

East Brunswick Public Library  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
November 19, 2024

Attendees:

Otu Amankwah	Karen Parry, Interim Library Director
Dr. Joyce Boley	Maria Carmelo, Exec. Admin. Assistant
Wayne Christie (arr. 7:20 pm)	Karen Geist, Accessibility Librarian
Dr. Kenneth Freedman	Zainab Jaorawala, Teen Representative
Lisa Gurevich	Vidhya Karuppiah, Teen Representative
Colleen Talbot	

Mr. Amankwah called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm. A roll call was made and a quorum was present. Mr. Amankwah stated that the meeting was advertised and the Open Public Meetings Act requirements were met.

All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Minutes of October 15, 2024:**

Ms. Talbot made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 15, 2024 meeting. Ms. Gurevich seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Gurevich and Ms. Talbot. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

**Public Participation:**

Ms. Karuppiah presented the Teen Report and introduced herself as the newest member of the TAG Executive Board. A total of 72 teen volunteers helped around the library in October, with 37 in the Circulation Department and 35 in the Youth Services Department. Virtual orientations focused on events and programming. October programs included the popular Cool Science Stories & Experiments, with 34 attendees, as well as a virtual session of Making College Affordable, a DIY lip Scrub program and Teen Book Club. The teens also planned for their holiday party at their October TAG meeting.

In the Friends Report, Ms. LeSeur shared that they had a busy and successful September and October, raising close to \$500.00 in their In-House Bling Sale, \$1,112.25 at their Handmade Craft Sale, \$735.00 at their In-House Book Sale and \$552.48 with their Defensive Driving program. The annual Friends of the Library Book Sale at the Brunswick Square Mall raised \$23,158.48. Member donations totaled \$485.00, for a total of \$26,523.82 in fundraising for the two months. Last week's Sir George Martin and the Beatles Abbey Road Medley event was a success, with 80 people in attendance and the Friends are planning new things, such as a Chili Cookoff in February, a Tea Time around Valentine's Day and a springtime raffle.

There was no Foundation Report.

Colleen Talbot presented the Township Report, with a reminder that tickets are still available for the Mayor's Gala on December 6<sup>th</sup> at Park Chateau and shared the Mayor Cohen would like to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

In the School District Report, Dr. Boley shared that schools were closed on November 1<sup>st</sup> in observance of Diwali, the Teacher's Convention and American Education Week took place last week, where classrooms were open to visiting parents, and the updated school website has launched. The Superintendent of Educational Technology is providing guidance to students and staff with Artificial Intelligence and the ESL population is continuing to boom. Reports cards will be issued on Tuesday and the Saving Hamlet concert is scheduled for this weekend.

There were no public comments.

### **Financial Report:**

In the Financial Report, Ms. Parry shared that the library is close to where they should be as far as the budget is concerned and she is working closely with library managers as well as the township on the 2025 budget. Ms. Parry also discussed capital expenses through 2028, including adding an emergency door, handicap doors and a teen area remodel.

Mr. Freedman made a motion to approve the November 18<sup>th</sup> Bill List. Ms. Gurevich seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Gurevich and Ms. Talbot. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

### **Correspondence:**

There was no correspondence.

### **Reports of Standing and Special Committees:**

There were no reports of standing or special committee reports.

### **Director's Report:**

Ms. Parry presented the September Director's Report, reporting that the Union contract has been finalized and sent to union representatives for ratification and execution, and should be ready to vote on at the December Board of Trustees meeting. Usage is has risen, with a 14% increase in foot traffic from last month and an 8.5% increase from this time last year. Ms. Parry shared that she is extremely impressed with staff and programs the staff works so hard on putting together. The library partnered with the township and Middlesex County Workforce Development Board on October 25<sup>th</sup> by hosting a Job Fair in the library meeting rooms. Approximately 500 patrons visited the library's Diwali celebration on October 27<sup>th</sup>, with vendors, food and dance performances. October's programs included a 3 part beginner sewing class, Bollywood Dance Workshop, Bone Density Screening, a table at the Friends Handmade Craft Sale and the library's first Sensory Hour, which will be held at the library every third Sunday of the month an hour before opening to the public. Managers attended a two-day leadership workshop and Ms. Parry has been working with the town and library staff on the Mental Health Taskforce, whose purpose is to remove the stigma associated with mental health issues. The Mental Health Taskforce is being organized by Opioid Settlement funds, and provides local resources for support. The

taskforce is spreading awareness by advertising with posters, bookmarks, yard signs, stickers and including the Mental Health Taskforce logo on program announcements.

Dr. Boley made a motion to approve the October 2024 Director’s Report. Ms. Talbot seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Gurevich and Ms. Talbot. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

**Old Business:**

There was no old business.

**New Business:**

Karen Parry introduced Stephanie Filippone, Manager of the Adult and Technical Services Department to the board. Ms. Filippone has been with the East Brunswick Library since 2017, as an Adult Services Librarian and became Manager of Adult and Technical Services in 2012. Ms. Filippone described her department’s duties within the library. The Adult and Technical Services department is responsible for all adult print, audiobooks, e-books and streaming content, as well as Kanopy, Hoopla and Libby. The department also handles ordering and processing of books for the entire library, adult programming and working with the EB Friends of the Library in co-sponsored programs. Adult programs include concerts, Astronomy Club, book discussions, craft programs, recording studio and voiceover workshops, ESL programs, conversation groups, citizenship classes and school visits. The Technical Services Department handles processing, barcoding, repairing books as well as library catalog weeding. There is a total of six staff members in the department. Ms. Filippone provided a tour of the department to the board members present at the meeting.

*Resolution #10,872*

**Awarding a Contract for Bathroom Epoxy Flooring**

**WHEREAS**, the East Brunswick Public Library Board and Administration seek to make improvements to the bathroom flooring at the East Brunswick Public Library, and

**WHEREAS**, the Library is authorized to purchase goods and services without advertising for bid if purchased through a State approved cooperative vendor pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:11-12; and

**WHEREAS**, The Gillespie Group, Inc. is a Middlesex Regional Educational Services Commission (MRESC) New Jersey State Approved Co-op vendor, #65MCESCCPS; and

**WHEREAS**, funds are available for this contract in the Building Reserve Fund; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Library Board of Trustees awards a contract to The Gillespie Group, Inc., 5 Chris Court, Suite G, Dayton, NJ 08810 as outlined in their proposal dated July 9, 2024, in the sum of \$24,527.20; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, by the Library Board of Trustees as follows:

1. This contract is awarded without competitive bidding as a professional service [NJSA 40A: 11-5-(1)].

2. Notice of this contract shall be published in the Home News Tribune within ten (10) days after passage of same.

*Resolution #10,873*

**Awarding a Contract for Teen Space Carpeting**

**WHEREAS**, the East Brunswick Public Library Board and Administration seek to make improvements to the Teen Space carpeting at the East Brunswick Public Library, and

**WHEREAS**, the Library is authorized to purchase goods and services without advertising for bid if purchased through a State approved cooperative vendor pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:11-12; and

**WHEREAS**, The Gillespie Group, Inc. is a Middlesex Regional Educational Services Commission (MRESC) New Jersey State Approved Co-op vendor, #65MCECCPS; and

**WHEREAS**, funds are available for this contract in the Building Reserve Fund; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Library Board of Trustees awards a contract to The Gillespie Group, Inc., 5 Chris Court, Suite G, Dayton, NJ 08810 as outlined in their proposal dated September 5, 2024, in the sum of \$13,686.03; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, by the Library Board of Trustees as follows:

1. This contract is awarded without competitive bidding as a professional service [NJSA 40A: 11-5-(1)].
2. Notice of this contract shall be published in the Home News Tribune within ten (10) days after passage of same.

Dr. Freedman made a motion to approve Resolutions 10,872 & 10,873. Ms. Talbot seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Gurevich and Ms. Talbot. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

Ms. Parry requested approval for the library to close at 5:00 pm on Friday, December 13<sup>th</sup> for the Staff Holiday Party.

Mr. Christie made a motion for the approval of closing the library at 5:00 pm on December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024 for the Staff Holiday Party. Ms. Talbot seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Gurevich and Ms. Talbot. 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 9:12 pm. Ms. Talbot seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mr. Wayne Christie, Secretary