

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

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**Regular Meeting**

**May 26, 2021**

Ms. Habayeb, President of the Board, called the regular meeting of the Westfield Memorial Library Board of Trustees to order at 7:35 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. Capone, Ms. Habayeb, Ms. Motwani, and Ms. Ramakrishnan. Staff members attending were Ms. Schulze and Ms. Karwowski.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ms. Habayeb moved the approval of the minutes of the April 28, 2021 regular meeting and the minutes of the March 24, 2021 and April 28, 2021 Board Executive Sessions. Ms. Motwani seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

The Financial Report for April 2021 was reviewed by the Board. Ms. Schulze added that the monies from the CARES reimbursement and insurance claim have been reflected in the financial report. Mr. Gildea informed her that the WML is responsible for the \$2,500 insurance deductible.

Mr. Capone inquired about the electricity reimbursement of \$1,020 which is included as a source of revenue in the Financial Report. Ms. Schulze replied to his satisfaction that we are still in discussions with the daughter of the owner of the solar panel company and the town attorney.

## **APPROVAL OF BILLS AND CLAIMS**

Ms. Ramakrishnan moved to approve the Bills and Claims totaling \$58,882.25 for May 2021. Ms. Habayeb seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

## **FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY**

Mr. Miller, co-President of the Friends, informed the board that the May 10<sup>th</sup> Friends meeting was held in person on Quimby Street. They celebrated Mr. Israel's retirement with Mr. Capone representing the WML Board of Trustees. The next meeting will be at noon on June 10 at Tamaques Park in the picnic area. They will hold their annual election of officers with the current officers on the slate for the next year.

The Friends recently awarded their annual scholarship. They also received a moving letter from a former recipient, currently a librarian in Warren County, who was so appreciative of being a recipient about a decade ago that she made a \$1K donation towards a future scholarship.

The reading buddies program concluded for the school year. The High School Community Service Club expressed interest in continuing the program during the next school year.

The Friends are seeking new board members who can bring new ideas to the group. Many of the existing board members have served for 10 years or more.

## **INTERIM DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

The Interim Director's Report was reviewed.

Ms. Schulze reiterated the increased services offered by the library commencing June 1, 2021. The WML will open at 9:30 A.M. Monday through Saturday rather than the current 10 A.M. opening. Computer access will increase from ½ hour sessions to one hour sessions. The water fountains will be accessible. Some tables and chairs will be available in designated areas. The Children's Department will not have the same seating accessibility as other areas.

Currently masks are mandatory in Westfield. The town is holding a meeting on Thursday, and Ms. Schulze believes it is to discuss whether masks will be required in

municipal buildings. If the town lifts the restriction concerning the wearing of masks then Ms. Schulze is seeking the board's support to continue the requirement of wearing masks in the WML. According to a section in the State Library Laws, libraries are permitted to impose stricter requirements regarding mask wearing in indoor settings.

The board supports Ms. Schulze's position but is asking what recourse the library has if a person refuses to wear a mask. It was felt that the library can mandate that the staff wear masks but possibly only recommend that the public wear a mask. The board also requested a copy of the material that Ms. Schulze was quoting from. Ms. Schulze will speak to Mr. Gildea concerning the measures the library can take if a person refuses to wear a mask. Ms. Habayeb suggested reaching out to the Town Attorney Tom Jardim.

Ms. Ramakrishnan added that possible conflict situations may be avoided by keeping a few masks at the Circulation Desk and offering it to a patron who has forgotten his or her mask.

Ms. Schulze will update Ms. Habayeb with information in answer to the above mentioned requests.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Ms. Habayeb asked for committee reports.

Ms. Schulze met with the Building and Grounds Committee concerning the solar panels. The committee expressed an interest in expanding the solar footprint to increase efficiency. They also are interested in how contracts have changed in this area. Ms. Schulze is pursuing this with the Town Attorney. The WML will go forward on a month-to-month basis and it is her recommendation to sign a contract for another year since it will take time to research the matter.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Ms. Habayeb asked the status on the return of overdue material from the library. Ms. Schulze replied that notices have been sent and the WML is seeing more movement in the return of late materials. Ms. Basso will continue to run overdue reports and pursue further emails to patrons. By the June meeting, Ms. Schulze will share statistics on the overdue materials.

## **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 director's 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 at 8 P.M. Ms. Behr-Shields seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted:

Mary Anne Karwowski

## **RECONVENE IN PUBLIC SESSION**

The Public Session reconvened at 8:15 P.M.

Ms. Habayeb moved the meeting adjourn. Ms. Behr-Shields seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 8:16 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted:

Jennifer Schulze