of these were a Public Service Commission grant that we administered where we bought laptops and put them in all of the OWL's networks libraries. And we administered the grant to do that.

Kara Sullivan (Executive Director, Friends Of Appleton Public Library) 55:08

Another example is that we received two grants to purchase, play and learn centers, which are literacy rich environments that you can put in places like a laundromat that provide books for children. And so we're administering those two grants as well.

Kara Sullivan (Executive Director, Friends Of Appleton Public Library) 55:24

And then we educate the public on all the great programming that the library offers. And finally, as you all know, we are also running the capital campaign for the building project, which I'm happy to entertain questions on. I—

Tues, Dec 20, 2022 4:30PM

as I said, we are in a breather, and I will reiterate, Colleen's sentiment from earlier tonight, "we are working on it." So I think that's—oh I, oh, I do—I did want to talk about—this kind of gives you a breakdown of, we have a rhythm of work that we do throughout the year. And it really gives you a breakdown of what we work on every month. Fall, end of year drives, spring, we have our Spring Drive, we have our event that we gear up for, which will be June 4 this year. And summer is really the time to do new board orientation, meet with any new alderpersons. And then you know, there's always the budget time in October and November.

Kara Sullivan (Executive Director, Friends Of Appleton Public Library) 56:27

And a couple of fun facts. APL is the first library in Wisconsin to offer free Wi Fi thanks to a Friends grant. Friends has given the library \$1.75 million in grants since the year 2000. Last year, we funded 86 programs, events, services, technologies, and initiatives. This is down a little bit after the pandemic. That number pre pandemic was closer to like 110, 115. And then over 95% of the summer reading library program is funded by friends grants.

Nancy Scheuerman (Library Board President) 57:03

Well, thank you. You have no idea how appreciative the community is of the friends. And I'm going to remind all of the trustees as I have learned how to do, and it took me a while, is when people asked me about my work with the library, I take the opportunity to explain what the trustees is and the wonderful friends. Because lots of people get very confused. And I think it's important for our public to know that the Board of Trustees has a job, but that we—the library—really relies on the friends to fund all of these special programs, and that anyone and everyone should be welcomed to be a part of the friends. So, I just encourage everybody to do that. And it took me a while to do that when I became a trustee, but now it kind of rolls off me when I'm somebody says something about "oh, what do you, well, then what do you do?" And like the brunch, the breakfast? It was an opportunity for me to tell somebody when I was there I said, "But the friends fund that." It's not like the city's paying for us to have breakfast. That is a friend's thing. So. Comments, questions for Kara? Helpful to you to get that history too of the friends and

Kara Sullivan (Executive Director, Friends Of Appleton Public Library) 58:21

The abbreviated history. Yes.

Nancy Scheuerman (Library Board President) 58:24

But it is important because for us to see. And it's kind of interesting to know that it was formed to help build a new library.

Kara Sullivan (Executive Director, Friends Of Appleton Public Library) 58:31

Right. Right. And we're continuing on with that mission. So yeah. Any other questions, comments?

Board Member 58:38

Thank you.

Nancy Scheuerman (Library Board President) 58:39

Thank you. Thank you so much. Appreciate it.