

East Brunswick Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
April 21, 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.
Art Lewin, Trustee Emeritus
Angel Albanese, CFO, East Brunswick Township
Aaron Pickett, Youth Services Manager
Gary Matoren, East Brunswick Resident

Note: The meeting was held via zoom conference.

Ms. Cornavaca called the meeting to order at 7:02 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. Ms. Cornavaca welcomed Ms. Tibbetts to the Board, who then introduced herself to the other Board members.

Agenda:

Mayor Cohen made a motion to revise the April 21, 2020 agenda to include a discussion about the selection of the Library Labor Attorney. Ms. Spadafino seconded. Voting yes: Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Spadafino, Ms. Tibbetts and Ms. Wendell. Voting no: Ms. Cornavaca, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Pan and Ms. Punjabi.

Minutes of March 17, 2020:

Mayor Cohen made a motion to approve the minutes of March 17, 2020. Ms. Punjabi 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:

Ms. Cornavaca shared that the Friends of the Library and the Teen Representatives opted not to attend the meeting.

Mayor Cohen wanted to give a round of applause to all of the township employees who are working to help the township run efficiently, and he noted that the Library is doing an

exceptional job. He also shared that finances will be an issue moving forward which will be addressed at a later time.

Mr. Matoren gave brief remarks about his philanthropy around the township.

Treasurers Report:

Ms. Spadafino made a motion to approve the March 30, and April 22, 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 reviewed some of the at home services that the library is offering at this time, including issuing library cards, and answering circulation and reference questions. Several on-line programs have been offered, including technology training, storytimes, Lego Club, and a new weekly Lunch & Learn Health Program. All programs are also being streamed on YouTube. The IT department is working with Rutgers University on donating unused computers for use on computing a vaccine for Coronavirus. The 3D printer will be used to make ear guards for N95 masks.

The management staff is working on a re-opening plan, which may include an A/B shift for staff, and Ms. Kuzma has purchased sneeze guards, a sanitizing gun and tape to mark off the carpet for use when the library re-opens. Mayor Cohen informed Ms. Kuzma that these items may be eligible for reimbursement from FEMA. Mayor Cohen asked how staff who don't have a role at this time are being used. Ms. Kuzma responded that some staff are taking training classes.

Ms. Cornavaca made a motion to approve the staff changes on the March 2020 Director's Report. Mayor Cohen 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.

Old Business:

A. COVID -19 Update

Ms. Kuzma reviewed all that the library is doing under the Director's Report, above.

B. Library Labor Attorney

Mayor Cohen recommended the hiring of the firm of Cleary, Giacobbe, Alfieri and Jacobs as the Library Labor Attorney. He feels that it is important to hire a labor attorney now, as labor issues, such as employee testing, may arise once the library re-opens. This firm is the Township, as well as the Board of Education, Attorney, and since the library shares many things with the township, he feels that this would be a good fit. Mayor Cohen feels that labor law is not special to libraries, and having someone integral to the township is of paramount importance. The fee that this firm proposed is the same as the other proposals, so cost is not an issue.

Mayor Cohen then made a motion to hire Cleary, Giacobbe, Alfieri and Jacobs as the Library Labor Attorney. Ms. Cornavaca said that a vote cannot be held at this time, since only a discussion about this issue was on the amended agenda, and not a vote. Mayor Cohen then asked for an emergency meeting to vote on this, sometime before the next scheduled Board meeting. Ms. Cornavaca said she will work with Ms. Kuzma to set a date for this.

Ms. Pan added that she reviewed all of the Labor Attorney proposals, and she feels that Andrew Oddo, who has been the labor attorney for 7 years, is a better fit. He has library experience, knows EBPL, and has a good working relationship with the staff. Ms. Cornavaca shared that if Cleary, Giacobbe, etc., was hired, she would want to also hire a conflict attorney to have on retainer in case any conflicts between the library and township arise.

Ms. Tibbetts asked to be brought up to speed on this issue, as she was not on the Board when this matter first arose. Library Administration will send out the attorney proposals to all of the Board members, as well as a chart that was prepared comparing all proposals.

Information Items:

Ms. Pan shared that she appreciates all that the staff is doing. She feels that the communication and adaptation of the staff has been wonderful.

Ms. Spadafino asked what should she do with all the thank you cards that she wrote for the staff, in celebration of Library Appreciation week. Ms. Kuzma responded that they should be distributed once the library re-opens.

Dr. Freedman asked if there will be any economic impact on the Library Construction Bond. Ms. Cornavaca responded that there should not be, as this money has already been allocated. The application deadline is June 5. Ms. Kuzma said that the library has completed the majority of their work for the application, and they are just waiting for the township's resolution to bond for the matching funds.

Dr. Freedman made a motion to adjourn at 7:50 pm. Ms. Pan seconded.