

The Free Public Library of the Township of Mahwah
Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting
April 19, 2022

Call to Order:

Ms. Javer, President, called the regular monthly meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

- In compliance with the Open Public Meeting Act, this meeting was announced in the Bergen Record, on the Library's website and on signs posted at the Library entrances.
- This meeting is taking place on-line in accordance with New Jersey state statute 10:4-8B, which authorizes local units to conduct public meetings through the use of streaming services and other online meeting platforms.
- Information on accessing this public meeting has been posted on the library's website, members of the public are welcome to participate only during the public portions at the beginning and end of the meeting by voice, telephone or webcam using the "chat" feature in the conferencing software.

Present:

Absent:

Ms. Cassotis
Ms. Clarkin
Mr. Ferguson
Ms. Javer
Mr. Lee
Ms. Park
Mr. Wendrychowicz
Mr. Haderler
Mr. Liden
Ms. Mercadante

Dr. DeTuro
Mayor Wysocki

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Present:

Public Session: A motion was made at 7:31 PM by Ms. Clarkin and seconded by Ms. Park to open the meeting to the public. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made at 7:30 PM by Ms. Cassotis and seconded by Ms. Park to close public session. Motion passed unanimously.

Secretary's Report:

A motion was made by Ms. Clarkin and seconded by Mr. Lee to accept the minutes from the March 15, 2022 regular monthly and annual meeting. Motion passed unanimously

Financial Review:

Financial Reports & Bills for Payment

Mr. Lee reviewed the March financial reports:

- We received the first quarter appropriation in March.
- Mr. Lee noted an increase in gifts and donations. Mr. Haderler stated that the uptick in gifts and donations is due to resuming in-person programming.

- Mr. Lee noted that passport processing remains healthy and questioned if there is a revenue point to designate more staff.
 - Mr. Hadel reported that we should have adequate coverage since hiring a part-time employee who will be working twenty hours a week as a passport agent.
 - Mr. Hadel stated that passport revenue from January through March is half of our total anticipated revenue for the year.
- A motion was made by Ms. Cassotis and seconded by Ms. Clarkin to accept the March 2022 Treasurer's Report and the April 2022 bills for payment.

Roll Call:

Ms. Cassotis - yes
 Ms. Clarkin - yes
 Dr. DeTuro - absent
 Mr. Ferguson - yes
 Ms. Javer - yes
 Mr. Lee - yes
 Ms. Park - yes
 Mr. Wendrychowicz - yes
 Mayor Wysocki - absent

Motion passed unanimously.

Operational Review: Mr. Hadel highlighted the following from his report.

Library Operations

- Personnel:
 - Mr. Hadel reported that it has been a busy month interviewing candidates, selecting and then on-boarding the new hires. We are thrilled with our new staff that includes:
 - Erin Piemontesi as our part-time PR and marketing coordinator
 - Thomas Ellwood as a part-time passport agent
 - Two new pages who are working out well
 - An Adult Service librarian and two Lending Service assistants for the weekends
 - Mr. Hadel recognized the Youth Services department for the work they have done getting ready for summer reading. In particular, Kerri Brown has done a fantastic job working on graphics as well as coordinating and making preparations for the summer reading kick-off party.
 - This is the first time since COVID started that we have had multiple staff out sick due to COVID at the same time. We are following CDC current guidelines to determine when they were able to return work.
- Programs: Mr. Hadel reported the concerts are back in person.
- Computers & Technology: Mr. Hadel stated that Google announced the end of the G Suite legacy free edition which the library has been using for ten years. Mr. Hadel is investigating options and discovered that the Library is not eligible for either Google's non-profit or educational discounts but there may be other options that will work.
- BCCLS & Professional Development: Mr. Hadel reported that he attended a BCCLS System Council meeting in which the President conducted all business as "consent items" without the opportunity for discussion or any voting. Mr. Hadel stated that he plans to voice his concerns to the Executive Board and, if this method of conducting meetings continues, will object to this practice at the next meeting.

- Capital Projects:

- Network & Technology Upgrades

- The final switches to complete the network and technology upgrades have been ordered.
 - Mr. Haderler reported that there are twenty computers that are set up for the public that are outdated. He has started to find computers that are similar to the last round of computers we purchased. He stated that he would like to replace them all at one time since they are failing.

A motion was made by Mr. Ferguson and seconded by Ms. Clarkin to approve spending approximately \$25,000 to purchase new computers for the public in the reference area.

Roll Call:

Ms. Cassotis - yes
Ms. Clarkin – yes
Dr. DeTuro - absent
Mr. Ferguson - yes
Ms. Javer - yes
Mr. Lee – yes
Ms. Park - yes
Mr. Wendrychowicz - yes
Mayor Wysocki - absent

Motion passed unanimously.

- Security Cameras - The cameras are back ordered; our technology provider is saying they will be available in June.
 - Material Displays – Working with Alexandra Bickel, who manages the adult displays, about selecting new furnishings for displays in the main concourse. We are looking to purchase a long counter-like table to set up a coffee service for patrons.
- Statistical Summary: The statistical reports were acknowledged. Mr. Haderler stated that we no longer include program costs--with the new software it would be extremely tedious to include this information.

Friends of Mahwah Library Reports: No Report

Correspondence: No Correspondence

Old Business:

- Procedures for recognizing outgoing trustees: The board reviewed and finalized how they will recognize outgoing trustees.

A motion was by Ms. Javer and seconded by Mr. Wendrychowicz to formalize how we show our appreciation to past trustees for their service, including: giving the outgoing trustee a plaque; reading a formal letter of thanks into the minutes; and, requesting the Mayor and Town Council recognize their contribution. Motion passed unanimously.

New Business:

- Affirming the Library's support for intellectual freedom:

- Ms. Javier raised the issue reported in recent articles in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* concerning censorship and banning books. Mr. Lee expressed the importance that we have a stated policy in place to support intellectual freedom so that as a board we are prepared to respond unanimously if challenged.
- Ms. Javier stated that the Library has a clear collection management policy specified which states the library's support of intellectual freedom. She encouraged all of trustees to review the policy. She stated that if you are going to engage in discussion with someone over the recent censorship and politicization of banning books, to remember your role as a trustee.
- Mr. Hadeler stated that our mission statement does not clearly express our support of intellectual freedom but it is clearly stated in our collection management policy. Mr. Hadeler recommended the following in light of everything that is building up over recent weeks and months where intellectual freedom governance of libraries is becoming incredibly politicized.
 - A simple statement in support of intellectual freedom that is also a board policy, if not a policy it could be part of our guiding principles.
 - Include the section of the collection management policy that addresses intellectual freedom into the guiding principles.
- After discussion by the board, they agreed with Mr. Hadeler suggestion. Ms. Javier asked Mr. Hadeler to include the first line from the collection management policy that addresses intellectual freedom be included with the Library's guiding principles.
- eContent Platforms:
 - Mr. Hadeler reported that Alex Bickel has been in touch with people from Palace Project and Lyrasis. Lyrasis is working on the finishing touches of integrating Overdrive and their service to use one app to access all material. After review of Ms. Bickel's report on eContent platforms Mr. Hadeler concluded the following:
 - He would not select a Bibliotheca product or a Baker and Taylor product.
 - Palace Project and Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) are newer econtent organizations although they do not have the depth of installations, they have a lot of the content but not all of the content. However, they are more aggressive in negotiating with publishers for better terms for libraries and if it works their app is a one stop shop for Overdrive and any other content we purchase. But this has not been tried and tested.
 - Overdrive is the 800 lb. gorilla that dominates the market--they are the oldest player and have been buying up on-line services. Overdrive is the safe bet. Palace Project and DPLA is taking more of a risk in the hopes a little bit of a risk in the hopes that it turns into a better product.
 - What we can do is create an account with Libby (Overdrive), continue to use the Libby app which will give us access to BCCLS content and our own content from one app and will require some user education because the user will have to select their library.
 - If it turns out that Palace Project and DPLA thrive in two years, we can switch over and still have access to the content that has been purchased.
 - Ms. Javier asked how long the library would be locked in for with OverDrive
 - Mr. Hadeler explained that with Overdrive you are paying the platform fee which is about \$1,000 a year. The content that you buy can be moved from one provider to a different provider for most of the content. Palace Project--there is no fee but it is not certain how easy it is to move your content to Overdrive.
 - Ms. Javier stated that, based on Mr. Hadeler's recommendation, to continue to use Overdrive is the safest and makes the most sense.
 - Mr. Hadeler reported that BCCLS is working on something called Vega which is a new catalog interface that will include the content that we purchase separately.

A motion was made by Mr. Ferguson and seconded by Ms. Javier to purchase additional content from Overdrive.

Roll Call:

Ms. Cassotis - yes
Ms. Clarkin – yes
Dr. DeTuro - absent
Mr. Ferguson - yes
Ms. Javer - yes
Mr. Lee – yes
Ms. Park - yes
Mr. Wendrychowicz - yes
Mayor Wysocki - absent

Motion passed unanimously.

- Mr. Haderler reported that he is deeply concerned with BCCLS stated in an email sent to the board.
 - He reported that he plans to send the BCCLS executive board an email expressing his concerns with BCCLS branding.
 - Ms. Park stated that her concern with regards to branding and what is occurring with BCCLS is that the focus is to the libraries' constituents and not the library themselves. As a library system, your constituents are the libraries and what BCCLS is doing is overstepping their reach.
 - Mr. Haderler reported that this task force from the outset surveyed directors, then trustees. Directors are the voting representatives of the library, which is in the BCCLS by-laws. He explained that it is an egregious overstep for BCCLS to survey the library staff and patrons.
 - The board expressed their support for Mr. Haderler's concern with BCCLS and proposed actions.

Trustee Education: Mr. Wendrychowicz reported that he and Ms. Javer participated in a five-week BCCLS program on parliamentary procedures that was very well done. On Thursday we had a webinar with the NJ State Library that was an excellent presentation on trustee basics.

Executive Session:

Public Session:

A motion was made at 8:16 PM by Ms. Clarkin and seconded by Mr. Lee to open the meeting to the public. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made at 8:16 PM by Ms. Cassotis and seconded by Ms. Clarkin to close the meeting to the public. Motion passed unanimously.

Upcoming Meeting Dates:

- Tuesday, May 17 – monthly board meeting, 7 pm.
- Saturday, May 28 – Monday, May 30 – closed for Memorial Day.
- Tuesday, June 7 – primary elections held in library.
- Saturday, June 11 – Summer Reading Kickoff.
- Tuesday, June 21 0 monthly board meeting, 7 pm. Last board meeting until September.
- Monday, July 4 – closed for Independence Day.

Adjournment:

A motion was made by Mr. Wendrychowicz and seconded by Ms. Clarkin to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 PM. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Park,
Secretary