

East Brunswick Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
May 19, 2020

Attendees:

Deborah Cornavaca, President
Mary Pan, Vice President
Arti Punjabi, Treasurer
Patricia Palumbo, Secretary
Mayor Brad Cohen
Dr. Ken Freedman
Barbara Wendell
Kathy Spadafino
Nicole Tibbetts

Melissa Kuzma, Interim Library Director
Daragh McAuley, Exec. Administrative Ass't.
Karen Karnchanapee, Pres., Friends of the Library
Angel Albanese, CFO, East Brunswick Township
Aaron Pickett, Youth Services Manager
Melissa Hozik, Adult Programming Librarian
Wayne Christie
Jen Fitzgerald

Note: The meeting was held via zoom conference.

Ms. Cornavaca called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. A roll call was made and a quorum was present. Ms. Cornavaca stated that the meeting was advertised and the open public meeting act requirements were met.

Agenda:

Ms. Punjabi made a motion to approve the May 19, 2020 agenda. Dr. Freedman seconded. Voting yes: Mayor Cohen, Ms. Cornavaca, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Pan, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Spadafino, Ms. Tibbetts and Ms. Wendell. Voting no: none.

Minutes of April 21, 2020:

Dr. Freedman made a motion to approve the minutes of April 21, 2020. Ms. Cornavaca seconded. Voting yes: Mayor Cohen, Ms. Cornavaca, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Pan, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Spadafino, Ms. Tibbetts and Ms. Wendell. Voting no: None. There were no matters arising from these minutes.

Public Participation:

Karen Karnchanapee, President of the Friends of the Library reported that the Friends voted in new officers for 2020-2021. Anita Varshney will be stepping down as co-President, and Linda Carbley will take her place. One hundred-sixty people registered for the Friends program on May 14. The Friends are thinking of new events for the fall. Ms. Cornavaca thanked the Friends for all of their hard work and dedication to the library.

Wayne Christie reported that he attended the NJLTA meeting, and that the Trustee Training Institute is still scheduled for the fall. He also shared that BCCLS is holding an online seminar about the re-opening of libraries.

Treasurers Report:

Ms. Cornavaca noted that the library is seeing the impact of the closure with usage statistics and revenue being down. Ms. Cornavaca made a motion to approve the May 6 and 20, 2020 bill lists. Ms. Pan seconded. Voting yes: Mayor Cohen, Ms. Cornavaca, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Pan, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Spadafino, Ms. Tibbetts and Ms. Wendell. Voting no: None.

Correspondence:

There is no correspondence.

Reports of Standing and Special Committees:

No committees met.

Director's Report:

Ms. Kuzma reported that she attended, virtually, the Human Relations Council event on April 29 to share all of the services that the library is offering at this time. Immediately upon closure, the library programming became virtual. There are storytimes, craft programs, technology training, a weekly Lunch and Learn with Doctors program and more. 90 YouTube videos have been uploaded, which have had 2,800 views. The library has issued 185 new library cards, and has answered 224 reference questions. Digital resource usage is up, and Universal Class had 3,000 uses in April.

The circulation department is working on a curbside pick up procedure, to be implemented as soon as staff returns to the building. 25,810 items are currently on loan, and procedures are being developed to quarantine and shelve these items when they are returned. A virtual time capsule project has been started, to commemorate this unique time in our history. A survey has been distributed to library patrons, to ascertain what they would like to see when the library re-opens. 637 responses have been received so far, with virtual programming, children's programming and job search assistance high on the wish list. Afternoons are the time when most people want the library to open.

A discussion was held on how to disinfect the materials being returned. Ms. Kuzma has read different recommendations on how long items should be quarantined, ranging from 24 hours to 9 days. She is waiting for further guidance on this from the state library and ALA.

Ms. Tibbetts said that she will work with Aaron Pickett to see what kind of summer programming will be offered.

Old Business:

A. Resolution #10,751 Appoint Library Labor Attorney

Resolution #10,751

Appointing Library Labor Counsel

WHEREAS, the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees authorized the Township of East Brunswick to utilize its website for the benefit of the East Brunswick Public Library and to publish a legal advertisement for Requests For Quotations for the position of Library Labor Counsel; and

WHEREAS, the Library Board received Qualification Statements from Eric M. Bernstein & Associates, LLC, Andrew P. Oddo, Esq., Rainone, Coughlin and Minchello, Weiner Law Group- Douglas Zucker, Esq., and Cleary, Giacobbe, Alfieri, Jacobs, LLC.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees that it hereby appoints _____ as Library Labor Counsel, effective January 1, 2020, through December 31, 2020, in accordance with the response to the Request for Quotations for the provision of professional services for the position of East Brunswick Public Library.

Mayor Cohen made a motion to hire the firm of Cleary, Giacobbe, Alfieri and Jacobs as the Library Labor Attorney. Dr. Freedman seconded. Ms. Cornavaca recommended adding an amendment to the resolution to include Andrew Oddo as a conflict attorney, should the need arise. Voting yes: Mayor Cohen, Ms. Cornavaca, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Pan, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Spadafino, Ms. Tibbetts and Ms. Wendell. Voting no: None.

New Business:

A. 2020 Budget Cuts

Ms. Cornavaca reported that the Mayor notified her that \$600,000 will be cut from the previously proposed 2020 budget. Ms. Kuzma reviewed the budget and identified a savings of \$150,000 to \$175,000. She suggested using reserves to make up the difference. This, however, will impact the 2021 budget as well. Ms. Albanese spoke, at the request of Mayor Cohen, and said that the town council will hold a special meeting on May 21 to re-examine the budget. The township has lost significant revenue due to the covid crisis, and the state budget is delayed as well. Ms. Albanese is working with Ms. Kuzma and the library auditor to see if the library fund balance can be increased.

B. Renovation Update

Ms. Kuzma reported that, at the May 18 town council meeting, the council voted to issue a bond for the library renovation project. It was supported unanimously, and Ms. Cornavaca thanked them for their support. Ms. Kuzma is prepared to submit the construction bond application, which is due by June 5.

C. Re-opening Plan

Ms. Cornavaca said that she has reviewed this plan with Ms. Kuzma, but that the plan is by no means final, as she is still waiting for guidelines from the CDC and the state. The proposed plan is to re-open with a 3-phase plan. Some services will be resumed prior to the full opening of the library.

Phase 1 will have maintenance staff thoroughly clean the building. Phase 2 will see limited staff return, on a rotating basis, with the book drops opened, and curbside pickup of materials for patrons. Phase 3 will allow the public to return to the building, with limited library hours as well as the number of people in the building.

Ms. Kuzma is working with the Fire Marshall and the building department to determine the building occupancy rate, as this is unknown at this time. This number will determine the number of people allowed in the building, as it is presumed that the Governor will limit the occupancy to a certain percentage. Ms. Kuzma and Ms. Filippone have developed this plan after meetings with Library Link and other library directors. Cleaning supplies are being ordered in preparation of opening, and each staff member will receive one reusable mask. Ms. Kuzma is keeping track of all supplies ordered and submitted a total to Ms. Albanese, in the hope that some of this can be reimbursed with money from the CARES Act.

A discussion was held about security in the building and the disinfection of the returned items. Ms. Kuzma shared that an electrostatic sprayer was purchased that will be used for general building disinfecting. The current plan shows that the public bathrooms may be closed, and this was questioned, as people are encouraged to wash their hands. Ms. Cornavaca stated that this plan will most probably be amended before it will be implemented, and as it will be a fluid document, it will not be formally adopted by the Board. Ms. Kuzma stated that several library policies will need revision and Board approval, such as the Code of Conduct and the Circulation Policy.

Information Items:

Mayor Cohen shared that he has seen a huge outpouring of support from the community and a great display of humanity.

Ms. Pan praised the staff for all of the new and innovative ways they are reaching out to the library patrons.

Dr. Freedman made a motion to adjourn at 8:10 pm. Mayor Cohen seconded.