

East Brunswick Public Library  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
February 20, 2024

Attendees:

Otu Amankwah	John Arthur, Library Director
Dr. Joyce Boley	Maria Carmelo, Exec. Admin. Assistant
Wayne Christie (arr. 7:15 pm)	Zainab Jaorawala, Teen Representative
Lisa Gurevich	Adam Abramson, Library Labor Attorney
Dr. Kenneth Freedman (arr. 7:25 pm)	
Joseph Palombit	
Colleen Talbot	
Ashish Verma (arr. 7:21 pm)	

Mr. Amankwah called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm. A roll call was made and a quorum was present. Mr. Amankwah stated that the meeting was advertised and the Open Public Meeting Act requirements were met.

All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Minutes of January 30, 2024:**

Ms. Gurevich made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 30, 2023 meeting. Mr. Palombit seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Ms. Gurevich, Mr. Palombit and Ms. Talbot. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

**Public Participation:**

In the Teen Report, Ms. Jaorawala shared that last month's TAG meeting, held on January 4<sup>th</sup> had 31 attendees. The teens were involved with a total of 26 events in January, assisting in preparation, organization and clean up as well as conducting programs that were created by TAG volunteers. These programs included Cool Science Stories and Experiments and the Skyscraper Challenge. The Chess Club also met during the month of January.

There was no Friends Report.

Mr. Arthur reported that the members of the East Brunswick Public Library Foundation are scheduled to meet via Zoom on Thursday, February 29<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Talbot presented the Township Report, reporting that Mayor Cohen is working on the budget with the Township CFO.

In the School District Report, Dr. Boley presented a chart of languages spoken by students and their families in 2024. The top three languages spoken are Arabic, Chinese and Spanish. ESL night is scheduled for tomorrow, February 21<sup>st</sup>. Dr. Boley has been working to see how the schools and library can benefit by using shared services and databases.

The library received a public statement from an East Brunswick resident inquiring about providing more community opportunities for children with autism to socialize with their neurotypical peers, while also giving parents an opportunity to meet other parents and create support systems. Dr. Boley suggested the library collaborating with the Special Education Parent Advisory. The Board agreed to look into the matter further.

**Closed Session:**

Dr. Boley made a motion to enter executive session at 7:13 pm. Mr. Palombit seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Ms. Gurevich, Mr. Palombit, Ms. Talbot. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

The Board returned to open session at 8:03 pm.

**Treasurers Report:**

Mr. Arthur reported no major changes in the financial report. The library is awaiting quotes from two different companies for new furniture in the Teen and Youth Services areas. Passport revenue has decreased from this time last year, as expected based on the trends of the last few months. This is due to the post-Covid influx of applicants applying for passports in 2023.

Ms. Talbot made a motion to approve the February 21, 2024 bill list. Mr. Verma seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Gurevich, Mr. Palombit, Ms. Talbot and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

**Correspondence:**

There was no correspondence.

**Reports of Standing and Special Committees:**

The East Brunswick Public Library Foundation is scheduled to meet on February 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Director's Report:**

In the Director's Report, Mr. Arthur reported that children's circulation increased from last year, primarily due to the construction that took place in 2023. Librarian Martha Hess has kicked off tax season with her annual AARP program. The Lunar New Year celebration held on Saturday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> brought many visitors into the library.

Dr. Freedman made a motion to approve the January 2023 Director's Report. Ms. Gurevich seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Gurevich, Mr. Palombit, Ms. Talbot and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

**Old Business:**

Mr. Arthur presented the 2024 through 2027 Capital Plan. Plans for purchasing a bookmobile and/or opening a library branch have been put in hold and will be revisited in 2025. The library’s IT department is looking at a new print management system, which will be presented to the board at next month’s meeting.

Mr. Palombit made a motion to approve the 2024 through 2027 Capital Plan. Mr. Christie seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Gurevich, Mr. Palombit, Ms. Talbot and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

**New Business:**

*Resolution #10,863*

**Pay Rate for Interim Library Director**

**WHEREAS**, the East Brunswick Public Library Director will be taking eighteen (18) days of family leave; and

**WHEREAS**, for the ongoing operations of the East Brunswick Public Library it is necessary to name an Interim Director in the absence of the Library Director; and

**WHEREAS**, the pay rate for serving as Interim Director must be established;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees, that any current employee of the East Brunswick Public Library holding the title of Department Manager may serve as Interim Director, at the discretion of both the Library Director and the Department Manager; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Department Manager serving as Interim Director shall be afforded an additional, non-pensionable, \$20.00 per hour for each hour worked as Interim Director or a maximum of \$700 per week for a thirty-five (35) hour work week in the position of Interim Director.

Dr. Freedman made a motion to approve Resolution #10,863. Dr. Boley seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Gurevich, Mr. Palombit, Ms. Talbot and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

**Information Items:**

There were no information items.

**Adjournment:**

There being no further business, Mr. Christie made a motion to adjourn at 8:52 pm. Mr. Palombit seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mr. Wayne Christie, Secretary