

**WESTFIELD MEMORIAL LIBRARY**  
550 East Broad Street  
Westfield, New Jersey 07090-2197

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**Regular Meeting**

**January 27, 2021**

Ms. Habayeb, President of the Board, called the regular meeting of the Westfield Memorial Library Board of Trustees to order at 7:56 P.M.

Ms. Habayeb announced:

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the meeting of the Westfield Memorial Library's Board of Trustees is being held virtually through a Zoom Webinar. Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act of the State of New Jersey, adequate advance notice of this meeting has been provided by posting a notice of this meeting on the Westfield Memorial Library's community bulletin board and by transmitting the same notice to the Westfield Leader, Star Ledger, and Town Clerk. Attendance at this meeting is welcome, however the public's right to participate is left to the discretion of the Library's Board of Trustees.

The following Board Members were in attendance: Ms. Behr-Shields, Mr. Boyes, Mr. Capone, Ms. Habayeb, Ms. Oporto, Ms. Ramakrishnan, Ms. Saltzman, and Ms. Serapiglia. Staff members attending were Mr. Israel and Ms. Karwowski.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ms. Habayeb moved the approval of the minutes of the December 16, 2020 regular meeting Ms. Oporto seconded the motion, and it was approved as follows:

**AYES:**

Mr. Capone  
Ms. Habayeb  
Ms. Oporto  
Ms. Saltzman  
Ms. Serapiglia

**NAYS:**

None

**ABSTENTIONS:**

Ms. Behr-Shields  
Mr. Boyes  
Ms. Ramakrishnan

## **FINANCIAL REPORT**

The Financial Report for December 2020 was reviewed by the Board. Mr. Israel stated that there was a balance of approximately \$168K at the end of the year. This amount will be moved to the reserve once the town audit is completed.

## **APPROVAL OF BILLS AND CLAIMS**

Ms. Saltzman moved to approve the Bills and Claims totaling \$54,740.47 for January 2021. Ms. Oporto seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

## **FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY**

Ms. Lechner and Mr. Miller, co-President of the Friends, gave their report to the board.

Ms. Lechner heads the membership drive which has already had 196 renewals of membership four weeks into the drive. The dues are used to provide some money for the Friends' sponsored programs and to gain the interest/support of the community to commit to actively participating in the organization. So far, individuals who were members sometime during the 2017-2020 period were contacted. The membership drive will be featured in an article in the Westfield Monthly. Future plans are to have the membership drive publicized in the Westfield Leader and facebook. Ms. Lechner's goal is to increase membership with new members, especially individuals with children in the school system.

Mr. Miller announced that their application to the County HEART (History, Education, Arts Reaching Thousands) Grant program to purchase video equipment to record programs that can be viewed on a YouTube channel was approved.

The annual book sale was canceled last year due to the pandemic, and most likely will be canceled this year at the next Friends' meeting. They plan to hold a book recycling day in the WML parking lot on a day that the library is closed. The books will be boxed for stocking their Little Free Libraries, set out for browsing by the public, and/or shipped to Better World Books.

Due to the pandemic which caused some museums to close or shorten hours and limited accessibility to the library, the museum pass program has been on hold. The Friends hope to start the program again shortly but on a limited basis with only museums in NJ and maybe one large NYC museum.

The Friends also started to plan a reading program with the High School Community Service Club that would be held on Zoom.

Ms. Oporto offered to share information with the Board of Education concerning promoting the membership drive. Ms. Lechner will reflect on this offer and get back to Ms. Oporto.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2024**

Alan and Leslie Burger from Library Development Solutions gave the Board of Trustees the opportunity to provide input on the draft of the Strategic Plan. The plan is the culmination of an effort over the last 18 months to obtain input from the community and library staff on ways the library can improve its policies, services, collection, and facilities. Information was sought from various focus groups and non-users.

The plan includes a vision statement, mission statement, goals, objectives, and possible actions to accomplish the objectives. The plan is designed to be flexible. It should be reviewed at least yearly to assess what went well, what the library needs to do, and what must be changed.

The board's comments and discussions about the plan centered on the vision and mission statements, composition of the focus groups/surveyed individuals, inclusion of the use of outdoor space, incorporating business needs into the goal of "everyone is welcome," and the possibility of including additional photos other than children. Mr. Israel will ensure that the new board members receive a copy of the Needs Assessment. Mr. Berger will also verify that the board members have the current link to the Survey Monkey.

Once the plan is approved, the Burgers will send the plan to a print designer. They will also work with Mr. Israel on an implementation matrix to measure the responsibilities for various actions.

Ms. Habayeb thanked Alan and Leslie Burger for partnering with Mr. Israel and the Strategic Planning Committee.

Upon Mr. Capone's recommendation, Ms. Habayeb inquired if the new board members needed additional time to review the strategic plan before the board votes on the matter. The new members felt that additional time was not needed.

Ms. Habayeb asked for a motion to approve the draft Strategic Plan. Ms. Oporto made the motion to approve the Strategic Plan, Ms. Serapiglia seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

The Director's Report was reviewed. Mr. Israel emphasized several points from his report:

- 1) The WML is open for business on a curbside basis. Mr. Israel worked with the Department Heads on a revised protocol for allowing patrons into the library once the transmission rate goes down. A reservation system will be used using the app Eventbrite. Details were forwarded to the board members in the board packet. Mr. Israel responded to Ms. Saltzman's satisfaction that individuals can also make

reservations to enter the library by phone or through an email. In response to Ms. Behr-Shields question, the reservation system does not store any information.

- 2) He received an update about libraries and vaccines at the statewide webinar earlier this month. The NJLA drafted a letter to the health department that a provision should be added to delineate the library employee group or municipal work group as a special group eligible to receive the vaccine. Since (a) there are no vaccines designed for the young, (b) the young are contracting the virus in large numbers, and (c) the library serves many young patrons, it is felt that library personnel should move up in the queue for receiving the vaccine.
- 3) The NJLA issued a statement concerning the violence at the Capitol which was included in the board packet. If no board member objects, Mr. Israel plans to post the statement on the WML website. There was no objection by any board member.
- 4) Mr. Israel highlighted the statistics in the director's report regarding downloads of electronic material. The WML ranked high compared to other libraries.

Ms. Saltzman remarked that the Monthly Statistics Report reflected zero reference questions this month and that this library service should be publicized if there is low usage. Mr. Israel replied that he believes that these statistics have not been kept since the library closed in March. They will once again be kept beginning in February.

- 5) The first full time IT Specialist will begin on February 1<sup>st</sup>. He will be invited to attend the March board meeting.
- 6) The adult and youth services librarians met with Leslie Burger earlier in the week for an orientation on how to proceed with and the importance of weeding. This project relates to the long range plan and should assist in sharpening their focus.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Ms. Habayeb asked for committee reports.

Ms. Saltzman, Chair of the Personnel Committee, thanked the board members for their completed evaluations of the Library Director. The results have been reviewed with Mr. Israel. Now the Personnel Committee is in the process of finalizing the evaluation and the goals for the director position. The beauty of the strategic plan is that the goals for the director and department heads fall into place.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Ms. Habayeb asked if there was any old business. There was nothing to present concerning a proposed fines and fees policy as the terms of several members of the Community Relations & Publicity Committee had expired. Hopefully, a new policy can be discussed at either the February or March meeting.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Habayeb asked if there was any new business. There was none.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was none.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Habayeb announced:

Whereas the Open Public Meetings Act P.L. 1975, Chapter 231 permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

Whereas this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist:

Now Therefore Be It Resolved, by the Board of Trustees of the Westfield Memorial Library, that the public shall be excluded from the discussion of the following matters:

Personnel

Be it further resolved that minutes will be kept on file in the library's administrative office, and once the matter involving the confidentiality of the above no longer requires that confidentiality, then the minutes shall be made public.

Ms. Habayeb made a motion to adjourn to Executive Session. Ms. Oporto seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved at 9:07 P.M.

Respectfully submitted:

Mary Anne Karwowski

**RECONVENE IN PUBLIC SESSION**

The Public Session reconvened at 9:08 P.M.

Ms. Habayeb moved the meeting adjourn. Mr. Capone seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 9:28 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted:

Phil Israel