

WESTFIELD MEMORIAL LIBRARY

550 East Broad Street
Westfield, New Jersey 07090-2197

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Regular Meeting

November 16, 2022

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. Collum, Ms. Habayeb, Mr. Katz, 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: Amy Lovato, resident of 617 Embree Crescent. Emily Barker 434 Longfellow Ave, Jeaneen McGuire 209 Woodland Ave, and Christine Binder 404 West Dudley Ave.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Habayeb moved the approval of the minutes of the October 26, 2022 regular meeting. Ms. Saltzman seconded the motion, and it was approved as follows:

AYES: Mr. Collum, Ms. Habayeb, Ms. Motwani, Ms. Reilly, and Ms. Saltzman,

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: Ms. Cusick, Mr. Katz, Ms. Ramakrishnan, and Ms. Serapiglia.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The Financial Report for October 2022 was reviewed by the Board.

APPROVAL OF BILLS AND CLAIMS

Mr. Collum moved to approve the Bills and Claims totaling \$43,962.15 for November 2022. Ms. Habayeb seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Ms. Davidson, co-President of the Friends, mentioned:

- The Friends have picked October 21-23, 2023 for the next children's book sale. This does not include set up time.
- They would also like to help with the library's 150th anniversary in 2023.
- The Friends ran into an issue with the puzzle sale. The meeting room is booked for the 4 days they would need.

This brought about a discussion for a solution. The Friends asked about using the hallway for a few days. The final suggestion was to consider working with the library's ongoing book sale shelving. The Circulation desk is used to collecting monies for this book sale, and the cost of used puzzles would be low enough to consider adding on there. The Friends will look into this.

FOUNDATION

Mr. Davies, President of the Foundation, reported that the focus of the Foundation is in IRS documentation for their status as a non-profit. Once this is solved, the Foundation would also like to meet with Mr. McGinley to discuss posting the Foundation Board positions, and the capital project the library would like the Foundation to focus on. The long-range planning committee asked to coordinate with Mr. Davies and the Foundation for that matter.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

- All previous year comparison numbers are up.
- Winter salt delivery has been received. The neighbors and Mr. McGinley were concerned about the type of salt used in the past. This year has switched to a people and pet friendly salt type.
- Elevator repairs were budgeted for, and Mr. McGinley is getting company quotes for this. The controller is a possible cause. Repairs may happen in early 2023.
- Direct Install Plan was signed and returned. Tristate is waiting on PSE&G's approval.
- A librarian attended a program about usability of websites with disabilities access. Mr. McGinley wants to focus on this with the library's website as well, for all accessibilities.
- Collaboration with the town had the Mayor attending a fantastic Hindu themed event at the library.

This last point caused a discussion about expanding cultural outreaches, starting with a series of readings for the different winter holidays.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Habayeb asked for committee reports.
There were none.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Habayeb asked if there was any old business.

Reconsideration Request

Mr. McGinley discussed the Reconsideration Requests for the book *Gender Queer* by Maia Kobabe. He made clear that this matter was for the two requests prior to this week. Requests received before November 10th, from Diane Pepetone and Amy Lovato. Mr. McGinley mentioned that there were two more received this week. One was resolved via email, and another has been forwarded to the Reconsideration Committee.

The Acquisitions and Services Committee met in regards to this title. They submitted a report on their recommendations which mentioned the library's collection development policy, Merriam-Webster dictionary's definition of pornography, and the American Library Association's guidance on labeling. The concluded recommendation of the Acquisitions and Services Committee is to not remove *Gender Queer* from the holdings of the Westfield Memorial Library, and further, to not prejudicially label or restrict access to library materials. The vote to approve the recommendations was motioned by Ms. Habayeb, seconded by Mr. Collum, and went as follows.

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

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: Ms. Cusick

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Habayeb asked if there was any new business. Mr. McGinley brought up the following topics.

FY23 Draft Operating and Capital Budget

Mr. McGinley started by highlighting the improvements from the previous year including roof repairs, expanding to night hours again, and joining a consortium. Then, he suggested recommendations for the FY23 budget. These priorities include an increase in Sunday staffing budget to expand from 9 months to 12-month Sunday services. Migration from the library's existing stand-alone ILS to a shared ILS. Funding for the overlap in the Head of Technical Services position. An increase to the part-time budget to fund annual increases and creation of a new outreach and program associate position.

Discussion about the outreach position centered on the staff being stretched too thin. A dedicated person would make a difference, and could have an outreach and marketing plan made with the ability to build in reaching different communities.

A discussion ensued covering the Tech Services overlap and the part time budget. Mr. Collum asked for clarification on why there was an overlap. One factor is Mr. McGinley trying to hire someone for this very critical position by Jan 2, 2023 so they can work with the current Head of Technical Services for the week before retirement on Jan 6, 2023. Another factor is that between library policy and Town policy, the retiring Head of Technical Services will be on the payroll for several months. There may be some looking into the various policies involved.

Ms. Habayeb asked if there was a sense of the FY22 year-end balance. Mr. McGinley stated that the library is at 79% of expenditures for the year. 76% full time and 75% part time employee expenditures, with a December 30th payroll date likely to include the increased salaries. The Capital Budget is tougher because of the HVAC. Some projects have been completed and removed from that budget; others are near completion but may not be finished by the end of December. The AV upgrade probably will be, but the outdoor patio is waiting on quotes. This will not use all of the reserves, and the budget will be voted on in the December meeting.

2023 Draft Board Meeting Schedule

Mr. McGinley drafted a schedule for the Board meetings that was presented. He suggested the Board look it over and vote on it in the December meeting. Mr. McGinley stated that he was holding the Holiday Closings draft due to Union concerns and contract issues that needed clarification in regards to the Christmas holiday closings due to it falling on a Sunday/Monday.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Christine Binder of 404 West Dudley Ave read from a prepared statement. The library asked for a copy of this three-page statement for our records. Points made during this statement are as follows:

- Gender Queer has graphic drawings and was displayed during Banned Book Week in an easily accessible area. Ms. Binder is confused why a school banned book was so easy to thumb thru.
- Five example pages were detailed for their graphic nature and problematic reasons. These pages are: p 42, 61, 135, 167, 222.
- There were concerns about pornography being hurtful to parts of developing brains, and the depiction of opioids being a way to cope given the opioids addiction plaguing the country.
- Aware that the Board could not comment, Ms. Binder posed questions for consideration. Among these were asks for balanced and responsible statement making displays.

Amy Lovato (617 Embree Crescent) is disappointed in the library's decision. She added that the library will not allow porn on the computers, but it is allowed in books. Ms. Lovato will reconsider her children visiting the library.

Emily Barker (434 Longfellow Ave) questioned the definition of porn the library used in its consideration. Ms. Barker doesn't understand why this book is being hailed and out in the open when the schools voted down graphic sex ed classes.

Jeanen McGuire (209 Woodland Ave) agreed with the statements made by the public present. There are ways to raise topics without harming children, and added that she can't believe how drastically the town changed over the last 12 years.

Ms. Habayeb thanked the public for their comments, acknowledging their anger and felt their upset. A clarification was made that the library used the definition of pornography as follows: The depiction of erotic behavior (as in pictures or writing) intended to cause sexual excitement.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 P.M.

Respectfully submitted:
Nicole Peist