



116 MILLER STREET, SHERMAN, NY 14781

716-761-6378

October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Ms. Karen Utz, Regional Director  
Regional Economic Development Council  
95 Perry St., Ste. 500  
Buffalo, NY 14203

RE: NY FORWARD GRANT LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR THE VILLAGE OF SHERMAN

Dear Ms. Utz,

In the last 3 years, the Minerva Free Library has an entirely new board of directors bringing renewed energy to the Sherman library.

There is great enthusiasm around the development of programming and services offered, which includes public computers and internet access, community book club, preschool, afterschool, and summer reading programs, while being a host to community meetings. The Minerva Free Library has received \$183,000 through donations and grants over the last 3 years in support of programming, materials purchases, and updated furnishings.

The Minerva Free Library has revived the Summer Reading Program and reestablished relationships with community organizations like the Sherman Historical Society. Connecting the two brought the opportunity for the kids to explore the French Creek Yorker Museum enabling them to experience Sherman's earlier history. Businesses like The Cornerstone Restaurant provided treats.

Board members are engaged in grant writing, outreach and education. With multiple successfully awarded grants and generous donations, we have invested \$148,000 in capital improvements to construct the outdoor learning center, build the sign, replace the windows, and install the new elevator.

The Minerva Free Library is working to ensure all in the community have full access to the three stories with ADA accessible restrooms on each floor. This has begun with the current installation of the new elevator, however the small bathrooms on each floor do not meet ADA specifications and will require creative design plans to fit in the limited space while achieving ADA accessibility. Among the outstanding restoration priorities, we have received a quote of \$20,855 to replace the carpeting.

The Minerva Free Library fully supports the Village of Sherman's application to the NY Forward program to further revitalize and connect the businesses and organizations strengthening our community.

Sincerely,

Cindy Sears  
Director, Minerva Free Library