

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

Attendees:

Otu Amankwah	John Arthur, Library Director
JoAnn Chmielowicz	Michael Bobish, Assistant Library Director
Wayne Christie	Daragh McAuley, Exec. Admin. Assistant
Ken Freedman	Donna Forte, Co-President, Friends of the Library
Patricia Palumbo (Arr 7:35)	Debbie Matra-Grossman, Friends of the Library
Nicole Tibbetts	Adrian Levine, Friends of the Library
Ashish Verma (Arr 7:40)	Shreya Bhardwaj, Student Representative
	Jaden He, Student Representative
	Keith Kipp, Director of Planning & Engineering

Ms. Chmielowicz called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm. A roll call was made and a quorum was present. Ms. Chmielowicz stated that the meeting was advertised and the Open Public Meeting Act requirements were met.

All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes of July 19, 2022:

Dr. Freedman made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 19, 2022 regular meeting. Mr. Amankwah seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Chmielowicz, Dr. Freedman and Ms. Tibbetts. Abstaining: Mr. Christie. Voting no: None.

Public Participation:

Keith Kipp, the Director of Planning & Engineering for East Brunswick Township, gave a presentation on the Children’s Room renovation plans. The library has contracted with an architect and has construction plans and a cost estimate prepared. The Township will provide Project Management services, including a dumpster for the project, and will work with their vendor to install the fire suppression system. There are two ways for this project to proceed: The project could be put out to bid, or a state contract vendor can be picked and it could be added to the Community Development Block Grant, and qualify for an approximately \$50,000 grant to pay for the bathroom portion of the project. The Library will pay for the project out of Library Reserves.

A discussion was held about approaching the township to ask them to pay for the project, but it was explained that this would have to be added to the 2023 Capital Improvement Plan, and it may not even be approved. Mr. Arthur explained that since the library has reserves, the township would likely want the library to pay for it with that money. The Board then voted to move Resolution #10,820 up on the agenda, since it was necessary for Dr. Freedman to leave the meeting early. Mr. Christie made a motion to move the vote for this resolution to this point in

the meeting. Ms. Tibbetts seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Chmielowicz, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Tibbetts and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None.

Resolution #10,820

Awarding a Contract for Children's Room Renovations

WHEREAS, the East Brunswick Public Library Board and Administration have determined a need for improved lighting, ceiling tiles, ADA-compliant bathrooms, and other improvements in the children's room of the 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, Ascend Construction Management, Inc. is a Middlesex Regional Educational Services Commission (MRESC) New Jersey State Approved Co-op vendor, #65MCESCCPS; and

WHEREAS, the Library has sufficient funds available to pay for the completion of the renovations; and

WHEREAS, the price reflected in Ascend Construction Management, Inc.'s proposal is within the range estimated by the Architect for this project, Arcari Iovino Architects PC;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees hereby approves awarding the contract for the East Brunswick Public Library Children's Room Improvement Project to Ascend Construction Management, Inc., P.O. Box 525, Eatontown, New Jersey 07724, for an amount not to exceed \$205,000.

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

Donna Forte, the Co-President of the Friends of the Library, reported that the annual Book Sale will be held on October 10-16 at Brunswick Square Mall. They held a pop-up book sale at the mall on August 27th, and raised \$700. A Family Photo event will be held on October 22 & 23, and a Bling Sale will be held on November 5 & 6. Defensive Driving classes will be held on November 14 & 15, and the Fall Program will be on November 17, entitled 'The Life and Music of Bobby Darin.' Ms. Forte also reported that the Friends voted at their last Board meeting to gift the library with \$30,000 for 2023. Ms. Chmielowicz, on behalf of the entire Board, thanked the Friends for their generous contributions, and is grateful for their support.

Jaden He, the Student Representative, read the teen report for July and August. Many programs were held during the summer, led by the TLC program. In July, 576 people attended programs, and 208 teens volunteered. In August, 33 programs were held with 574 attendees and 159 volunteers. Over the summer, young adult materials showed a 22% increase in circulation.

Mr. Arthur reported that the Foundation Board agreed to donate \$20,000 for makerspace equipment. This will include a poster printer and a Glowforge laser printer. The Makerspace will hold a grand re-opening during Maker Day in March. Mr. Arthur has reached out to several residents about joining the Foundation Board and has received some interest.

Mr. Arthur read the following Proclamation for the Friends of the Library, on behalf of Mayor Cohen:

Proclamation

WHEREAS, the East Brunswick Public Library is one of the Township's most valuable resources, bringing knowledge and enjoyment to nearly every resident of our community; and

WHEREAS, the East Brunswick Friends of the Library is a nonprofit volunteer organization created in 1967 that provides funds for library programs, services and equipment. Those funds come largely from membership dues and fundraising; and

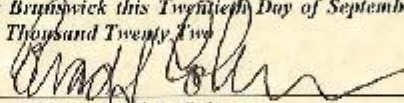
WHEREAS, every year the East Brunswick Friends of the Library hold an annual book & media sale at the Brunswick Square Mall to raise money to benefit the library and its patrons; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, that I, Brad J. Cohen, Mayor of the Township of East Brunswick, do hereby proclaim that October 10-October 16, 2022, shall be known as "**Friends Book Sale Week**" within the community in order to recognize the enormous contribution made by the Friends of the Library and to encourage participation in the book & media sale by all citizens.

BE IT FURTHER PROCLAIMED that Civic Center Drive shall be renamed "**Book Sale Drive**" for the week of October 10-16, 2022.



Given Under My Hand and the Great Seal of the Township of East Brunswick this Twentieth Day of September in the Year Two Thousand Twenty Two



Mayor Brad J. Cohen

Office of the Mayor Township of East Brunswick

Ms. Tibbetts reported that Hammarskjold Upper Elementary School Library has reopened, and she thanked the Library for all of their help with book donations. Back to School nights are being held this month, and she also thanked Library staff for attending.

Treasurers Report:

Mr. Arthur noted that passport revenue is at 75% of the budgeted amount for the year. Mr. Arthur also noted that the percentage spent on the Budget Summary report does not include the encumbered amounts, and that no payments for Health Care costs were reflected in the budget yet for 2022. He may ask the Board to move some funds from one budget line to another next month as the year end gets closer. Mr. Arthur also directed the Board to the Reserve Report which indicated that there are sufficient funds to pay for the Children’s Room renovations.

Mr. Amankwah made a motion to approve the August 17 and September 21, 2022 bill lists. Ms. Palumbo seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Chmielowicz, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Tibbetts and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None.

Correspondence:

Mr. Arthur shared a letter from a patron describing the wonderful work that Librarian Paul Kibala did on the Author talk with Lisa See.

Reports of Standing and Special Committees:

A. Building Committee

This was discussed earlier in the meeting.

B. Policy Committee

This committee did not meet, but Mr. Arthur will be sending some Makerspace policies for them to review shortly.

C. Personnel Committee

Mr. Arthur reported that Administration staff is working on some revisions to the Personnel Manual, which will be sent soon to the committee for review.

D. Strategic Planning Committee

Mr. Arthur reported that Rutgers will be holding three focus groups next week. The final draft of the survey is in progress, and will be sent out soon. He hopes to have the Strategic Plan complete by the end of the year.

Director’s Report:

As a follow up to the last Board meeting, Mr. Bobish reported that the disruptive videos have been taken down from the internet. A letter was sent to the offender's home and his library privileges have been suspended until December 31, 2023.

Mr. Arthur reported that material usage trends are up, and digital usage is down from the height of the pandemic, as to be expected. Representative Bonnie Watson Coleman visited the library on September 1.

Mr. Christie made a motion to approve the staff changes in the July and August 2022 Director's Reports. Ms. Palumbo seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Chmielowicz, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Tibbetts and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None.

New Business:

A. Resolution #10,818 – To Apply for Grant Funds- Multicultural Music Series

Resolution #10,818

**To Apply for Grant Funds-
Multicultural Music Series**

WHEREAS, the East Brunswick Public Library is applying for a grant, in the amount of \$10,000 from the Middlesex County Division of Arts and History Programs for concerts to be held in 2023; and

WHEREAS, in 2022, through \$6,375 in grant funding from the Middlesex County Division of Arts and History Programs, in combination with a \$2,825 contribution from the Friends of the East Brunswick Public Library, the library was able to hold a six-week concert series featuring music from a variety of cultures; and

WHEREAS, 547 people attended the 2022 Concerts in the Courtyard: A Multicultural Music Series in total; and

WHEREAS, the library's goal is to increase the series from six weeks in 2022 to ten weeks in 2023; and

WHEREAS, East Brunswick is a vibrant, diverse town in the heart of both Middlesex County and the State of New Jersey, and as such it is situated in an ideal location for a concert series that will draw interest from residents throughout the region;

BE IT RESOLVED that the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees hereby certifies that permission has been granted to apply for a Grant for a Multicultural Music Series in the amount of \$10,000 from the Middlesex County Division of Arts and History Programs (with a \$5,000 match from the Friends of the East Brunswick Library), and will allocate \$500 toward advertising the concerts if the funds are fully awarded.

Mr. Arthur explained that the grant awarded this year was a great success, and the Library is asking for a larger grant for 2023, with some matching funds from the Friends of the Library.

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

B. Resolution #10,819 – To Apply for Additional Grant Funds- New Jersey Department of Labor

Resolution #10,819

To Apply for Grant Funds-

From the New Jersey Department of Labor

WHEREAS, the East Brunswick Public Library was awarded \$19,706 to offer an English Immersion Institute for Job Seekers from the New Jersey Department of Labor; and

WHEREAS, 20 students successfully completed the six-week immersion course; and

WHEREAS, the \$19,706 has been fully spent in the administration of that series during the summer of 2022; and

WHEREAS, additional grant funding may be available to offer a similar series in the winter or spring of 2023,

BE IT RESOLVED that the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees hereby certifies that permission has been granted to apply for additional grant funding from the New Jersey Department of Labor, in an amount to be determined by Library Administration and based on the needs of the program, in the range of \$10,000 to \$25,000 dollars.

Mr. Arthur explained that the ESL immersion class over the summer was a great success, and the Department of Labor asked the Library to request funds to hold more classes in 2023, in the event that there are any available funds.

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

C. Resolution #10,820 – Awarding a Contract for Children’s Room Renovation

This resolution was voted on earlier in the meeting.

D. New Jersey State Library Trustee Training Institute

Mr. Arthur explained that this will be held on October 8 via zoom. He encouraged all to attend this free training. He also invited the Board to stop by the Library table at East Brunswick Day on October 2.

Information Items:

There being no further business, Mr. Christie made a motion to adjourn at 8:55 pm. Mr. Verma seconded.

Respectfully submitted,
Mr. Wayne Christie, Secretary