

The Public Library of the Township of Mahwah  
Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting  
December 19, 2019

**Call to Order:** Mr. Wolf, President, called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

Mr. Wolf stated that in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act adequate notice of the meeting has been given to the *Record*, posted in the library, on the library website and filed with the Township Clerk.

**Present:**

Ms. Clarkin  
Mr. Koster  
Ms. Javer  
Mayor Roth  
Mr. Wolf  
Ms. Gilbert  
Mr. Hadelers  
Ms. Mercadante

**Absent:**

Mr. Grob  
Mr. Lee  
Mr. Wendrychowicz  
Dr. Schoen

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Public Present:** Janet Ariemma

**Public Comment:**

A motion was made by Ms. Javer and seconded by Ms. Clarkin to open the meeting to the public at 7:32 PM. Motion passed unanimously.

Seeing no public present, a motion was made by Mr. Wolf and seconded by Ms. Javer to close public session at 7:32 PM. Motion passed unanimously.

**Secretary's Report:**

A motion was made by Mr. Koster and seconded by Ms. Javer to accept the minutes of the regular monthly meeting on November 20, 2018 as presented. Mayor Roth and Ms. Clarkin abstained, motion passed.

**Treasurer's Report:**

Financial Reports - Mr. Wolf reported that overall, revenue for the year is on budget, expenses are \$1,860,000 versus 1,936,000 which is due to savings realized through open positions and salaries. Library materials are down but will likely catch up by the end of the year. We are running \$70,000 ahead of budget which will allow us to fund the capital account for the year as budgeted and aligned with the strategic plan. Mr. Hadelers has looked at anticipated cash flow for the first half of 2019 and recommended transferring \$25,000 to the capital fund to ensure that there is enough money in the operating fund to get us through February. Mr. Wolf asked if transferring \$50,000 would be a problem; it would not be a problem so long as the municipal appropriation arrives in February.

A motion was made by Mr. Wolf and seconded by Mr. Koster to transfer \$50,000 from the operating reserve account to the capital reserve account as budgeted.

Roll Call:

Ms. Clarkin - yes

Mr. Grob - yes  
Ms. Javer - yes  
Mr. Koster - yes  
Mr. Lee – absent  
Mr. Roth - yes  
Mr. Wendrychowicz - absent  
Mr. Wolf – yes  
Dr. Schoen – absent

Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Ms. Javer and seconded by Ms. Clarkin to approve the operating and capital December 2018 Bills for Payment as presented.

Roll Call:

Ms. Clarkin - yes  
Mr. Grob - yes  
Ms. Javer - yes  
Mr. Koster - yes  
Mr. Lee – absent  
Mr. Roth - yes  
Mr. Wendrychowicz - absent  
Mr. Wolf – yes  
Dr. Schoen - absent

Motion passed unanimously.

2019 Draft Budget:

Mr. Hadelier distributed an updated copy of the 2019 draft budget with the medical insurance costs that were received. Due to the reduction in medical expense, partial funding was restored to many of the lines that were cut in the draft budget distributed last month. Most of the money went back into collections, online resources and programs. The new BCCLS delivery service is fully funded and there was a small increase for conference attendance and staff development. Mayor Roth stated that the reason for the lower medical insurance rates for next year are due to a lower experience rate last year and a change of the insurance carrier to CIGNA, a larger network that offers more favorable rates.

A motion was made by Mr. Wolf and seconded by Mr. Koster to accept the 2019 draft budget as presented.

Roll Call:

Ms. Clarkin - yes  
Mr. Grob - yes  
Ms. Javer - yes  
Mr. Koster - yes  
Mr. Lee – absent  
Mr. Roth - yes  
Mr. Wendrychowicz - absent  
Mr. Wolf – yes  
Dr. Schoen - absent

Motion passed unanimously.

Unemployment Reserve Account – Mr. Wolf stated that the unemployment reserve has been on the books for a while to cover unemployment, since we are self-funded. The amount in the reserve is based on a calculation allowing for 52 weeks of unemployment, which was judged necessary when the reserve fund was established. Current unemployment requires funding 26 weeks of unemployment and the likelihood that we will need to layoff six or seven people in the next few years is low. Mr. Hadelers stated that the proposed change in calculation will reduce the balance of the unemployment reserve account by \$47,220; this amount will be transferred into the operating reserve account leaving a remaining balance of \$48,397.80 in the unemployment reserve account.

A motion was made by Mr. Wolf and seconded by Ms. Javer to accept the proposed unemployment reserve balance calculation as presented.

Roll Call:

Ms. Clarkin - yes  
Mr. Grob - yes  
Ms. Javer - yes  
Mr. Koster - yes  
Mr. Lee – absent  
Mr. Roth - yes  
Mr. Wendrychowicz - absent  
Mr. Wolf – yes  
Dr. Schoen - absent

Motion passed unanimously.

#### **Director's Report:**

##### Building & Grounds

Upgrading the CCTV System – Mr. Hadelers reported that it has been great having Hector Rivera as the new maintenance handyman. Together they have run 13 runs for different camera locations, the cameras and server were received, installation is going much quicker than anticipated.

Repair to lights over the main staircase – Mr. Hadelers reported that the electrician replaced and repaired the lights in the stairwell.

Upgrading the internet connection – The Optimum internet connection was upgraded from 250 Mbps to 500 Mbps. The upgrade adds \$40 per month to the bill.

Children's Room Enhancements - Mr. Hadelers reported the children's renovation is going well, the final drawings were included in the board packet. Janice Davis did an excellent job creating an enchanted forest with the goal of making the children's room a destination for Mahwah residents. We expect to complete the project before summer reading.

#### **Monthly Statistical Reports:**

The statistics were reviewed and acknowledged. Mr. Hadelers stated that we are usually the sixth busiest library in Bergen County. There are many decreases in physical circulation which are not just happening in Mahwah but reflective of the entire consortium and libraries nationwide. Program attendance decreased slightly this year. Mr. Hadelers stated interest in classical and jazz concerts have dropped off, and there is

more interest in early swing and rock tribute bands. The board noted the high use of the quiet study rooms.

### **Committee Reports:**

Strategic Planning Committee - Ms. Javer reported that the committee met in the beginning of the month, the general consensus was to focus on core services. There are many things that the committee would like to do but money is needed to do them. The committee is heading toward recommending a referendum on the ballot to increase the millage. There was a discussion of including in the plan the hiring a consultant to assist with the referendum so that ultimately we can have a form of sustainable funding. The additional items that the committee members wanted in the strategic plan to further the goals include a focus on programming, increasing eContent, introduction of a library app. Capital project include replacing on aging rooftop HVAC unit and the telephone system which has surpassed the end of its life. The Committee strongly supports the library exploring new services such as becoming a passport office. Hiring a full-time PR and Marketing assistant will be critical to the overall success. The Committee will draft a four-year plan by late January.

Mr. Hadelers stated that he will be working on drafting the strategic plan based on the input from the committee meetings that will be ready to present to the board early next year. The library's funding for 2019 is \$124,000 less than it was in 2007. Between 2009 and 2014 the library lost nearly \$400,000 in funding due to declining assessed property values. The Committee does not see any dramatic changes coming over the next four to five years, meaning the Library will face a budget shortfall unless new sources of funding are identified. The Committee is looking into other ways to fund the facility or scale back services.

Mayor Roth agreed the Library faces difficult decisions, with a fixed mill rate and property values that have not gone up due to the many variables that affect it. The Mayor recommended the Library Board have a compelling reason to go out for a referendum to increase the mill rate. He stated that it will be a tough year for the town, there are vital infrastructure that needs to be addressed that will result in a tax increase. Mr. Roth stated that he was not trying to discourage the library board but wanted to make them aware of what is going on.

Mr. Wolf stated that they are looking at all our options and trying to figure out the best approach.

### **Old Business:**

### **New Business:**

2019 Cleaning and Janitorial Service – Mr. Hadelers reported that we received two cleaning service quotes in response to an RFQ that was send out in November. Quotes were received AMAVA 5 Inc. and Z & C Cleaning Service, LLC. The recommended vendor is AMAVA 5 Inc. since they provided the lowest responsive quote for a total annual cost of \$ \$26,475 with the window cleaning option.

A motion was made by Ms. Javer and seconded by Ms. Clarkin to award the annual cleaning contract to AMAVA 5 Inc. for cleaning and janitorial services from January 1 through December 31, 2019 for a cost of \$ 25,680 plus the additional window cleaning option for \$795, a total annual cost of \$26,475.

### **Roll Call:**

Ms. Clarkin - yes  
Mr. Grob - yes  
Ms. Javer - yes  
Mr. Koster - yes  
Mr. Lee – absent

Mr. Roth - yes  
Mr. Wendrychowicz - absent  
Mr. Wolf – yes  
Dr. Schoen - absent

Motion passed unanimously.

**Trustee Education:**

**Public Session:**

A motion was made by Ms. Javer and seconded by Mr. Wolf to open the meeting to the public at 8:34 PM. Motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Ariemma stated as a member of the public and Mahwah tax payer, she would be opposed to any increase in the tax rate. She feels that the Library should manage with what we have. She would not support a vote to increase the library's millage rate. Ms. Clarkin stated that the Town's tax bill has gone every year. There are items in the Town and School budgets that are outside the 2% cap which increases taxes. The Library doesn't have the ability to increase its funding the same way. Mayor Roth explained that the Library's appropriation is a percentage of the ratable base, it has nothing to do with a percentage of the taxes that are received by the Township. Once the millage rate is applied to the ratable base, the Town is statutorily required to fund the library at that amount. Mr. Hadelar stated that the only variable that affects the library's funding is the total value of ratable properties in town. Mr. Roth stated that the municipal expenses are capped at 2% a year, there are items that are inside and outside the cap, all items are in the tax rate. Mr. Wolf stated that a referendum is going to require educating the public on the library's funding.

A motion was made by Ms. Javer and seconded by Ms. Clarkin to close public session at 8:45 PM. Motion passed unanimously.

**Executive Session:**

**Upcoming Meeting Dates:**

- Thursday, 12/20: Staff holiday party, library closing at 1 pm.
- Wednesday, 1/16: Monthly Board meeting.
- Wednesday, 2/20: Monthly Board meeting.

**Adjournment:**

A motion was made by Mr. Wolf and seconded by Ms. Javer to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 PM. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Javer  
Secretary