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February 1, 2014

Special Meeting held at Island Trees Public Library and 5 PM

Re: The closing of the island trees public library

Pledge of Allegiance was recited

John Mikulin welcomed and thanked everyone for coming to this Special Meeting. All Board Members introduced themselves as well as Chris Ostuni, legal counsel and Michele Vaccarelli, Library Director.

We are all here for one reason, and realize that everyone is concerned, they all have questions, and we know that the people wanted to hear from us so we called together this meeting and hopefully we will be able to address many of your concerns. Some of them will be referring over to the meeting on February 10th with the Superintendent, who is here in the back along with 3 board members. You can ask them any questions regarding the sale of the property or anything that has to do with that consideration. We are going to focus on the future of the Island Trees Public Library.

John M.:- Gave some historic information: last year we were told that we would be moving over to Gallow building, then we thought we were going to get a freestanding building on this property, and now it's only less than two weeks and we just heard about this proposal from the superintendent that we would be moving to the middle school. It is not our role. We will not be adversarial here. We have received a proposal and are appreciative of it. We are going to look first and foremost at our fiduciary responsibilities. The cost it would take to move this library if we had to: pay the full burden out of our reserves would be astronomical. We are going to look at all alternative options before we make any decisions. This is the people's library, the people's school district, and the people's land, and it is primarily the people's choice. John M stated the board is here and the board represents you, we are here to listen to you. To know what you feel about the situation and to know what you want for the library. John stated he would take down all your suggestions and concerns, and we will answer all your questions.

Joe Budo: – Stated what a great job the library board is doing. He suggested that we ask the district if they sell the land and put up a 55 and older development, could the library then have a facility that is state-of-the-art? John M stated that he had a conversation with the superintendent today where he mentioned this fact. Suggesting that we have this building and possibly, we can extend out to get some grant money so that we can build a bigger library, the library that will hopefully increase our property value. Joe B. stated that he would like to see a new facility on the property, again state-of-the-art, something that is beautiful. Perhaps also with the money from the property, build more soccer and baseball fields, other things that our children can use. John M. stated that the concerns should be addressed at the February 10th meeting.

Bill Pillock: – If we move to the middle school, his concern is that if someone is following our children home there is no way of securing this situation. Bill F. also stated as a father, his concern about the safety of our children, especially in the times we live (Columbine, etc.)

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Bill F.: - Also stated that no one has mentioned that this building was named after a Congressional Honoree. There seems to be no respect shown for this man and his family deserves it. This has not been stated, and before we level this building, let's look at the name, and look at the medal.

Deborah Edward: – Stated that she was surprised to hear about our moving, to which John M. stated the Board was also surprised. Deborah asked if we received a proposal. John M. stated that initially they thought they were going to the Gallow building. Then he spoke to a news reporter who told him that we were going to get a freestanding building here. John M. stated that these questions Deborah is posing should be asked at the Feb. 10 meeting. We do not own the property.... we are playing two roles...we are all public officials representing you on the library, and we want to hear what you think this library should be. Deborah E. also stated that she is not familiar with the budget. John M. answered as follows: the library has its own separate tax base system. The library will never raise taxes over 1%. When the homeowner pays their taxes, in that bill in addition to town tax, county tax, school district taxes, then there is the library tax, which is \$167.00 a year. The taxes are paid to the Receiver of Taxes who in turn takes all the library tax money and pays it to the school. Once a month the school sends us the money. We pay monthly rent for the building and send the rent to the school district. Our lease is up in 2017. After the lease is up in June 30, 2017, we would have to vacate the building. If we had to spend our money to move to the middle school, right now we have \$1.2 million in our reserves. The Superintendent informed the board that it would cost \$700,000 to move. When the library moved from the middle school to our current location, the cost was over the \$700,000 quoted by the Superintendent. We don't believe we could afford the cost of the move. Deborah E. asked if we go to the middle school who is going to incur the cost of construction, whose obligation is it? John M. replied that he believes that so far, it is our obligation. Bill F. interjected stating that he doesn't know the reasoning why the School District is moving so fast. (we were only told 2 weeks ago that we had to move). Bill F. stated that whatever will be done on the side of the board of the library, it will be transparent. Further stating that transparency is what everyone in the community deserves.

Pat Mahon: (President of school board):- Stated that they are all members of the Island Trees community. The school district is looking for a cooperative arrangement which is what the school district is willing to do. Pat M. stated if the library was to go back to the middle school, to answer prior question about security, the library portion would be walled off from the entire school. There would be no interaction from the rest of the school. Bill F. asked who chose where we are going, where is all the data, the financial people that were involved? What are the reserves of the school's budget? Bill F. asked the audience who lives in this neighborhood and if they knew about what was going on, and that there was a Facebook page? The reply was a strong no.... they did not know. Bill F. stated that the Facebook page received 112 hits and the community on Tuesday put up a page stating “save our library” which today has received 984 likes. The school board page is much larger than the library and in a few days, we received much more hits. The opinion is that there was not transparency in this decision to move the library. A comment was made that if you are going to sell a building... you don't post it on Facebook.

Sal R.: – The school district and school board is going ahead of themselves for the sale of this land. For the sale of this land it has to be put to a vote, if that passes, then a zoning variance is required from the town, building permits, etc.. The Town of Hempstead understands that this is a

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residential neighborhood and they don't want that type of housing here. The district is assuming that the vote will pass and the reason for us to quickly vacate the building.

Sam: --- In the absence of transparency of the school board, he would like to see this board issue a motion that the Nassau County District Attorney be asked to oversee this. John M. asked our legal counsel to look into this request.

Public question: – She read in the Tribune that the school board was thinking of putting a 55 and over development here, so why wouldn't they want a library on the property to service the senior citizens of our community?

Elizabeth Motaly: - Regarding the facilities we are running now, is it the time to be looking to increase the size? Michele, Director, reported from the handout supplied. Our spacing is not adequate for the population that we currently serve. For the amount of people we serve, the adequate sq. footage should be 16,000, we have 7,400 sq. footage. Going to the middle school would not serve the community properly in everything we currently do now, we would be going backwards not forward making the move to the middle school. Question asked, do we know the square footage proposed in the new facility? John M. stated no that is in negotiations, this should be asked at the February 10th meeting.

Dr. Murphy: - Thanked the board for having this meeting. Dr. M. responded to the creeps and derelicts comment, to which John M. stated that this was concern by a private resident not by the board, the public will speak about this at the Feb. 10 meeting. Dr. M. stated that he didn't recognize any issues here at the library or preschool – to which a question from the Public was asked: why do we have guards in the school? The Public directed question to Dr. M. that he was told that someone was following a student from Gallow. John M. stated that the board put every employee of the library into a program which would help them look for certain types of people coming into the library in order to protect our children, the board is dedicated to this and it should be continued. Dr. M. stated that if security does become a concern, which it has not on this campus so far, we can enhance this. If the library does go to the middle school, the district would add additional security to make sure that safety is a priority. Chris Boiallis asked if the additional security would be on the district's budget or the library's? Dr. M. stated that it would be on the district's budget because they are concerned about the student's safety. Also, Chris B. asked about putting up a wall to block that off, wouldn't that block the egress on the stairwell? Dr. M., stated no, it wouldn't. Chris B. stated then you wouldn't be getting the same space as last time. Dr. M. stated we would be getting more space and have the ability there to enhance the space. Dr. M. stated that the library could store the old discarded books down the district's office section. He sees that the library could use some updating. They have the ability to gut areas in the middle school and expand out and help make the Island Trees Public Library a library of the 21st century. John M. stated the board is willing to explore all options, but they also are exploring the options: of the middle school move, getting a new building, staying here on the property, and building something here as well. We are open. It has been 2 weeks and we are looking into everything. Dr. M. stated, as a development, as to what is being developed, he has not signed a contract with anyone. They were only looking into a plus 55 under the covenants of the land, that once sold the parties could not resell. Board Member stated: this should be discussed at the February 10 meeting.

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Connie Guinta:- What I'm concerned about is if we moved to middle school what would stop the school board, if let's say, in 15 years they need the space and want us out. We are back to the same situation as we are right now. I've seen hundreds of thousands of dollars spent on moving the library from Nassau Mall to the Island Trees Middle School, and then hundreds of thousands of dollars spent on moving from the middle school to our current location. John M. stated the expense of moving is much more than that. Connie G. stated that we don't have security. If you give me 2 classrooms or if you give me 4 classrooms, it still is not enough, I don't think it is laid out to be a library, it is suppose to be a school. That is how I really, really feel. I feel that you are putting us there because you have no other place to put us.

Chris Boiallis:- I don't think it is fair to constantly say that it is a 55 and over when the page that the school board has put up states that they will allow children to live in here, when the current cost is about \$21,000 per child to educate per year, at 200 units, if we had 20 kids there, any revenue that could potentially come in after it is built is gone, and we are at a net loss. Then there is more people that are coming in and we have no place to put them. We would be back here with the same problem.

Comment from Public:- This should all be discussed and be brought up at the Feb. 10 meeting. Make sure you attend this and express your concerns. She stated she wants the board to know what the community wants. John M. asked what is it that you want to see for our library. Public stated that she wants to make sure that the board of the library gets what they need, that the board is not forced to do anything that is not right for our district, or the board. John M. replied that he will make sure that they receive the best services, the same, or better for this library, that is why he is committed to looking into getting a freestanding building. Public- that is why we are all behind you to make sure our kids and you get what we want.

Bob.- He wanted to address the comment about the school board going behind their back. The school board has meetings and everyone is invited, anybody can go and see what they are doing. Public stated... no that is not true, we don't know what they are doing since they go into executive session which the public is not invited. Then they discuss matters which public is not privy to. John M. stated we are getting off topic.

Laura Guinta:- Works as librarian at Garden City. Regarding the security, it is a public building we will always have a situation with people who we don't want near to our children. Why would the district want to take facilities away from the middle school? I think you would want to make the rooms available for the children in the school. Bethpage, Seaford, Levittown, Hicksville, Wantagh all have their own library building. She believes we are the only library that has a wing in a school. Seaford sold property of 5 acres at \$5.6 million. We have 11 acres to sell, so assuming the district gets \$10 million or so dollars, why couldn't they use some of that money to build a real modern library building. I would like a freestanding library building.

Public:- If we get seniors here, they predominately vote against the school budget, not as a general statement, but more likely. In the future, the school budget will have more difficulty in getting the budget passed, which will affect the library. John M. replied that the library has a separate budget from the school budget, we have our own. You can vote for the library budget in April, the school budget is in May. John M. reiterated that everyone please attend the February 10th meeting and express your concerns. The future is undetermined at this point of time. Public

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stated that the children are losing. We are taking away from our kids. Bill F. stated that he comes to our library frequently and has observed that our computers are always occupied with kids doing homework or researching papers. Not everyone has computers at home. The kids need the resources we supply at our library. Also, when there are layoffs, there are numerous individuals on our computers doing resumes, job search, etc..

Sonia Taub:— I love this library. I belong to it, take classes in it my kids went to it. I have been here for over 54 years. I want a library that will be a place where people will come, to get books, for kids to have programs. I would love for this library to be built out. Here is perfect there are rooms that are empty that we could use. She started coming to the library when it was in the storefront. I want my own building, where nobody can kick us out!! This is a small library, but the people that come here love it. John M. stated that he has suggested this to Dr. Murphy today, and he said he would bring over one of the board members and walk through the building. John would be allowed to give his pitch, his theory and cause as to why we should have this, which would bring up the property value and would be better for the community. John M. stated he hopes to do this in private with the school board member.

Pat Mahon: - In 95/96, there were no personal computers, no electronic books. In terms of sq. footage, here at our library you would have the same space in the middle school. John M. stated: no, we would not. We have 8 classrooms here at our library and at the middle school the last proposal the library received, there was 7 classrooms. Pat M. asked if your basis based on 95/96 thinking about shelving space for all the books? Now a days, there is more as well as books, we have electronic concept. John M. stated we would like to keep the books. We want both. We have the same amount of books in the library, we are not planning on lessening our books, in fact in 1997 we had less books in that library. We have CD, DVD, audio books, video games, blue-rays, we need a lot of shelving. Space is tight. As Michele stated, the 17,000 sq. footage is what is appropriate for the population of this size, we only have 7,000.

Andrea Crivello: - I have been a page here at our library for the past 8 years. We use a huge number of shelving and we do not have enough, and cannot get enough, and have not been provided with enough. I have been putting every single book away that is returned. I am sorry, but in the middle school, you are not going to get enough shelving space. Also, 18 people are going to lose their jobs, and you will lose more resources.

Rene Stacy:-- DVDs are so popular at this time, (movie, music, book DVDs). We have magazines; we need more and more room for all of these items. In our Community Room, we have many programs; yoga, water coloring, knitting, painting, etc. we are unable to house these programs. Our custodians come in to this room 3 times a day to set up / break down for the needs of the programs. We need another Community Room.

Public, member of community theatre group:— Their programs are in such demand, they go traveling library to library. It breaks her heart that they are unable to bring their group to our library to perform, but there has not been availability here for them.

Julian:— Very honored that Dr. Murphy is here. I want to tell him they have full.....-illegible on tape--- (person standing against wall furthest from the board) ...all our student success, I don't believe he means it. If we move to the middle school it will be a downgrade for us, it shows that we are poor and that we are different from other school districts.

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Laura Guinta: – Spoke about a building grant, which is given every year. It is \$14 million given statewide.

Jackie T. NLS: - There is money to be given. You have one of the smallest libraries, from an outside point of view. With 45 years in the field, it is a very unsatisfactory library the way it is, not any reflection to the staff. You are doing a lot with a disadvantage, doing a lot with what you have. Ever since I have come here, for the last 15 years, your library is at the bottom of the metric because of your building. Whereas collection base is going down nationally, people want to use the library other ways. They want study rooms, kids are suppose to be doing projects together, the rooms you have are not enough. Also the 8 computers you have, they aren't enough, are they? Just because media changes over the time, we don't get rid of a format, we just replace a new format, it doesn't go away. The library has items available that you are not able to get on your home computers, since the libraries subscribe to databases. Sal R. our library's annual budget is \$1.1 million.

Anne Bauman asked:- Will the ITPL Board Meeting minutes be available? Response: Yes they will be.

Joanne Pazleola: – Last year there were cutbacks in resources that were available in terms of getting the kids ready for the State exams. I am a schoolteacher who gave free tutoring to about 8 students who needed extra help every Saturday morning for 3 months before the test. My goal was to go to the library to provide them with the resources and the computers. That became an issue because the room was not available, and it was a disruption to the other patrons in the library trying to do their work, with my students who were trying to talk about the mini lesson. It didn't work out at the library, so in the end I had to hold the lessons in my house, which I originally didn't want to do. My point is, obviously, there are issues that exist with the library as it is now, and it would have been great to have the extra room in the library to support the student when the school district is not able. I do not see moving to the middle school would address those kinds of issues. There are definitely issues. I just don't see them resolved by moving into that space. This is just my experience with the issues that I have had with the library. Public: there are many others who feel this way, when it comes to tutoring they want to use the library. John M. stated that it is their wish that we would be able to provide this also, we are your representatives. John M. further stated that if anyone needs anything from our library to please come and drop off in our mailboxes. We are here for you, and we are here to assist you.

Public:- Is there any information available stating the cost of the move, what it would be. John M. stated we are in the middle of researching this, as stated 2 weeks ago we thought the sale of the property was to be a freestanding building for us on this location. We are looking into every option, looking at grants, bonds, etc.

Sam: – This is the smallest, poorest library in Nassau County that I have seen. There are libraries in other districts that are no more well off than we are, some are worse off than we are, and they have better libraries and facilities. This would be a perfect opportunity to make it a freestanding library and theatre, and if they are going to put senior citizens over in the housing area, it would be perfect for them to be able to walk over to the theatre and see the shows. John M. stated that out of 54 libraries we are 51 in size. We have a population as of 2010 of 15,000 people. Most libraries with our population have more space. Bayville has about the same size

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as us, as well as Malvern. Bayville had 6,000 as of 2010, Malvern had 8,000 people as of 2010, we had 15,000. For our population and space, we are under the market in Island Trees.

Dr. Murphy:– The developers were looking at the property, which is 11 acres. We also have 4 other locations in the district. We have the land for the library, and if you are talking about a freestanding building, or an attached structure all freestanding that could be yours. We have the facility to work with you to create this. The money is in the dirt, we have other locations outside of this that we can look at. Use your grant to create a good space. I'd love to sit down with you and discuss these things.

Public:– Question to John M. we were told that the developer was going to build a freestanding building here and then he took it off the table? John M. stated that first, a person from the newspaper called him and was doing a story on Michele (Director) and wanted to know the future of the library. I told him that the future of the library was undetermined because we didn't know what was going on with the property deal. At that time, I was told by the newspaper reporter that you are not going to be moved from the Karopczyc building. If the developer does not want to develop, does not want to build a library on this site, then the Karopczyc building will not be sold, and they will only sell off the Gallow building.

Public: – You heard this from someone from the newspaper and not from the district?
John M. replied – Yes.

Public: - What I am hearing from everyone is that we don't like to lease from the district, we want our own building. John M. stated that the board is happy to lease from the school district right here. We will renew our lease after 2017.

Jerry S., board:– This is the first time that Dr. Murphy said anything about the other buildings, aside from the middle school. This is the first time we heard about any other buildings being available.

Bill F.:-- I have the good of the community at heart. The library and school district has to work together. If going to the middle school is on the table, let's discuss it. Transparency is key. I don't see why the school board does not step back, take a breath and let's discuss. Why are we full steam ahead?

Dr. Murphy: – I do want to sit down and discuss everything. John M. stated we are willing to do so. Dr. Murphy admitted that he thought the space would be enough, that he would be able to create space in the middle school, which would be enough. I see that now, I see that from everyone, so we can talk about it, we can sit down as a group and work something out. John did bring up a good point, we are one community of Island Trees. If the library would be at the middle school, it would be a self contained area, but in the evenings, you would have access to some of the other areas once school is closed, to use some of resources such as the stage, cafeteria, etc. The library is not all about books and DVDs, and other things, it is about the programs that people do. It ends up being more than a library, it becomes a community center. In some ways, it is not just a library board, it is more like a community get together. If we able to be that, create that vision and then move on. What we can do as a school district deal when you are able to increase the space with something like this, which would be good for all, the library and school district. We are talking about, a minimum of, adding half a million dollars

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into taxes. That helps you, me, it helps the whole community. The proceeds of the sale helps everyone with technology, technology for the kids in the school, technology that could help for the library. In addition, you will be able to fix up the sports fields and enhancing the facility.

Bill F.:– Do we have an idea of what the property is appraised at? Dr. Murphy stated “it is a lot of money.” John M. stated that everyone should go to the Feb. 10 meeting and ask this question.

Public: - Likes what he is starting to hear from Dr. Murphy, but if it means moving to a smaller facility, absolutely no. If it means losing 18 employees... absolutely not. Just want to say... there was a sale of the Israel Community Center. In the beginning of the years, we were told it was worth \$5 million dollars. It actually sold for \$2.4 million dollars. Don't think you are going to be so rich when the land is sold. By the time you get to signing, you might not get everything you thought.

Chris B.:– Dr. Murphy, when you keep saying of the \$500,000 that is coming in, that is assuming that we pick up no children. Every child that would move into that development, which is in the proposal. Dr. Murphy stated that he made a mistake on this because he was with the realtor today, and that was the initial information that he heard and it changed. Dr. Murphy stated that there will be no children in the 55 and over, this will be written in.

Carol:– We have legislators, we have council people, do they know what is going on. Dr. Murphy stated that yes they know what is going on.

Public: – Other than hearing from the newspaper reporter, has the library received any written notice that the lease will be ending. John M. stated that we can stay until 2017, but they want us out by 2016. The lease will not be renewed after 2017. We will not break the lease, they cannot force us out.

Linda and Rob:– We have lived in this district our entire lives. Our son mentioned he plans to buy our house and raise his children here in our district. We love this district, we love the library. We wish to have senior citizens programs because they built this district. We want children's programs because this is the future of our district, and we want more space because that is what we need. The district charging us so much, and we want to hold them to this obligation of only charging us so much, and still be able to have more. We don't want to spend a lot more money on taxes. Anything else, we have to present on February 10th at the meeting.

Juliette Feeley:– Regarding storage in the middle school, they have asbestos in the basement. I was told that we cannot store anything in the basement, so there is no storage. Question referred to Dr. Murphy. Dr. Murphy stated: the school district has tons of things stored in the basement, which is not in contaminated areas. The basements in our school buildings, they are cavernous. The middle school has huge areas of storage that could be used. We are still in the infancy stages of talking about this, but there would be room at the different buildings for storage, whether the district office, or the preschool or the library. Pertaining to the middle school not being able to store in the basement, we store tons of things down there right now. Juliette – what was explained to me was that the elevator in the middle school is at the opposite end of the library. We would not have access of the elevator to go into the basement because it is in the school and that you wouldn't want to store things down there anyway since they have these beware tags hanging.

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Renee:- I just want to say my feelings on the library. I love the library. I work here. I am a patron. When I first moved to Levittown, the first thing I did was to come to Island Trees and get a library card. I would be very cautious about moving this library into the middle school. I, as everyone else can say, when they closed Gallow, there was a 5 year projection on how the enrollment was going to continue to decline for several years. Within about approximately 2 years of the Gallow closing, the 6th graders moved into the middle school, and not too long after that, the 5th graders had to move into the middle school. If they put us into the middle school, if we go, the Administrative offices goes to Stokes... where they had been and had to leave because there was not enough room, and the preschool goes to Sparkes, where there is currently BOCES classes, music and art classrooms and if enrollment goes up, which there is no saying that it won't, there is absolutely no room for anyone to go. If they sell all the property, there will be no place to move.

Public (the police officer by the window):- Bottom line, first and foremost, you must take into account that kids they are our future. We have to make sure that they are secure. We have to make sure that they are taken care of. If we keep selling things off, getting rid of things, and compacting things, when we need something -- we won't have it. For the amount of taxes everyone pays, we deserve to have a library. We all have to work together, we must all know what is going on.

Dr. Murphy:- We are trying to be efficient. The Island Trees Public Library operates mean and lean for a number of years. The school district has been downsizing. We are looking for the most efficient way to do something, handle the resources, and do it the right way. It is not easy. We will get everyone together. John M. stated he had a phone conversation this morning with Dr. Murphy and spoke about getting together, spoke about our vision for the community. Dr. Murphy stated he is available Saturday mornings from 8am – noon. This would not be a public meeting.

Laura Guinta:- We are the 51st smallest library out of 54 libraries, that is really pathetic. Do we want to be the 51st smallest library, and we are so small that we are on the very bottom? I would think that the school district would want to consider trying to do something. The library is for everyone. We have such a small children's room, we only have a tiny space for the Young Adult area, our Adult section is mixed in with the Young Adult in the computer room. If we were able to expand then we could serve everyone in the community. We don't want to raise taxes. This is my home library.

John M.: Asked for 3 more final questions before we all go home. I think we had a great dialogue upon what we want for the future of our library in this community and I thank you all for that. We have listened, we are going to take your opinions. I am sure the school board members will take your opinions when we meet look for a space for this library that will fit the facilities needs, whether it is here or whether it is elsewhere. We are going to make it happen. Please attend the February 10th meeting, which will discuss the sale of the property and what was discussed today.

Public: – Are we only capable of renting, or are we capable of purchasing? John M. stated we are capable of purchasing a building, to do that it will cost money. We will look into grant options, bond options, maybe if the school district would be willing to help out in the location of

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the sale, if there is a sale. All options will be explored.

Mike: – Being that we lease the property right now, you did mention what your budget was, but it wouldn't be out of the realm for donations. I implore you to find out from the school district how much they are looking for this property. John M. stated he agreed.

Public:– There are banks and businesses up and down Hempstead Turnpike that are always trying to get involved with community actions, and I am sure if we go to them and say, don't you want to be part of the expansion of Island Trees Library. Many of them would say, Yes. Bill F. stated that some of the biggest companies in the world are right here in our back yard, Target, Wal-Mart, Chase, etc.

John M.:- Thank you so very much.

John M. asked for a Motion. Jerry Schmotzer asked for a Motion to close the meeting. Salvatore Rinaldi seconded the Motion. Unanimous. Meeting closed at 6:35pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ann L. Boiallis