

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

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Regular Meeting

January 24, 2024

Ms. Habayeb, President of the Board, called the regular meeting of the Westfield Memorial Library Board of Trustees to order at 7:46 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. Cusick, Mr. Domogala, Ms. Habayeb, Ms. Motwani, Ms. Ramakrishnan, Ms. Reilly, and Ms. Saltzman. Others attending were Mr. McGinley, Ms. Peist, Ms. VanArendonk, Ms. Davidson, and Ms. Colicchio.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Habayeb moved the approval of the minutes of the December 20, 2023 regular meeting. Ms. Saltzman seconded the motion, and it was approved as follows:

AYES: Ms. Cusick, Ms. Habayeb, Ms. Motwani, Ms. Ramakrishnan, Ms. Reilly, and Ms. Saltzman.

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: Mr. Collum, Mr. Domogala, and Ms. Serapiglia.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The Financial Report for December 2023 was reviewed by the Board. Mr. McGinley pointed out that this reflects almost all of the expenditures, with a few remaining bills to be paid from the 2023 budget, so the surplus will be similar to last year. He also drew attention to the second Bank of America statement, as that is the account opened for annual appeal funds. There was a big response, and Mr. McGinley has more checks to deposit. The appeal has received \$21,523.16 so far. A discussion of the process for these annual appeals funds ensued.

APPROVAL OF BILLS AND CLAIMS

Mr. McGinley took a moment to explain the various budgets and years paid from that made this month's bills and claims a color-coded breakdown. Ms. Habayeb moved to approve the Bills and Claims totaling \$93,683.37 for January 2024. Ms. Saltzman seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Ms. Davidson and Ms. Colicchio, co-President of the Friends, jointly presented:

- There was no January Friends meeting.
- The Friends awarded an applicant a scholarship, and are extending ways to get the information out, as they want to award more of them.
- The puzzle sale is at the end of February, the sale is very popular, and continues to be sold inside the library regularly as well as an annual sale.
- Spring will be very busy as well, with the Book Sale coming in April.

FOUNDATION

Ms. VanArendonk, President of the Foundation, updated the board with the following: The Foundation held a January meeting, as they have 3 board members and are trying to find more as well. They may have another member soon. Ms. VanAredonk reminded all that the Foundation was formed to make larger fund-raising efforts on behalf of the library for larger scale improvements. For a while, the Foundation went defunct, and the new members are trying to restart everything to continue this effort again. They will also contact a consulting firm from Maplewood to help with the restart. The Foundation is hoping for a website later in the year.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

- The Local History room, which hosted the board meeting, was finished the day before. IT and books will come soon, along with other minor updates to the space.
- Statistics were up across the board, except for social media. The Instagram numbers were up, as there is no Facebook usage yet. Mr. McGinley recapped the Facebook hack issue for the board.
- Mr. McGinley discussed the Capital Funding by the local government graph, showing the Union County libraries. Fanwood had a state grant, Berkley Heights moved buildings, Summit was surprising with their funding. He added that there were 50 different categories in this report.

- The state library is offering new trustees training, and our library requires 7 hours total per year. Ms. Cusick expressed interest, and Mr. McGinley will send the Zoom link for the March training.

Mr. McGinley asked if there were questions related to his report. Ms. Cusick asked about the duct cleaning, including how dirty it was. Mr. McGinley said that they did find bird nests and cleaned them out, adding duct cleaning should be in future budgets. Ms. Reilly appreciates the MLK and Black History Month programming the library is hosting, as the library can be a closer walk than the intermediate schools for some. Mr. McGinley explained that after the meeting room was painted, a Black History exhibit was put up. The regular framed art in the meeting room will go back up after the exhibit and various Westfield related Black History programs end. Ms. Ramakrishnan asked about the Local History Room's empty shelving. Mr. McGinley stated that the library paired down its local history collection, and the cabinets with doors will hopefully help preserve the items more sensitive to the elements.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Habayeb asked for committee reports. There was 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.

Mr. McGinley brought up the FY23 Annual Report, starting by saying the financial statement was added to with more explanations for the major expenditures. Ms. Motwani discussed the library's efforts for fundraising in the future and asked for the library stats to be included in the town budget presentation, as the library is part of the municipality, and the library's value is \$16,000 in returns for a \$3,000 investment. Mr. Domogala asked about the state aid process, and Mr. McGinley discussed the history of this process. It's about \$1.25 per person, with major funding cuts in the 2008-9 recession. There are efforts to get the amount back up a little, but most often, the libraries are asked to meet with their legislators every year to explain what they do with the funding. Ms. Saltzman pointed out a minor error. Mr. McGinley said that he highlighted borrowed books and major projects more this year.

Mr. McGinley ended with the letter from the state for trustees. It simply outlined the policies that the state felt needed reminders or explanation. This included the following points: Library Trustees are an autonomous board, return of library excess funding law N.J.S.A. 40:54-15, and libraries may not charge room rental fees.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was none.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Habayeb moved the meeting adjourn at 8:20 P.M. Ms. Cusick seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted:
Nicole Peist