

East Brunswick Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
December 20, 2022

Attendees:

Otu Amankwah	John Arthur, Library Director
Wayne Christie	Michael Bobish, Assistant Library Director
Mayor Brad Cohen	Daragh McAuley, Exec. Admin. Assistant
Ken Freedman	Debbie LeSeur, President, Friends of the Library
Patricia Palumbo	Shreya Bhardwaj, Student Representative
Aarti Punjabi (left 8:30)	
Nicole Tibbetts	

Ms. Palumbo called the meeting to order at 7:32 pm. A roll call was made and a quorum was present. Ms. Palumbo stated that the meeting was advertised and the Open Public Meeting Act requirements were met.

All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes of November 15, 2022:

Mr. Christie made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 15, 2022 regular meeting. Ms. Tibbetts seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Mr. Christie, Mayor Cohen, Ms. Punjabi and Ms. Tibbetts. Voting no: None. Abstaining: Dr. Freedman and Ms. Palumbo.

Public Participation:

Shreya Bhardwaj, the Student Representative, read the teen report for November. Several programs were held during the month, including a TAG meeting, the debate team, and an Intermediate Python Series. 86 teens volunteered this month, and logged 109 volunteer hours.

Debbie LeSeur submitted the report for the Friends of the Library. Bunco will be held again on January 13, and they will hold a Krispy Kreme fundraiser on February 12 to coincide with Super Bowl Sunday. Pocketbook Bingo will be held on March 10. They are also planning a Cinnaholic fundraiser later in the spring.

Mr. Arthur reported that the Foundation met earlier in the month and discussed purchasing outdoor book lockers. This is a lower cost way of providing 24-hour service to patrons than other options. There are larger size lockers available to fit maker kits. If it is successful here, they also discussed installing them at other locations around the township. Mr. Arthur also reported that he has spoken with another person who may be interested in joining the Foundation Board.

Mayor Cohen reported that he just returned from a trip to Israel, where he signed a twin city agreement with Yavne. This city is similar in size to East Brunswick, and Mayor Cohen looks to improve relations with them, and provide business opportunities.

Ms. Tibbetts reported that Hammarskjold Upper Elementary School recently held a book collection and received 125 books which will be distributed to families. Winter concerts in the schools are scheduled for this week. New courses are being introduced in the High School, entitled 'English for Special Topics.' These are electives for seniors, and the course subjects are voted on by the incoming seniors. The 5 topics picked for next year are: Society, Psychology and Social Nature; Crime and Justice; Sports and Gaming; Film and TV and; Music and Arts.

Treasurers Report:

Mr. Arthur reported that revenue has exceeded the amount budgeted for the year. He further explained the error made by TSYS and library staff efforts to recoup the money. Research is being done to change credit card processing companies. The budget looks like it will come close to what was projected. Mr. Arthur submitted the paperwork for the Community Development Block Grant, and is hopeful that the library will receive \$56,000 towards the children's room renovations. Mayor Cohen announced that the \$750,000 for the HVAC repair is still in the bill that is before Congress, and it may be passed by the end of the week.

Mayor Cohen made a motion to approve the December 21, 2022 bill list. Ms. Punjabi seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Mr. Christie, Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Punjabi and Ms. Tibbetts. Voting no: None.

Correspondence:

Mr. Arthur distributed a letter from Senator Cory Booker in which he nominated the library for the IMLS National Medal for Library and Museum Service.

Reports of Standing and Special Committees:

A. Building Committee

This children's room renovations are continuing.

The remainder of the committees' actions will be discussed under new business.

Director's Report:

Mr. Arthur said that the construction timeline is expanding, due to some issues with the sprinkler system. The hearing loop induction system has been installed. Staff training will be held in the 2023, and then it will be advertised to the public.

Ms. Tibbetts made a motion to approve the staff changes in the Director's Report. Dr. Freedman seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Mr. Christie, Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Punjabi and Ms. Tibbetts. Voting no: None.

New Business:

A. Notary Service- Updated Policy

Mr. Arthur explained that in the past, notary service was a procedure but had never been approved by the Board. The policy that he has presented aligns with what other libraries in the area offer. This has been reviewed by the policy committee and the attorney.

Mayor Cohen made a motion to approve the notary policy. Mr. Amankwah seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Mr. Christie, Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Punjabi and Ms. Tibbetts. Voting no: None.

B. Personnel Manual- Updates regarding time tracking

Mr. Arthur spoke to the attorney and it was suggested that the library keep time card records for the full-time staff. Currently, only part-time staff clock in and out. It is important to keep track of who is the building in the case of an emergency, and for accountability. Managers or administration will have to manually change the records for any off-site work or work from home. Mr. Bobish also shared that the desk schedule would be rolled out at the same time as this- January 1.

Mr. Christie made a motion to approve the personnel manual updates. Mr. Amankwah seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Mr. Christie, Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Punjabi and Ms. Tibbetts. Voting no: None.

C. Strategic Plan Discussion

Mr. Arthur reported that Rutgers received approximately 400 survey responses, and he spoke to them about sending out the survey again, but it would take considerable expense. He feels that sending out a short 1 or 2 question survey would be beneficial. A lengthy discussion ensued and it was agreed that library administration would send out 2 short surveys, translated into 5 or 6 languages. One survey will ask about library usage, and the other about whether residents would utilize a library branch or book mobile and other topics that were discussed in the focus groups.

D. 2023 Budget Discussion

Mr. Arthur reported that a preliminary draft budget is complete but is awaiting to hear from the township about the PERS costs for 2023 before it can be finalized. The library will receive 26.25% of the 2022 budget for the 1st quarter of 2023.

E. Resolution #10,826 Closed Session

Resolution #10,826

Closed Session

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act, P.L. 1975, Chapter 231 permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees wish to move to executive session to discuss the following matters:

Personnel

WHEREAS, minutes will be taken during the closed session and once the confidential matter has been resolved, then the minutes will be made available to the public;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees will hereby move to closed session and that the public will be excluded from this meeting in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Mr. Christie made a motion to approve the above resolution. Ms. Tibbetts seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Mr. Christie, Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo and Ms. Tibbetts. Voting no: None.

The Board moved into closed session at 8:56 pm.

The Board returned into open session at 9:08 pm.

F. Resolution #10,827 – Library Director Merit Pay

Resolution #10,827

Library Director Merit Pay

WHEREAS, the East Brunswick Public Library Board Personnel Committee has determined that, in accordance with the Employment Agreement previously agreed upon and effective July 8, 2022 through December 31, 2023, the Library Director, John Arthur, has performed at a level which merits the maximum non-pensionable, merit-based bonus described in that agreement- \$2500.00,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Library Board of Trustees of the East Brunswick Public Library approves the merit-based bonus payment of \$2,500.00 for the third and fourth quarters of 2022, to be paid in the next pay period in which it is able to be processed by the Township Payroll department.

Ms. Palumbo made a motion to approve the above resolution. Ms. Tibbetts seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Mr. Christie, Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo and Ms. Tibbetts. Voting no: None.

Information Items:

There being no further business, Mr. Christie made a motion to adjourn at 9:14 pm. Dr. Freedman seconded.

Respectfully submitted,
Mr. Wayne Christie, Secretary