

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

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Regular Meeting

June 22, 2022

Ms. Ramakrishnan, Vice President of the Board, called the regular meeting of the Westfield Memorial Library Board of Trustees to order at 7:30 P.M.

Ms. Ramakrishnan 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. Collum, Ms. Cusick, Ms. Motwani, Ms. Ramakrishnan, Ms. Reilly, Ms. Saltzman, and Ms. Serapiglia. Staff members attending were Mr. McGinley and Ms. Peist.

Members of the public present at the meeting were Bridget Soyka-Smith and Ally Smith of Soyka Smith Design Studios. Mr. McGinley said that in lieu of going directly into the regular meeting, there would be a presentation from Soyka Smith Design Studios.

PRESENTATION - Soyka Smith Design Studios

Bridget Soyka- Smith and Ally Smith on behalf of Soyka Smith Design Studios presented:

Westfield Memorial Library Design Package

A 26-page package was presented to propose a new design plan, with flooring and furniture ideas for the library. The presentation focused on ways to improve the inside of the library using paint, flooring, new furniture and finishes. The design showcased most of the library, but it was made clear that this was not the finished plan. The presentation was meant to be a base root starting point to both see a full future picture, while discussing it in phases of work over a period of years.

Highlights include:

- An entryway that would feel more like a living room.
- Rearranging a separate section for a Tween Zone with cork flooring, and a tiny cyber bar.
- Opening Teen Zone floor plan, adding seating around the pillars, and removing the curved wall between the Teen Zone to the Internet Café area. Another cyber bar area, and folding tables.
- Attempts at adding flexibility in inflexible areas with movable curved seating areas, art piece display cases on wheels. All materials would be bleach cleaning, in light woods and light colors.
- 2nd floor resigned with more seating down the center and by the windows.
- A smaller reference desk closer to the stairs.
- Multiple suggestions for a glass walls study area along the wall of study carrels. There would be an open top to these areas, so there are options for various sound deafening functionalities.

A discussion ensued, where various board members enquired about current existing elements, and rooms not listed in the design. Noted were the Children's area, the Local History room, and the Meeting room were not listed. As this was just an ideas presentation, concerns will be looked into going forward.

OATH OF OFFICE

Ms. Ramakrishnan began the regular meeting with the welcoming of Ms. Colleen Cusick to the board.

A brief round of introductions from the board members ensued. Ms. Cusick then read the Oath of Office onto the record and was sworn in.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Before the approval of the minutes, Mr. Collum asked about the Buildings and Grounds reporting in April minutes stating a different company for the Outdoor Café area. The presentation from Soyka Smith Design Studios also included a design for this area. There was a request for clarification. Mr. McGinley stated that the library was already in consultation with a landscaper for the design of the Outdoor Cafe. Soyka Smith Design Studios simply offered furniture suggestions.

Mr. Collum moved the approval of the minutes of the April 27, 2022 regular meeting, as there was no May meeting. Ms. Motwani seconded the motion, and it was approved as follows:

AYES: Mr. Collum, Ms. Ramakrishnan, Ms. Reilly, Ms. Saltzman, and Ms. Serapiglia.

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: Ms. Cusick, Ms. Habayeb, Mr. Katz, Ms. Motwani.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The Financial Report for May and June 2022 was reviewed by the Board.

There were no questions about the April statements from the May packet.

Mr. McGinley drew attention to some concerns in the June packet, which covered the May accounting. The library was pretty much through the gas and heating budget in the middle of the year. Mr. McGinley stated that it is his first full year, so the library has been following pre covid budgets. He will look into this matter, but a few factors have changed. First, the library's gas meter moved from inside the boiler room to outside the building, making meter reading easier. Second, the price of gas went up.

Ms. Saltzman mentioned that the electric budget is way down in terms of spending. Mr. McGinley said that summer had not started yet. A further discussion of the utilities and possibilities ensued. Mentioned was the ending of a 3rd party supplier through PSE&G. Mr. McGinley will monitor the bills, as energy costs will go up, and see if the library needs to find a new 3rd party supplier.

Mr. McGinley also stated that website maintenance spent more than he liked, but that the library overall hasn't spent as much as it should have yet. Also mentioned was the fact that the library's bookkeeper and Mr. McGinley have been entering bills into the town's system. Checks used to come six weeks after the board meeting are now coming one week after the board meeting, but he would need to see what happens with the second round of vendor checks. Consistent timing for the checks needs to be established before Mr. McGinley would feel confident knowing the new vendor check timing.

APPROVAL OF BILLS AND CLAIMS

Mr. Collum moved to approve the Bills and Claims totaling \$48,681.50 for May 2022. Ms. Reilly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Mr. Collum moved to approve the Bills and Claims totaling \$35,523.65 for June 2022. Ms. Reilly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

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

1. The book sale was successful in raising \$13,800. DPW saved the Friends money with the use of the town's dumpster.
2. The Friends held their election. The new co-Presidents are Mary Ellen O'Boyle and Harriet Davidson.
3. A cocktail reception was held at 16 Prospect to acknowledge the roles of the PTO and College Women's Club for helping found the Friends 50 years ago. Mr. Miller also thanked Ms. Motwani for attending the reception and making a speech.
4. The employee luncheon from the Friends and Trustees was a success. Mary Ellen oversaw this task. Al's Deli worked with the Friends to provide sandwiches based on their menu and gift cards. They also wanted to thank Jen for coordinating the library staff side of the process.
5. The Friends also hosted a luncheon for their volunteers which included book sale, books on wheels, and the free little libraries volunteers.
6. Sharing the Warmth, the Friends knitting group, participated in World Knitting in Public Day. Sharing the Warmth group donates blankets and hats among other items. In the past few years, they have donated to the Center for Hope Hospice, Books on Wheels patrons, and are in talks about trying to donate the Friend's 50th Afghan to the Children's Department.
7. The Mayor at the previous Town Council meeting issued a proclamation for the Friend's 50th anniversary. Ms. Lechner added that the Friends have had more interest in their programs and the Friends in general from the promotion of the Town Council proclamation. Mr. Miller thanked the Board for their recommendation for this proclamation, and mentioned the Friends have raised over \$1 million dollars in their 50 years.
8. Mr. Miller and Ms. Lechner also thanked the Board for the relationships developed over the past 2 years. They were both ending their terms of co-Presidency the week after this board meeting.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Director's Report was reviewed. Instead of reading highlights of the past two months, Mr. McGinley asked if there were any questions about the reports. There were none.

Mr. McGinley stated it was the first time ever that all the statistic numbers were up, compared to previous years, with the exception of in-person programs.

Ms. Saltzman and the other board members congratulated Mr. McGinley on his NJLA award, the 2022 New Jersey Library Association President's Award. He explained that this award is given to an NJLA member who demonstrated continued dedication to NJLA and provided inspiration and support to the President during that year.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Ramakrishnan asked for the committee reports.

Buildings and Grounds

The Green Team, on behalf of the library, applied for a Community Energy Planning grant. It would be for \$10,000. \$5,000 being earmarked for the library to pursue a Sustainable Energy masterplan. The library was unofficially informed that they will be receiving this grant, and are waiting for the formal grant to come through.

There is no update on Tri-State Light and Energy. July 1st will begin an increase in incentives, so the library might get better incentives going forward. The library was told it would be 4-6 weeks for a proposal, so we are still waiting for this.

Personnel

The committee stated they are working on mid-year informal reviews. The end of year review was a little late, and the mid-year will be too, as currently the committee is down to one person handling this.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Ramakrishnan asked if there was any old business. There was none.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Ramakrishnan asked if there was any new business.

Mr. McGinley included a draft of revisions to the old Rules of Patron Conduct. **Rules of Conduct** is a condensed and cleaned up conduct code. The changes made were:

- Responding to problems with eating in the library. A stricter policy on eating. Covered drinks are allowed, not food. Food is only acceptable in café or meeting room areas.
- Changed age to 10 years old for both children left unattended and unattended at library closing time. Previously there were two different ages listed.
- Adjustments made to the banned appeal process.

Ms. Reilly pointed out an error on page one. In the Overview paragraph, the last sentence still referred to the rules as Patron Conduct. If the name of the policy was changed to Rules of Conduct, that line would need correction.

Mr. Collum motioned to approve the Rules of Conduct. Ms. Motwani seconded, and it was unanimously approved.

After this the board members again discussed at length the presentation from Soyka Smith Design Studios.

Ms. Saltzman raised concerns about patrons not feeling greeted, and the possibility of moving the circulation desk. She also posed a question about bringing reference personnel to the first floor. Mr. McGinley stated there was more of a need for them on the second floor.

The question of a makerspace was also answered. There is a lot going on in Westfield, including the possibility of the Rialto becoming something else. If the Rialto becomes a space to partner with for programs or makerspace events, then it's not wise for the library to build a small makerspace when there could be a larger one down the road within the same number of years.

Ms. Ramakrishnan made points about the lack of signage in the examples given. Comments were made about the Teens wanting collections and tutor/study space more. Mr. McGinley wants an estimate for the children's area, and this would bring the proposal estimate closer to what he guesstimated.

Ultimately, Mr. McGinley was reminded about mobile makerspaces being marked in the budget, and he stated that there is a lot planned to do that is waiting on HVAC budgeting first. That is the biggest need at this time.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was none.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Ramakrishnan 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. Saltzman made a motion to adjourn to Executive Session at 9:21 P.M. Ms. Serapiglia seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted:
Nicole Peist

RECONVENE IN PUBLIC SESSION

The Public Session reconvened at 9:39 P.M.

The following Board Members were in attendance: Mr. Collum, Ms. Cusick, Ms. Motwani, Ms. Ramakrishnan, Ms. Reilly, Ms. Saltzman, and Ms. Serapiglia. The staff members attending were: Mr. McGinley.

Mallory Saltzman made a motion to accept the appointment of Daniel Fox and Rachel Simpson to the part-time positions of Youth Service intern, effective June 20, 2022, Ms. Ramakrishnan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Ramakrishnan motioned that the meeting be adjourned. Ms. Reilly seconded it. All were in favor. The public session was adjourned at 9:40.

Submitted by Mallory Saltzman, Board of Trustee secretary