

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

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Regular Meeting

September 22, 2021

Ms. Habayeb, President of the Board, called the regular meeting of the Westfield Memorial Library Board of Trustees to order at 7:31 P.M.

Ms. Habayeb announced:

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: Mr. Boyes, Mr. Capone, Ms. Habayeb, Ms. Oporto, Ms. Ramakrishnan, and Ms. Saltzman. Staff members attending were Mr. McGinley, Ms. Schulze, and Ms. Karwowski.

Ms. Habayeb informed those in attendance that Ms. Behr-Shields moved outside Westfield. Therefore, she is no longer a member of the board. Later in the meeting it was mentioned that the by-laws permit one board member to be a non-resident of Westfield. This will be explored further.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Saltzman moved the approval of the minutes of the June 23, 2021 regular meeting. Ms. Ramakrishnan seconded the motion, and it was approved as follows:

AYES: Mr. Boyes, Mr. Capone, Ms. Oporto, Ms. Ramakrishnan, Ms. Saltzman

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: Ms. Habayeb

Ms. Habayeb moved the approval of the minutes of the July 16, 2021 special meeting. Ms. Ramakrishnan seconded the motion, and it was approved as follows:

AYES: Mr. Boyes, Mr. Capone, Ms. Habayeb, Ms. Ramakrishnan, Ms. Saltzman
NAYS: None
ABSTENTIONS: Ms. Oporto

Ms. Habayeb moved the approval of the minutes of the August 5, 2021 special meeting and Ms. Oporto seconded the motion. The motion was approved as follows:

AYES: Mr. Boyes, Ms. Habayeb, Ms. Oporto, Ms. Ramakrishnan
NAYS: None
ABSTENTIONS: Mr. Capone, Ms. Saltzman

Ms. Habayeb remarked that the minutes of the June 23, 2021 Executive Session were not included in the board packet. Ms. Saltzman had taken these minutes and had been waiting for the new director to be chosen and working on the job before forwarding the minutes to the new director. Mr. McGinley will research if it is necessary to approve Executive Session minutes. Ms. Habayeb concluded that any unapproved Executive Session minutes from 2021 will be addressed at the next meeting.

[Ms. Serapiglia entered the meeting.]

FINANCIAL REPORT

The Financial Report for June, July, and August 2021 were reviewed by the Board. Ms. Schulze added that patrons are starting to pay owed fines and quite a few tote bags have been sold.

Board members posed numerous questions which are summarized as follows:

- Ms. Habayeb asked what is the source of the \$51,872 “fines” revenue in the operating budget which appears on the June, July, August financial reports? Besides the town appropriation and state aid, revenues from the fines surplus fund were used to fund the budget.
- Ms. Habayeb observed that the computer service contracts and computer software expenses are at or approaching the budgeted amounts. What is the outlook in these areas for the end of year? Ms. Schulze replied that our IT employee has upgraded our software systems but there should be no other major expense in that budget line. Mr. McGinley added that the WML hired a full-time IT employee so some of the technological service costs will be re-evaluated.
- A board member asked for an explanation of the \$1,250 Westfield Foundation Grant. Ms. Schulze explained that this money is used to assist in paying the Summer Intern employed in the Children’s Department.

- A board member inquired as to what is the total amount of money in the fines surplus fund? Ms. Schulze replied that it is quite a lot of money and some of it can be used to match the HVAC construction grant.
- Ms. Saltzman asked if the WML received reimbursement for the costs incurred to fix the broken heating coils/pipe earlier in the year. Ms. Schulze responded that the WML was reimbursed the full amount of the insurance claim minus an approximate \$3,000 deductible.

Mr. McGinley explained that as a director he examines what percentage of the budget has been spent at any point in time. The WML has spent 70% of the budget but should have been at 67% at this point in the year. The increase is due to being required to pay the benefits cost upfront. He will be bringing a fresh pair of eyes to examining the budget lines during the next month.

[Ms. Motwani entered the meeting during the discussion of the Financial Report.]

APPROVAL OF BILLS AND CLAIMS

Ms. Ramakrishnan moved to approve the Bills and Claims totaling \$73,350.63, \$40,985.64, and \$48,553.88 for July, August, and September 2021, respectively. Ms. Habayeb seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Ms. Lechner and Mr. Miller, co-President of the Friends, informed the board of the planned events.

Book Sale

The first book sale in two years is currently being held and is doing fairly well.

Arches/ Anniversary Reception

On October 14th a library reception will be held with a formal ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the painted arches in the Children's area of the library and kick off the 50th anniversary year of the Friends. The invitees include the painter Caren Frost Olmsted, Town Council members, County Commissioners, School Superintendent, library board members, with the Mayor cutting the ribbon. The board can take this opportunity to formally introduce Mr. McGinley to the attendees. The Friends plan to conclude with a wine and cheese reception for which the Friends received permission from the Town.

Then on Sunday, the Friends will hold an event for approximately 30 invited children from ages 5 to 9. The librarians will hold a story time for the children and then a tour will be taken to view the various animals and details on the painted arches. The painter has agreed to supply line drawings of scenes from the arches for the children to color

which will subsequently be displayed at the library for Halloween. The Wild Animal Rescue Group will hold a demonstration outside the library. An ice cream truck will also be outside to provide refreshments to the children.

Ms. Saltzman pointed out that there might be a scheduling conflict with the Mayor since it appears that she has another event scheduled for the same night on the town calendar.

Ms. Oporto inquired about the wearing of masks when the wine and cheese is being served. Discussion ensued about the matter. The end result is that the Friends will rethink this but it appears that the best alternative might be to serve the wine and cheese outside in the tents that the library and Friends own.

Ms. Oporto offered to pass the information to the Board of Education if the co-presidents informed her of further details.

Museum Passes

The Friends have restarted the museum pass program with passes for 5 museums currently available. The passes will be re-introduced in groups of 4 to 5 throughout the year.

Ms. Serapiglia expressed the concerns of some of our patrons that there is no reservation system so it is very difficult to obtain an available pass after their work day has ended. Ms. Lechner responded that their first concern was to get the program back up and running but she would be receptive to the idea of a reservation system. Mr. McGinley offered to research how the reservations systems are working in libraries that have them and possibly obtain quotes on products. The smooth working of a reservation system is dependent on the patrons returning the passes on time so the next person can pick them up. Ms. Schulze added that currently there is a 4 day checkout period for the passes and with a reservation system that period might be lessened.

Friends - Miscellaneous

- The first trip to the Opera will occur on October 13th.
- The first book discussion group will be held on October 13th.
- The Friends awarded a scholarship to WML librarian Dana Rosen-Perez who is taking a Master's level class at Rutgers University.
- Collected \$13,000 in membership fees.

INTERIM DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Interim Director's Report was reviewed. Ms. Schulze informed the board that:

- Clogs in the pipes led to an overflow in the Technical Services Room and Local History Room. Most of the damage was insubstantial, but some periodicals had heavy water damage but were not irreplaceable.

- There was a sighting of a bat coming out of the Reference Office after hours. Animal control and the Health Department were contacted. The bat has not been sighted since then.
- WML is currently investigating roofing companies to mitigate problems with the leaks. The gutters will also probably need to be cleaned.
- Many programs have been held virtually. The library is trying to build interest into coming back physically into the library.

Ms. Habayeb inquired about the possibility of obtaining water sensors in the HVAC rooms to detect water. Ms. Schulze raised the question with our HVAC Company but never received an answer. She will follow-up on this matter.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Habayeb took the opportunity to formally introduce the new director Allen McGinley. She apologized for not doing so earlier in the meeting. Mr. McGinley delivered an oral report summarized as follows:

- Mr. McGinley has spent his brief time here learning and observing.
- He plans to make an effort to acquaint himself with the staff. Starting with the full-time employees, he will sit down with them on a one-to-one basis.
- Mr. McGinley is making an effort to meet the community. He attended the Friends meeting last week and joined the Rotary Club. The library's publicist has sent out press releases introducing him to the patrons. He is encouraging people to introduce themselves and provide feedback on their concerns. He is considering holding some events to introduce himself to the patrons in a town hall style meeting. The community has been welcoming to him so far.
- Mr. McGinley attended the Union County Library Directors' Meeting where COVID protocols were discussed. He has familiarized himself with WML's current procedures.
- The staffing levels must be assessed as he desires to expand the hours of operation and safely bring back any services that are possible. The staff has shown commitment to the library.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Habayeb asked for committee reports.

Ms. Habayeb noted that she has observed the articles about returning overdue materials to the library in the e-newsletters. Before the library sends out the notices declaring the materials lost, she feels that the committee should discuss the matter. This would be in anticipation of moving to a fines free policy. The new director Mr. McGinley remarked that he was pleased that the WML was moving in this direction since a fines free policy removes barriers.

Ms. Schulze stated that the WML has been extending the expiration date on the library cards since the pandemic commenced. As of October 1, the dates will not be extended and patrons must renew their card. In response to Ms. Saltzman's question, a book can be put on hold and the library card renewed when the patron visits the library.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Habayeb asked if there was any old business.

Ms. Oporto remarked that as the library expands hours and services, we should reconsider using the outdoor space as a parklet for library events/programs. Due to weather conditions it is probably too late to implement this in 2021, but the Building & Grounds Committee should consider this for 2022. Discussion ensued. The board members were receptive to the idea. Ms. Oporto will forward pictures to Mr. McGinley of examples of parklets around town.

Ms. Schulze added that before we promote more use of outdoor space, we consider assessing the safety of the sidewalks and stanchions (especially the sidewalk from the staff entrance door around to Archibald Street) and consider an outdoor security system. Ms. Serapiglia noted that perhaps board member Mr. Boyes, who is also on the Town Counsel, can advise us on the Town's sidewalk program. Ms. Schulze and Mr. McGinley plan to review the condition of the sidewalks and stanchions.

Mr. McGinley mentioned that in the Teaneck Library he received a grant to provide Wi-Fi outdoors in the parking lot and adjacent area.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Habayeb asked if there was any new business. Ms. Schulze presented the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 2021-09

Whereas, the Westfield Memorial Library has an established account with Bank of America with the Library's Interim Director, Jennifer Schulze, named signatory to the account and;

Whereas, Michael Allen McGinley II is the newly-appointed Director and therefore requires to be added as signatory, and;

Whereas, the Library's Interim Director, Jennifer Schulze, should thus be removed as signatory, and;

Now Therefore Be IT Resolved, on this day, the 22nd of September 2021, that the Westfield Memorial Library Board of Trustees authorizes Jennifer Schulze taken off as signatory to this account and adds Michael Allen McGinley II as signatory.

Ms. Habayeb moved to accept the resolution as written and Ms. Oporto seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted:

Mary Anne Karwowski

