

Annual Report to the Hyde Park Community from the Hyde Park Library Board of Trustees

Happy 2025 to All! This report is my annual report from the year 2024.

One year ago the library hired a new Director, Lisa Palmer, which started a solid and positive year. Right from the beginning, she proved to be a good steward of our library, working to develop new programs, increase our outreach and assure our position as an integral part of the community. Her professionalism and experience in management, librarianship, grants, and construction have been, from the outset, a great benefit for the Hyde Park Library. I hope you all have met Lisa and will participate in library events and programs.

A focus of this year has been the capital campaign for our accessibility renovations. While maintaining the governance of the library and the physical infrastructure, we have hosted various fund-raisers to try to reach our goal and start the construction work. One year ago, we presented our show, "Words and Music", through the generous work and support of Broadway friends and local musicians and with the partnership of the FDR Presidential Library and Home. It was an amazing event that continues to be talked about with delight!

That was the big kickoff event of the capital campaign with several other notable events following throughout the year, with special thanks to the Hyde Park Friends and the AIR committee (accessibility improvements renovation). The events raised money while also increasing our partnerships and relations across the Town of Hyde Park. We partnered with the Inn at Bellefield for a cocktail party and with Coppola's for "Bacon, Bourbon and Books." The farmers' market hosted us on numerous Saturdays and Pelligrino's supported us during events with donations for raffles. Various local musicians donated their time and talent during our events and two concerts were held at the library, thanks to Greg Callahan, with all the profits donated to the accessibility cause. We thank all involved and all who supported us by attending.

October culminated with our ground-breaking ceremony at which Assembly Member Didi Barrett was honored for her initial grant of \$250,000 for the elevator project given to the library in 2016 and reserved until we were ready to use; and that time is NOW! Senator Michelle Hinchey then presented the library with another grant of \$250,000 for the accessible restroom and fire protection system necessitated by the elevator project! We are most appreciative of our State Representatives and thank them for supporting our elevator project with such significant grants. These two grants were able to cover half the cost of our full renovation project.

We hired a grant-writer for the year, which yielded two smaller grants from private foundations. We also received two significant grants from the Division of Library Development. With the repercussions of the COVID epidemic, and the various problems of our nearly 100 year old building, including the need for a new HVAC system, the total cost of the renovations has doubled. So, we continue to seek grants and aid, and contributions from generous individuals. We are working hard to be able to start the

construction as soon as possible so that the costs incurred by the library may be contained. All donations are greatly appreciated.

We are keeping our eyes on financial stability and efficiency as we maintain and improve our aging buildings. We received a grant to study the needs for a new HVAC system in the main library. With an eye on sustainability and energy efficiency, a mini split (heat pump) was installed this year. The Division of Library Development has honored us with a grant to help replace the whole system in a responsible and efficient way. The grant funds, however, will not be available to us until the fall of 2025, which could affect the efficiency of the implementation of the entire project. Additionally, there is a match to that grant which we need to raise. Our members of our staff are a significant resource and the new budget included a focus on establishing pay equity and increasing pay per the new minimum wage increase of New York. The Board's financial investments helped to increase the stretch of the tax money for the year.

In June, we had a dedication, naming ceremony and reception for the library's "Golden Room". Thanks to the very generous bequests from both John and Gloria Golden we were able to significantly affect the library and, thus, they are honored in the history of the Hyde Park Library.

We were honored by other individual bequests, for which we are very grateful.

Recognition and thanks are needed for the support of all the volunteers of the Hyde Park Library, without whom the library could not exist or thrive. The Friends of the Hyde Park Library, especially their chair, Linda Taylan, work tirelessly to raise much needed money for the library. Their efforts serve to limit the needed tax levy. The Board of Trustees of the Hyde Park Library offer their talents and time to maintain the library and sustain it for the future. Your Board of Trustees includes: Carole Chambers,(Vice President), Sue Buckley (Secretary), Mark Campbell (Financial Officer), Mary Williams (in-coming Financial Officer), Paul Agne, Karin Armstrong, Danielle Hinton, and newly elected members David Masenheimer and Yolanda Goodman. Our working relationship with Director Lisa Palmer makes our work easier and the benefit to the overall functioning of the library that much more positive. A special "thank you" to Herb Sweet for agreeing to be our external Treasurer.

It has been a rewarding and positive year for the Library. The Hyde Park Library is on solid financial ground. Our programs will continue to grow and develop. With the support of the community, hopefully more people will join us for those programs and new programs and events that develop. We are here for the benefit of all the members of the Hyde Park community. We will seek your input and hope to hear from you at those times. Our goals for the year include increased out-reach and program participation. Another goal is to reach full funding for our accessibility renovations, which also involves all of you at whatever level you can manage. If all goes well, we will have a lift installed by the end of 2025.

Sincerely,

Lynn Ruggiero, President,
Hyde Park Library Board of Trustees