

East Brunswick Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
January 30, 2024

Attendees:

Otu Amankwah	John Arthur, Library Director
Dr. Joyce Boley	Maria Carmelo, Exec. Admin. Assistant
Wayne Christie (arr. 7:05)	Debbie LeSeur, Friends President
Dr. Kenneth Freedman	Zainab Jaorawala, Teen Representative
Lisa Gurevich	
Colleen Talbot	
Ashish Verma (arr. 8:11)	

Mr. Amankwah called the meeting to order at 7:04 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 December 7, 2024:

Dr. Freedman made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 7, 2023 meeting. Ms. Gurevich seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman Ms. Gurevich, and Ms. Talbot. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

Dr. Freedman made a motion to approve the closed session minutes of the December 7, 2023 meeting. Ms. Gurevich seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman Ms. Gurevich, and Ms. Talbot. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

Election of Officers:

Mr. Amankwah opened up the floor for nominations.

President: Mr. Amankwah was nominated by Dr. Freedman. Ms. Talbot seconded. Voting yes: Dr. Boley, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman Ms. Gurevich, Ms. Talbot and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None. Abstaining: Mr. Amankwah.

Vice President: Ms. Palumbo was nominated by Ms. Talbot. Ms. Gurevich seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman Ms. Gurevich, Ms. Talbot and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

Treasurer: Mr. Verma was nominated by Dr. Freedman. Ms. Gurevich seconded. Voting yes: Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman Ms. Gurevich, and Ms. Talbot. Voting no: None. Abstaining: Mr. Verma.

Secretary: Mr. Christie was nominated by Ms. Talbot. Ms. Gurevich seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Dr. Freedman Ms. Gurevich, and Ms. Talbot. Voting no: None. Abstaining: Mr. Christie.

Public Participation:

Zainab Jaorawala presented the Teen Report. Approximately 30 members attended December's monthly TAG meeting where the teens worked on their Holiday Card Bonanza, creating holiday cards for senior citizens. The teens also held their Winter Wonderland event and TAG holiday party where they enjoyed snacks, hot cocoa and a movie. The Chess Club met in December and the Library's Youth Services Department, along with the teens, held their Hackathon event, where participants solved coding programs.

In the Friends Report, Ms. LeSeur reported that over \$200.00 has been raised so far in January from their Pop-Up Bling Sale. The Friends will begin collecting donations for their May 19th Bling Sale in March. Two fundraising events, The Friend's Valentine's Day Photoshoot and Krispy Creme Fundraiser were unfortunately cancelled due to lack of participants. Bunco was sold out with a waiting list but postponed due to inclement weather and has been rescheduled to March 15th at the East Brunswick Memorial VFW Post #133. The Friend's Pocketbook Bingo and Tricky Tray event is scheduled for March 22nd and The Friends will have a table with some giveaways at the Lunar New Year event taking place at the library on Saturday, February 3rd.

In the Foundation report, Mr. Arthur stated that he is working with the Foundation with assigning a liaison to attend the Library's Board of Trustees meetings as well as scheduling a meeting to discuss fundraising ideas.

Ms. Talbot presented the Township Report, reporting that Mayor Cohen will have a better idea about funding by the end of March.

Dr. Boley presented the School District Report. The schools have entered their second semester and budget season has begun. Incoming fifth graders are going to be welcomed at Hammarskjold Upper Elementary School at their expo tomorrow evening, January 31st. Schools will be open on President's Day, February 19th due to recent snow closures. ESL's Literature Night with the Library's Paul Kibala was cancelled and will be rescheduled to a future date.

There were no public comments.

Treasurers Report:

In the Financial Report, Mr. Arthur presented the year end reserve report and reviewed with the board some big expenditures from last year, including the children's area renovation. There are some open purchase orders from last year that will be paid in 2024 but charged to 2023. 97% of the 2023 budget has been spent. On the bill list, Mr. Arthur shared a new, innovative service the library will be offering to visually impaired patrons. The platform is called "RightHear" and is a virtual accessibility assistant that provides talking signage, allowing patrons to better understand and interpret their surroundings.

Dr. Boley made a motion to approve the January 31, 2024 bill list. Mr. Verma seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Gurevich, Mr. Palombit, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Talbot and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

Correspondence:

There was no correspondence.

Reports of Standing and Special Committees:

The Library Branch Committee met in December.

Director's Report:

In the Director's Report, Mr. Arthur reported that the library's Youth Services Manager, Sade Green-Puik has returned from maternity leave. Welcome back to Sade and a big thanks to Youth Services Librarians Suzanne Klein and Dana Vocht for their leadership as Interim Youth Services Managers during Sade's leave. The library has received a \$5,000.00 grant for 6 weeks of "Concerts in the Courtyard" this summer. AARP will be back for their third year of tax preparation services beginning in February.

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

Consent Agenda:

Resolution #10,853

To Name Authorized Banks

BE IT RESOLVED that the Library Board of Trustees approves the following and their successors and assigns as its authorized banks in which funds may be deposited or invested in the name Of the East Brunswick Public Library.

TD Bank

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the following individuals be authorized as signatories and empowered to invest funds on behalf of the Library Board of Trustees: The Board Treasurer; John Arthur, Library Director; and Chris Collado, Accounting Clerk.

Resolution #10,854

Naming Official Newspapers for 2024

BE IT RESOLVED by the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees that the *Home News Tribune* and the *Asbury Park Press* are hereby designated as official newspapers for the East Brunswick Public Library.

Resolution #10,855

To Approve State Contract Purchases

WHEREAS, the purchase of goods and services by local contracting units is authorized by the Local Public Contracts Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-12; and

WHEREAS, the East Brunswick Public Library purchases commodities from authorized vendors under the State Of New Jersey Cooperative Purchasing Program 1-N.J.C.P.; and

WHEREAS, utilization of State contracts represents the best prices available;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees that the aggregate purchases in 2024 from the following State contract vendors may exceed \$26,000:

Demco
HP Inc.
W.B. Mason Co Inc.
SHI International

Resolution #10,856

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR TO MAKE, NEGOTIATE, & AWARD CERTAIN CONTRACTS UP TO THE BID THRESHOLD

WHEREAS, the Local Public Contracts Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-3 provides that when the cost or price of any contract awarded by the contracting agent in the aggregate does not exceed in a contract year the total sum of \$17,500.00, the contract may be awarded by a purchasing agent or other employee so designated by the governing body when so authorized by resolution without public advertising for bids; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees may designate the Library Director as the contracting agent and the governing body of any contracting unit, in this case the Board of Trustees of the East Brunswick Public Library, may adopt a resolution to set a lower threshold for the receipt of public bids or the solicitation of competitive quotations; and

WHEREAS, effective January 1, 2024, the bid threshold has been established at \$17,500.00.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the East Brunswick Library Board of Trustees ratifies its designation of the Library Director as the contracting agent so authorized to make, negotiate and award contracts in the amount up to the bid threshold without the need for advertising for bids, but all such contracts in excess of \$15,000.00 shall be furnished to the Board of Trustees before they are signed and all change orders shall be governed by New Jersey Administrative Code, including, but not limited to, N.J.A.C. 5:30-11.1 through 5:30-11.10, and change orders shall not be used to substantially change the quality or character of any items or work to be provided.

Mr. Christie made a motion to approve Resolutions 10,853 – 10,856. Ms. Gurevich seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman Ms. Gurevich, Ms. Talbot and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

Old Business:

The Library Branch Committee met via Zoom on December 27th and further discussed potentially opening a library branch.

New Business:

Resolution #10,857

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 Cleary, Giacobbe, Alfieri, Jacobs, LLC and Weiner Law Group, LLP - Douglas Zucker, Esq.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees that it hereby appoints Weiner Law Group, LLP – Douglas Zucker, Esq., as Library Board Attorney, effective January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024, in accordance with the response to the Request for Quotations for the provision of professional services for the position of East Brunswick Public Library. In the case of a conflict for Weiner Law Group, LLP – Douglas Zucker, Esq., Cleary, Giacobbe, Alfieri, Jacobs, LLC will serve as Library Board Attorney.

Resolution #10,858

Appointing Library Board Labor Relations 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 Board Labor Relations Counsel; and

WHEREAS, the Library Board received Qualification Statements from Cleary, Giacobbe, Alfieri, Jacobs, LLC and Rainone Cofflin Minchello, LLC.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees that it hereby appoints Cleary, Giacobbe, Alfieri, Jacobs, LLC, as Library Board Labor Relations Counsel, effective January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024, in accordance with the response to the Request for Quotations for the provision of professional services for the position of East Brunswick Public Library. In the case of a conflict for Cleary, Giacobbe, Alfieri, Jacobs, LLC, Rainone Cofflin Minchello, LLC will serve as Library Board Labor Relations Counsel.

Resolution #10,859

Appointing Library Board Conflict 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 Cleary, Giacobbe, Alfieri, Jacobs, LLC.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees that it hereby appoints Cleary, Giacobbe, Alfieri, Jacobs, LLC as Library Board Conflict Counsel, effective January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024, in accordance with the response to the Request for Quotations for the provision of professional services for the position of East Brunswick Public Library.

Resolution #10,860

Appointment of Auditor for 2023 Audit

WHEREAS, NJSA 40A:5-4 requires that the Board of Trustees appoint a registered municipal accountant to audit the library's financial records; and

WHEREAS, PKF O'Connor Davies, LLP has submitted a proposal to perform the audit for 2023; and

WHEREAS, the Township of East Brunswick has appointed PKF O'Connor Davies, LLP to perform its 2023 audit; and

WHEREAS, the Local Public Contracts Law (NJSA 40:11-1 et seq.) requires that the Resolution authorizing the award of a contract for professional services without competitive bids be publicly advertised;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that

1. The Board of Trustees of the East Brunswick Public Library appoints PKF O'Connor Davies, LLP to perform the library's 2023 audit at an estimated fee of \$8,000.
2. This contract is awarded without competitive bidding as a professional service [NJSA 40A:11-(1)].
3. Notice of this contract award shall be published in the *Home News Tribune* within ten (10) days after passage of same.

Resolution #10,861

Temporary 2024 Library Budget

WHEREAS, the Township of East Brunswick will approve the municipal budget, including the library appropriation, later in the year 2024; and

WHEREAS, the library needs funding in order to operate; and

WHEREAS, it was determined that 26.25% of the 2023 budget, the maximum allowable quarterly temporary budget for the first quarter of 2024, is \$1,223,134.00.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees approves a temporary budget of \$1,223,134.00.

Resolution #10,862

Library Director – Qualified Purchasing Agent Classes

WHEREAS, the East Brunswick Library Board of Trustees has set goals for the Library Director for 2024; and

WHEREAS, one of the goals is for the Library Director to complete the final two classes of the Qualified Purchasing Agent sequence offered by Rutgers University; and

WHEREAS, having a trained Qualified Purchasing Agent on staff would be beneficial to the East Brunswick Public Library;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees approves paying for Public Purchasing classes from the Rutgers Center for Government Services in 2024 for the Library Director to attend, not to exceed a total of \$2,500 combined for all classes attended.

Mr. Christie made a motion to approve Resolutions 10,857 – 10,862. Ms. Talbot seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman Ms. Gurevich, 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 8:35 pm. Ms. Talbot seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Mr. Wayne Christie, Secretary