

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

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Regular Meeting

March 30, 2022

Ms. Habayeb, President of the Board, called the regular meeting of the Westfield Memorial Library Board of Trustees to order at 7:30 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: Ms. Behr-Shields, Mr. Boyes, Mr. Collum, Ms. Habayeb, Ms. Motwani, Ms. Reilly, and Ms. Saltzman. Staff members attending were Mr. McGinley and Ms. Peist.

OATH OF OFFICE

Ms. Habayeb began with the welcoming of Ms. Elizabeth Reilly, the new Superintendent's Representative. Ms. Reilly was a teacher at Washington School for 17 years before joining the K-12 board. She is also a resident of Westfield. A brief round of introductions from the board ensued. Ms. Reilly read the Oath of Office.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Saltzman moved the approval of the minutes of the February 23, 2022 regular meeting. Ms. Motwani seconded the motion, and it was approved as follows:

AYES: Ms. Behr-Shields, Mr. Boyes, Mr. Collum, Ms. Saltzman

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: Ms. Habayeb, Ms. Motwani, Ms. Ramakrishnan, Ms. Reilly, Ms. Serapiglia

FINANCIAL REPORT

The Financial Report for March 2022 was reviewed by the Board. Mr. McGinley reported that it is early in the year and the finances are in very good shape. The Capital Projects Budget on page 2 is incomplete

since there is no Board approval of this yet. The library's reserves account will still be a source for some of the funds needed. Mr. McGinley planned to propose a resolution regarding this accounting later in the meeting.

APPROVAL OF BILLS AND CLAIMS

Mr. Collum started with a question about the library's bill processing. He shared his concerns about the delays causing late payments, especially to the utilities, and questioned if the payment process in place is because of the bureaucratic process involved.

Mr. McGinley acknowledged the issue, and explained that the reason the library payments take so long is due to the procedures. The Board of Trustees has to approve the bills and claims, then the Westfield Town Council reviews and approves them, finally checks are issued. Currently, Westfield's Financial Department manually enters the library's bills and claims into their payment system after township approval. The wait period is 3-4 weeks after the Town Council's approval before the library receives vendor payment checks. Mr. McGinley stated the library is getting ready to change our process in hopes of getting the checks in a timelier manner. He also mentioned that the library is working on the goal of getting on the Westfield Township's system to potentially reduce these payment delays.

Ms. Motwani asked for clarification that the library could potentially take the responsibility of entering the bills into the Township system to close the gap in payment delays. Mr. McGinley confirmed this.

Mr. Collum moved to approve the Bills and Claims totaling \$32,401.40 for March 2022. Ms. Motwani seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Ms. Lechner and Mr. Miller, co-President of the Friends, mentioned the following:

1. The Hale Series returned with retired Judge John Boyle. The Friends are happy to report it had a good attendance. This was also the first program the Friends live streamed plus recorded with the new equipment for the Friends YouTube channel, and stated the video quality was excellent.
2. The Friends YouTube channel is FWMLNJ, and subscription is encouraged. The channel is up and running with the Union County Heart grant covering most of the equipment purchasing costs. \$1,650 in equipment, with the grant funding, the Friends were responsible for \$300 only.
3. The book sale will be May 3-7, with preparations beginning April 23. Donations will be accepted April 27, 28, 30. April 30th is the day of the free market, where the Friends work with the town's Green Team to have a table.
4. Westfield DPW will provide a dump truck each day for the removal of unsellable books.
5. They are proceeding with plans for the staff box luncheon from the Friends.
6. As community service, the Friends partnered with the High School, and received at least 4 carloads of donation books ahead of the sale.
7. The Friends are exploring sponsoring a concert in Mindowaskin Park to be held by the choir of the Maplewood Glee Club, possibly songs of the 70s.
8. It is their anniversary, so the Friends are planning a potential Happy Hour event in June. They are reaching out to 16 Prospect to host, as well as the PTO and the Women's College Club who founded the Friends.

A board member inquired about the book sale and potential bag issues, as the single use bag ban goes into effect May 4th. Mr. Miller explained that the bag rule was looked into, and it does not apply to all businesses. The friends feel they can go forward with the book sale without issue.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Director's Report was reviewed. Mr. McGinley reported:

1. The ongoing Verizon security system issues that predated his time as Director have been resolved. There was a connection problem between the library and the Town Hall.
2. PSE&G Direct Install program is moving quickly. Audits of the library's lighting and HVAC systems took place. He is still waiting on eligibility covered costs from the 1.5 million in HVAC costs.
3. In the draft of the Capital Plan, there was an estimate for the library's roof. Deegan Roofing, Siding, and Gutters evaluated the roof, and found it has good life left. Repairs were completed to the areas with water intrusions. All that remains is cleaning and power washing, which is dependent on the weather.
4. The Town of Westfield's Green Team submitted an application for a Community Energy Plan grant for the library. If successful, the grant would provide \$5,000 towards the solicitation of a sustainable energy master plan. Gable Associates recommend investing \$10,000-\$15,000 for the best analysis results.
5. Masks were made optional on March 7th in coordination with the Town of Westfield and Westfield Public Schools. The library also expanded the hours of operation.
6. The library hosted events for NJ Makers Day on March 26th. Initial attendance count was listed as 150, but with the make and take-home kits, participation became over 300. The library was assisted by the Westfield High School Robotics Club, WHS 3D Printing Club, Union County 4H and others.
7. The Comcast internet Wi-Fi service in the library has been upgraded from 150 Mbps to 1 GB. This project was budgeted and planned for, and is finally executed.

Mr. McGinley was asked about the time frame for PSE&G. He will follow up on this. Mr. Collum inquired about the public's response to the library's extra hours of operation. Mr. McGinley stated that there wasn't much to report yet. This will take time, as it has been 2 years without evening hours, and statewide evenings are slower. He will evaluate the library's peak usage, and would like to heat map the library to see what the peak hours are. Mr. McGinley added that he is aware there are standard hours of operation, yet it is also a matter of what the community may need.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Habayeb asked for committee reports.

Buildings and Grounds

Mr. McGinley responded that they are working on the PSE&G Direct Install, the HVAC needs, and the different options for both the funding and grants available.

Long Range Planning

Ms. Motwani stated the intention to relaunch the Foundation for the Westfield Library, to raise funds for Capital projects. The committee has been reaching out to the previous Foundation members. The past Treasurer and President have been found, as well as the previous bylaws. Plans are being made to

sign over the Foundation. The strategy is to have a good structure in place for the Foundation before populating the board and renewing community outreach.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Habayeb asked if there was any old business.

Financial Reserves

Mr. McGinley discussed the library's reserve account. The library has close to \$1 million dollars from fees paid by patrons and previous year surpluses. He recommended that some of these funds be used for library capital improvements. There were previous talks about a budget, with no approval yet on what the library costs are.

A drafted resolution for the library surplus funds, Resolution 22-01, was presented and discussed. The HVAC estimate of 1.5 million contained portions that could be covered by the PSE&G Direct Install Program. So, \$750,000 is a reasonable budget for the remainder. Automatic doors and the elevator have needed repairs in the past, with the elevator problems stemming from a controller unit in need of replacement. Roof repairs finished off the list of serious facility issues that needed addressing.

Mr. McGinley included a list of technology upgrades as well. Upgrading the Meeting Room included HD cameras to be able to record and stream programs to the larger community while working with the existing Meeting Room size and audio. A mobile STEM lab would also meet the community's needs while the library does not yet have equipment or a designated space for this. A mobile lab would allow the library to start building STEM programming, and survey with time, what might need to be added.

Discussion ensued. Ms. Motwani recommended reaching out to the Town of Westfield's Technology Advisory. A Meeting Owl camera was suggested, as it has 360 degrees of rotation and follows the speaker, or can split screens for more than one person talking. Mr. McGinley also clarified that this Resolution does not require the library to spend all the funding this year, simply that the funds are designated for future projects.

Self-Checkout, including RFID tags, became another topic. Mr. McGinley stated that it would be an issue of timing, as both upgrading to RFID and the kiosks are usually done together, like Scotch Plains Library did. RFID tags are easier to use, but some machines can do both, as barcode readers and RFID tags.

The possibility of funds for an outdoor space was suggested, and Mr. McGinley admitted it was an oversight. \$20,000 was added to the Resolution draft, budgeting for the ability to increase usable outdoor space as well as provide cosmetic and privacy landscaping for the neighboring areas.

Mr. McGinley asked for a vote on Resolution 22-01 including the amendment of funds for the outdoor cafe.

Resolution 22-01 resolved that library surplus funds in the amount of \$930,000 be designated for specific library capital projects, as detailed below:

HVAC Replacement - \$750,000
Automatic Door Openers - \$5,000
Elevator Improvements - \$5,000

Roof Repairs - \$5,000
Outdoor Hold Pick- Up Lockers - \$35,000
Self-Checkout Kiosks - \$30,000
RFID Tagging - \$50,000
A/V Upgrades in Meeting Room - \$15,000
Mobile STEM Lab Equipment - \$15,000
Outdoor Café - \$20,000

Ms. Habayeb announced a roll call vote for the amended Resolution. It was unanimously approved as follows:

AYES: Ms. Behr-Shields, Mr. Boyes, Mr. Collum, Ms. Habayeb, Ms. Motwani, Ms. Reilly, and Ms. Saltzman.

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: Ms. Ramakrishnan, Ms. Serapiglia

PPE Policy

Mr. McGinley stated the Board had previously passed temporary amendments to the Personal Protective Equipment Policy. The situation has since changed, and masks are no longer required. He suggested rescinding this policy.

A discussion ensued, whether it was possible to use language to change the policy without rescinding it. In the end, Mr. McGinley stated that the mask issue is something people have strong feelings about, so it would be best if the board approved it before safety situations become a concern. Since the future is still unknown, there is the emergency option of a Zoom meeting after 48 hours' notice.

Ms. Habayeb moved to rescind the policy. Mr. Collum seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Miscellaneous

Ms. Habayeb inquired about outstanding books' financial values, and potential write-offs. Mr. McGinley stated he would run a report on this. A request for an update on the LMxAC and Libraries of Union County Consortium was made. There was no update since the previous month's reporting of Union County Library Directors met with the County. Mr. McGinley stated that the ILS services are paid through fall of 2023, with the library's contract up at the end of the year. The ILS is behind in updates, so the library would either have to update to a more expensive system or join a consortium.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Habayeb asked if there was any new business.

Ms. Habayeb announced that Ms. Amy Behr-Shields would be leaving the board to become the Director of the Summit Public Library.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

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 8:25 P.M. Ms. Behr-Shields seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted:

Nicole Peist

RECONVENE IN PUBLIC SESSION

The public session was reconvened at 8:35

Following Board Members were in attendance: Ms. Behr-Shields, Mr. Boyes, Mr. Collum, Ms. Saltzman, Ms. Motwani, Ms. Habayeb, and Ms. Reilly. Staff members attending were: Mr. McGinley.

Ms. Saltzman motioned:

That the termination of Ernest Agresto, Custodian, be accepted effective March 21, 2022.

That the appointment of Jill Neibert-Garnhart to the part-time position of Library Assistant, be accepted, effective April 13, 2022.

Ms. Habayeb seconded it. All were in favor.

Ms. Habayeb motioned that the meeting be adjourned, Mr. Collum seconded it. All were in favor. Public session was adjourned at 8:37.

Submitted by Mallary Saltzman, Board of Trustee secretary