



ANNUAL REPORT – OCTOBER 2015

REVIEWING OUR PLEDGE TO THE COMMUNITY

Clinton Community Library Board of Trustees

This Board of Trustees came into existence in October 2014. We were an all-new board and, like all the king's horses and all the king's men, we seemed to be embarking on a mission of putting Clinton Community Library back together again. As we began, we made a five-focus pledge to the community. Now, arriving at our first anniversary as a Board of Trustees, it seems appropriate to review and renew that pledge.

1) **Healing in the Community.** Our Town of Clinton has always had geographical and zoning realities that challenge feeling and functioning like one community. Clinton divides into seven distinct hamlets, four school districts, two fire districts, four voting districts and five zip codes. The town is split further, and rather dramatically, by the Taconic Parkway. It has always been our little Library that draws us together as a community.

The events at the Library during Spring and Summer 2014 had the unhappy effect of distancing Clintonites from their beloved Library. Our first pledge was to help heal our historic friendship with the community. We set about to restore the Library as a source for continued learning and a site for community activities. If you have been reading our newsletters (there have been three so far), you know that we have been going forward by turning the Library back into a busy and happy place, the hub of our community, where town residents from each and all of our hamlets, school districts, fire districts, voting districts, zip codes and beyond, can once again come together, share and grow.

2) **Arranging for the Library's Stability and Sustainability.** The first major task for the Library was to obtain renewal of our provisional charter, due to expire in January 2015. An extensive process, it consisted of gathering and presenting information and statistics about the Library and hosting an on-site visit from the Department of Library Development. This material was ultimately reviewed by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York and in July 2015 Clinton Community Library (CCL) was granted a renewal of its provisional charter.

In order for our charter to move from provisional to permanent status, the Library will have to demonstrate its ability to sustain itself financially. Towards this end we have taken the following steps.

- Our Finance Committee brought in a 2015 budget on time, developed an *Action Plan for Library Sustainability* and plotted a projection of income and expenditures for 2015. The Finance Committee meets monthly to monitor the Budget status and the *Action Plan*. We arranged the Library's first Fiscal Audit and we updated our insurance parameters to sufficiently protect the Library.

- We have a dedicated fund raising committee and we are becoming more energetic and more successful in this critical endeavor. We have raised \$13,428 via grants, community events, direct appeal and spontaneous donations. Still planned in 2015 is a town wide tag sale, our traditional Election Day raffle and an annual appeal. In Spring 2016 we hope to put together a gala fund raising event. We have encouraged and would welcome the forming of a *Friends of the Library* group in the community to work with us.

- We are tracking community use of the Library on a monthly basis. We held two Focus Groups in Spring 2015 and are now compiling the data that has come in from a paper and on-line survey developed by the Board. The next step will be to structure a strategic plan that will stabilize the Library and guide it to a sustainability status.

- We are actively engaged in facility planning -- rethinking the use of our upstairs space and developing active use of the downstairs space.

- In August 2015 we hired a Library Director who brings 20+ years of overseeing a small community library. Teresa McGuirk has a hands-on working knowledge of the best practices for a community library, including budget preparation, financial management, library operations, strategic planning and 414 campaigns for public funding. Teresa had previously taken a responsibility-driven role at CCL as chair of our fund raising committee. Teresa knows well and cares passionately about the intersection of community and library needs.

- In the interim between directors, we selected a talented staff person to serve as Interim Director. Charlotte Victoria Marriott led CCL during the busy months of early Summer, running a two-week Summer Camp for the children in our community and introducing our community's Seniors to the machines and methods of the digital age. Charlotte will now assume the role of Program Coordinator.
- We continue to lean heavily on the Mid-Hudson Library System (MHLS) to train and guide us. We attend its workshops, use its extensive website and consult more than often with its Coordinator for Library Sustainability, Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, who attends each of our Board meetings.

3. **Adopting the highest level of transparency to the community.** All of our meetings are open to the community. At both the start and close of each Board meeting there is opportunity for community members to speak directly to the Board. We also welcome community members to serve on our Finance, Governance, Operations and Fund Raising subcommittees. An updated schedule of meetings is maintained on the Library bulletin board and website. Minutes of meetings are published on the website and then archived with all pertinent documents in a binder in the Library. We purchased a town parcel address list that allows us to be transparent also with residents who do not yet use the Library. We hope you have enjoyed our newsletters and found them useful.

4. **Increasing the visibility of and access to the Library trustees.** As Trustees we are charged with interpreting the needs of the community to the Library and the needs of the Library to the community. Of necessity, Board meetings follow a preset agenda. Recognizing this we have created some less formal opportunities for sharing ideas and feelings. For example, you will find a Trustee just hanging out in the Library on the last Saturday of each month. And now there is a Board e-mail address CCLBoard1215@gmail.com. We are all neighbors. Stop by; write; or if you see one of us at a community event, come over and say hello. We want to get to know you and we want you to get to know us.

5) **Working as a team: the Community, the Library, the Board and MHLS.** Fifty years ago the Community of Clinton decided it wanted, it needed its own Library. Some of you may have been there at the ground breaking. Or maybe it was your parents, or grandparents, or the people who lived in the house you now live in, or weekend in. That same spirit continues. For whatever success we have achieved this first year we must extend thanks to the Town Board, the Town Clerk's office, the Highway Department, Clinton Historical Society, the Friendship Garden Club, Mid-Hudson Library System and the many many individuals in the community who have encouraged and helped us. We extend special thanks to the Elizabeth C. Davis Memorial Fund for providing a grant that revived our Summer Camp programs for the children in our community.

You might say we are the *Little Library That Could*. And we will. The Board of Trustees would like to assure you that we continue dedicated to serving the Town of Clinton to the best of our ability. We stand by our pledge to renew the spirit of Clinton Community Library and its friendship with and service to all of the Clinton Community.

CCL Board of Trustees -- Barbara Burns, Caroline Matuk, Matthew Pfisterer, Wilfred Relyea