

EAST BRUNSWICK PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
February 18, 2020
MINUTES

The 584 regular meeting of the Board of Trustees was called to order by Mary Pan at 7:06 p.m. Present were:

Mary Pan, Vice President	Melissa Kuzma, Interim Library Director
Ken Freedman	Daragh McAuley, Exec. Admin. Ass't.
Aarti Punjabi, Treasurer	Anita Varshney, co-President, Friends of the Library
Barbara Wendell	Karen Karnchanapee, co-President, Friends of the Library
Mayor Brad Cohen	Art Lewin, Trustee Emeritus
Kathy Spadafino	Anushka Karande, Student Representative
Kelli Velez	
Deborah Cornavaca, President (Arr. 7:10)	

Ms. Pan announced that the Open Public Meetings Act had been complied with and that a quorum was present.

AGENDA

Dr. Freedman moved to adopt the agenda of February 18, 2020. Ms. Velez seconded. Voting yes: Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Pan, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Spadafino, Ms. Velez and Ms. Wendell. Voting no: none.

MINUTES

Mayor Cohen moved to approve the minutes of January 21, 2020. Ms. Punjabi seconded. Voting yes: Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Pan, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Spadafino, Ms. Velez and Ms. Wendell. Voting no: None.

Mayor Cohen moved to approve the minutes of the January 21, 2020 closed session. Ms. Punjabi seconded. Voting yes: Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Pan, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Spadafino, Ms. Velez and Ms. Wendell. Voting no: None.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Karen Karnchanapee and Anita Varshney, co-Presidents of the Friends of the Library, reported that upcoming events include Defensive Driving, the annual Book and Media Sale which will run from March 29 through April 5, and the spring meeting, featuring author Jennifer K. Armstrong on May 19, 2020. They are looking for volunteers for the book sale, especially for the pre-sale session. Ms. Varshney will let everyone know how they can sign up for this. The Friends recently introduced the text to donate app and Amazon Smile, which they hope will bring in a steady stream of revenue. They asked that this be mentioned at all Friends-sponsored events.

Anushka Karande, the student representative, reported that two new teen librarians started in January- Jenna Ingham and Moira Whittington, and they have moved to the YS department. They held mini programs as a break from mid-term studying, in which 70 teens participated. These included veggie sushi and button making.

Ms. Pan reported that the Foundation Board met and decided to attend the East Brunswick Education Foundation Dinner in March.

Mayor Cohen reported that one of the honorees at the Education Foundation Dinner is Joanne Chmielowicz, a former Librarian. Mayor Cohen held a press conference a few weeks ago concerning the redevelopment. An agreement has been reached with the developer, and properties are being purchased. The entire project should take 5-7 years. He also announced that he is holding several town hall meetings between now and June at various locations around the township.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The Board reviewed the treasurer's report, the monthly statistics and the bill lists.

Mayor Cohen moved to pay the bills on the January 30, and February 19, 2020 bill lists. Dr. Freedman seconded. Voting yes: Mayor Cohen, Ms. Cornavaca, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Pan, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Spadafino, Ms. Velez and Ms. Wendell. Voting no: none.

CORRESPONDENCE

Ms. Cornavaca read a thank you note from Jennifer Podolsky, thanking the Board for her send off, and an email from a patron thanking the library for the Black History Month programs.

REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Personnel Committee:

The personnel committee did not meet.

Search Committee:

The committee is still collecting applications. Five or six have been received to date. Ms. Pan asked the Board to send her any thoughts or visions of what they would like to see in a Director.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Kuzma shared several highlights of the report, including: the hiring of 2 new teen librarians; the Craft for a Cause program, where pouches will be made for kangaroos orphaned by the Australian wildfires; the success of the preschool fair and; the installation of bar code scanners on the public computers.

Ms. Pan moved to approve the staff changes listed in the January Director's reports. Mayor Cohen seconded. Voting yes: Mayor Cohen, Ms. Cornavaca, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Pan, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Spadafino, Ms. Velez and Ms. Wendell. Voting no: none.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Renovation/Construction Bond Application

Ms. Kuzma reported that she is working on the application with Leslie Burger, Keith Kipp, NK Architects and French & Parello. They are in the process of developing plans and determining the cost estimate for the submission, which is due by April 6. Libraries around the state submitted questions about the process, the answers to which were released last week. Ms. Kuzma is in the process of reviewing them. The planning board presentation is scheduled for 2/26. The Board must pass a resolution next month giving permission to apply for the grant. It was determined that the cost of a café cannot be included in the application, so the team will try to determine how to work around this.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Resolution #10, 748 Appointing Library Board Attorney

Resolution #10,748

Appointing a Library Board Attorney

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 Board Attorney; and

WHEREAS, the Library Board received Qualification Statements from Weiner Law Group- Douglas Zucker, Esq., Cleary, Giacobbe, Alfieri, Jacobs, LLC., and Mezzacca & Kwasnik, LLC.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees that it hereby appoints Weiner Law Group- Douglas Zucker, Esq. as Library Board Attorney, 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.

Ms. Cornavaca moved to approve the above resolution, recommending Douglas Zucker as attorney, as he was the only one with library experience. Ms. Velez seconded. Voting yes: Mayor Cohen, Ms. Cornavaca, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Pan, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Spadafino, Ms. Velez and Ms. Wendell. Voting no: none.

B. Resolution #10,749 Appointing Library Labor Council

Resolution #10,749

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.

Ms. Pan moved to approve the above resolution, recommending Andrew Oddo as labor attorney. Ms. Cornavaca seconded. Voting yes: Ms. Cornavaca, Ms. Pan, Ms. Punjabi and Ms. Velez. Voting no: Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Spadafino and Ms. Wendell. Resolution did not pass.

Mayor Cohen moved to approve the above resolution, recommending Cleary, Giacobbe, Alfieri, Jacobs, LLC. as labor attorney. Ms. Wendell seconded. Voting yes: Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Spadafino and Ms. Wendell. Voting no: Ms. Cornavaca, Ms. Pan, Ms. Punjabi and Ms. Velez. Resolution did not pass.

A discussion ensued about which attorney would be a better fit for this position. This resolution will be put on next month's agenda.

C. Approve the revised Salary and Wage Table

Ms. Kuzma explained that in order to post open positions on the NJLA website, the library must meet their minimum salary requirements. It was determined that the Director and Assistant Director positions were 8% below the minimum, and the librarian position was 6% below. The recommendation is to raise the minimum salary of the director and assistant director by 8%, and all of the other staff minimum salaries by 6%. This type of adjustment has not been made for several years, and needs to be done to keep up with industry standards. The net effect would be raising the salaries of 39 current employees at an approximate cost of \$27,500.

Ms. Cornavaca moved to approve the revision to the salary and wage table, effective February 19, 2020. Dr. Freedman seconded. Voting yes: Mayor Cohen, Ms. Cornavaca, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Pan, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Spadafino, Ms. Velez and Ms. Wendell. Voting no: none.

D. Staff Appreciation Week- April 19-25, 2020

Ms. Kuzma explained that a luncheon is usually held for the daytime staff, and dinner for the evening staff. The Board usually provides cash donations, or a dish of their choosing. Ms. Pan will coordinate having the Board write thank you notes to all of the staff.

E. Trustee Protocols and Trainings

Dr. Cornavaca reviewed protocols for board communication with the library director and required annual training. Dr. Cornavaca explained that the Board collectively must complete 7 hours of training for the year. Ms. Kuzma distributed a list of some online training options available. The Board can also attend the highly recommended Trustee Institute on October 17, 2020. All members were asked to let library administration know if they do complete any training so the numbers can be recorded. With respect to communications protocols, Dr. Cornavaca reminded board members that the protocol of the board is to funnel all communications and inquiries for the library director through the Board President or Vice President. Trustees should not each individually go to the director with inquiries, issues or concerns.

F. Resolution #10,750 Closed Session

Resolution #10,750

Executive 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:

Library Director Search

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.

Ms. Cornavaca moved to not go into closed session at this time, since the search committee for the Director has nothing to report. Mayor Cohen seconded. Voting yes: Mayor Cohen, Ms. Cornavaca, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Pan, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Spadafino, Ms. Velez and Ms. Wendell. Voting no: none.

INFORMATION ITEMS

There being no further business, Ms. Velez made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 pm. Dr. Freedman seconded.

Respectfully submitted,
Ms. Patricia Palumbo, Secretary