

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

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Regular Meeting

October 25, 2023

Ms. Habayeb, President of the Board, called the regular meeting of the Westfield Memorial Library Board of Trustees to order at 7:34 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. Cusick, Ms. Habayeb, Mr. Katz, Ms. Motwani, and Ms. Ramakrishnan. Others attending were Mr. McGinley, Ms. Peist, Ms. Davidson and Ms. Colicchio.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Habayeb moved the approval of the minutes of the September 27, 2023 regular meeting. Ms. Motwani seconded the motion, and it was approved as follows:

AYES: Ms. Cusick, Ms. Habayeb, and Ms. Motwani.

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: Mr. Collum, Mr. Katz, Ms. Ramakrishnan, Ms. Reilly, Ms. Saltzman, and Ms. Serapiglia.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The Financial Report for September 2023 was reviewed by the Board. No discussions on this report.

APPROVAL OF BILLS AND CLAIMS

Mr. Collum moved to approve the Bills and Claims totaling \$97,807.16 for October 2023. Ms. Habayeb seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Ms. Davidson and Ms. Colicchio, co-President of the Friends, highlighted the following:

The Children and Teens Book Sale started today. The donations were good, and Ms. Davidson hoped the board members were members of the Friends as well.

Jewelry collection and pricing for the November sale is going well. There are 2-3,000 pieces collected so far. The Friends will start promoting the jewelry sale and may ask for coordination with the library's social media. They have a few pieces specialty priced, with the majority being in the \$1-\$5 range for the sale. There is enough in donations that they will consider another sale, as well as secure storage for the possibility jewelry sales continue to be another avenue for the Friends. The Westfield Friends are grateful for the Summit Friends' assistance with this project, and for all they have learned attempting this new venture.

FOUNDATION

Ms. Habayeb made the board aware of an issue that has come up with the Foundation. The Treasurer of the previous Foundation had been helping with the current Foundation, while a board was created for the newer Foundation. This person has asked to step away, so the Foundation is in a place where they need an interim leader for minimum requirements to maintain the Foundation.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

- It was another good statistics month, everything up, except web views which usually fluctuate.
- Mr. McGinley included visuals for the statistics the state put out on library funding per capita. Westfield ranked 8 of 20 in the Union County per capita funding, with \$98.92. Union County average is \$89.80.

When asked about the book mobile, Mr. McGinley reiterated the paths for the vehicle, and discussed the workshops attended at the book mobile conference. The library would have more of a delivery vehicle if it was all electric, due to weight issues. There was a plan for books by mail, which would be similar to the planned uses for the book mobile, so the book mobile will take priority. Mr. McGinley advised the board that the library has to be careful and clear in the communications about the mobile's

needs, as the vendors are used to dealing with major cities or rural county needs. The book mobile project is on pause, while the budget gets completed.

Mr. Collum asked Mr. McGinley about the roof issues. Since the meeting was held on the second floor, Mr. McGinley was able to point out portions of the ceiling in Technical Services that suffered damage. The flat portion of the roofing was found to have dry rot and other damage that is expected to be repaired within the next few weeks.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

OLD BUSINESS

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

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Habayeb asked if there was any new business.

Library Holidays/Closing 2024

Mr. McGinley started with the draft for 2024 Library Holidays and Closings. The board had asked the previous year to present the draft for discussion in October. Mr. McGinley stated that it was an easier year because the 2023 holidays were on weekends, causing extra closing days during the week. The 2024 holidays are more straightforward. The list included the federal holidays, as well as the contractual holidays, and the holidays that because voluntary as of the 2023 closings. Mr. McGinley noted that the library removed the summer Sunday closings, so the additional closing days of Mother's Day and Father's Day is to save staffing issues and money on less popular library days. The 1 pm closings Thanksgiving Eve and New Year's Eve also lessen staffing concerns and fall in line with school closing schedules.

Mr. Katz mentioned that there are four Christian religious days off. There is no mention of other religious days off and was also curious how non-Christian holidays were handled with personnel. Mr. McGinley answered that no one is sure how to solve this yet. Currently, there are no non-Christian holidays that are also Federal holidays, nor are they in the union contract rules. Employees use paid vacation time. Mr. McGinley will look at the contract for next year. As it stands, the library follows the town's 13 holidays, with floating holidays if it is not aligned. Ultimately, Mr. McGinley tries to strike a balance between the holidays being seen/observed while also trying to keep the library open as much as possible. The vote on these drafted closings is pushed back to the November meeting.

FY24 Budget

Mr. McGinley stated that the finance committee discussed the budget priorities for 2024. First, a breakdown of the 2023 budget goals recapped the plans and progress of this year. The Capital budget had a lot of progress; completing AV upgrades, outdoor patio, transition of tech, and a large chunk of the HVAC work. The numbers for funding from the state came in for 2024.

The priorities for the 2024 budget year are as follows. Increasing utilities budget for the increased costs for gas and water. Increasing the computer software budget and reducing the computer hardware budget. A change to budgeting amounts for the cleaning service that replaced the custodian job, allocating that employment funding to the budget that pays for the cleaning service. Cost of living raises that align with the state changes for 2024.

Mr. McGinley also listed five potential job priorities.

Promoting a part-time library assistant to full-time. Currently, Circulation has one full time supervisor. The library has a great part time staff. This promotion would ensure Circulation would have a second person in charge if the supervisor is unavailable, and the primary task would be coordinating the high volume of books for LMXAC requested deliveries.

Adding a part-time Social Worker. Recently, the library had assisted a woman who did not have housing. There are also several older gentlemen with health issues that affect all library patrons. This position would be library focused, instead of Mr. McGinley bringing such matters to the town's health advisor. This position would be more like a liaison, assisting the public as well as helping with programs for the public and staff. This position would be on site flexible, and answer to Mr. McGinley.

Social Media Content Creator. The library is doing well with social media posting and is a popular resource. However, the current way this is handled is not sustainable, even with a full-time Public Relations person. Understanding social media platforms, and creating content is a skill. Mr. McGinley sees this as a potentially shared part-time position, working flexibly and remotely with the Public Relations person and Mr. McGinley overseeing this position.

Development Associate. This was a position in the development plan. Staff changing to assist with development. This part time position would focus on grant writing for the library, as well as fundraising assistance. A part-time position that answers to Mr. McGinley and the Admin department.

Production Assistant. This is an as-needed position, for assisting with recording events. Mr. McGinley sees a high school production department applicant that is paid a stipend for their time per event.

Added budgets for the 2024 fiscal year were: Fencing/Landscaping, Duct Cleaning, Bookmobile, Strategic Planning Services, Local History Room Renovations, as well as Second Floor Renovations.

A discussion of all that was in the budget ensued. Mr. McGinley stated that a trend in smaller libraries is to ask the staff there to do more instead of hiring new positions. Westfield Library is staffed like a smaller library in this way. Mr. Collum was impressed that all the jobs asked for by Mr. McGinley are less than 3% of the budget and gives so much back in value. The materials budget increased to cover more E-books and book sanctuary needs. Also added was an Outreach budget for marketing. Mr. McGinley was asked about the Capital Reserves budget. There are no estimates for the HVAC temperature controls yet. Other budgeted items roll over into the 2024 budget, like the automatic doors and elevator improvements. RFID tagging is actively moving, projected to start by the end of the first quarter. Once that is completed, outdoor pick-up lockers and self-checkout kiosks can be placed. The current library strategic plan ends in 2024, so a budget was put together for a new plan to be worked on. \$300,000 is budgeted for the second-floor renovations, but it might be more. Mr. McGinley budgets conservatively.

Ms. Habayeb moved to approve the FY2024 Budget Proposal. Mr. Collum seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Collection Development Policy

Mr. McGinley reminded the board that the previous meeting approved the library as a book sanctuary. Updating the Collection Development Policy included wording for this book sanctuary protection. “Endangerment of work due to documented attempts to censor or suppress” was added to criteria for the selection of materials. Criteria for collection maintenance point 5, inclusion in standardized lists, added “including lists of books that are frequently challenged”. The special considerations section added “Banned Books. As a “book sanctuary”, the library will acquire and protect books that have been the subject of documented efforts to censor, challenge, or suppress.”

Ms. Habayeb moved to approve the changes to the Collection Development Policy. Mr. Collum seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was none.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted:

Nicole Peist