

East Brunswick Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
September 28, 2021

Mayor Cohen called the 602nd meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 7:32 pm. Present were:

Mayor Brad Cohen, President	John Arthur, Library Director
JoAnn Chmielowicz	Mike Bobish, Assistant Library Director
Dr. Ken Freedman (Arr. 7:55)	Daragh McAuley, Exec. Administrative Ass't.
Patricia Palumbo, Vice President	Angel Albanese, EB Township CFO
Kathy Spadafino	Sofia Sepulveda, Student Representative
Nicole Tibbetts, Secretary	Donna Forte, Co-President, Friends of the Library
Ashish Verma (Arr. 7:35)	Debbie LeSeur, Co-President of Friends of the Library
	Scott Clelland, Wiss and Company

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

All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes of July 27, 2021:

Ms. Chmielowicz made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 27, 2021 meeting. Ms. Palumbo seconded. Voting yes: Ms. Chmielowicz, Mayor Cohen, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Spadafino and Ms. Tibbetts. Voting no: None.

Public Participation:

Scott Clelland, of Wiss and Company, LLC, gave a review of the 2020 Library audit. He reported that they gave a clean, unmodified opinion, and no material weaknesses were found. He said that both revenue and expenses were down, probably due to the pandemic. He reported that the library controls were good, and the amount in reserves, although higher than most other libraries, are within the parameters of what is allowed. He suggested that the library review all restricted fund balances and evaluate whether they are truly restricted or should be reclassified as Board designated funds.

Debbie LeSeur, Co-President of the Friends of the Library, thanked Mayor Cohen for the Proclamation that the Friends received from the township for the 47th annual book sale. The book sale will run from October 11-17. They will attend East Brunswick Day to recruit new members. They will have a fundraiser at Panera on October 15, and will run a Gertrude Hawk Candy Sale for the holidays. Ms. LeSeur announced that the library appropriation for 2022 will be \$20,000. The Board thanked them for their generosity and hard work.

Sofia Sepulveda, the teen representative, reported that many of the Teen clubs met in August, and 225 volunteer hours were logged during the month. ‘Teen Club Tuesdays’ were also held during the month. Moving forward, the teen groups will focus more on community service.

Mr. Arthur reported that the Foundation Board met earlier this month. They discussed the library renovations and the placement of an educational kitchen. Library administration has met with furniture and carpet vendors and with an architect. The managers suggested putting the kitchen in a future branch library. The Foundation wants plans or renderings to attract donors and new Board members.

Mayor Cohen reported that the state COVID transmission rate dropped below 1.0 for the first time in several months. He also reported that tax bills were mailed out with only a \$7.20 increase for the average household.

Treasurers Report:

The Board reviewed the Treasurer’s report, the monthly statistics, and the reserve and bank reports. Mr. Arthur pointed out the revised, condensed reports. Mr. Verma would like the financial statements to show trends, and possibly include bar or pie charts, for ease of understanding.

Ms. Spadafino made a motion to approve the July 28, August 25 and 27, and September 29, 2021 bill lists. Ms. Chmielowicz seconded. Voting yes: Ms. Chmielowicz, Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Spadafino, Ms. Tibbetts and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None.

Correspondence:

There was no correspondence.

Reports of Standing and Special Committees:

The Finance Committee met to review the audit and the new condensed financial reports. They will meet again in the near future to discuss the reserve accounts.

Director’s Report:

Mr. Arthur explained the circulation chart that was included in the board packet. A discussion started about removing media fees, as Mr. Arthur reported that most libraries no longer charge these fees. A discussion on this will continue at a later date.

Ms. Palumbo made a motion to approve the July 2021 and August 2021 Director’s Reports. Ms. Tibbetts seconded. Voting yes: Ms. Chmielowicz, Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Spadafino, Ms. Tibbetts and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None.

Old Business:

A. COVID-19 Update

Mr. Arthur reported that the number of visitors to the library are increasing slowly. Most programs are hybrid, although some presenters still prefer to hold their presentations via Zoom.

New Business:

A. 2022 Schedule of Days Closed

Mayor Cohen explained that the presenting of this to the board was delayed due to Juneteenth being added as a Federal Holiday. After discussions with the lawyer, it was decided to keep the library open on that day, and use the day to hold informative programs.

Dr. Freedman made a motion to approve the 2022 Schedule of Days Closed. Mr. Verma seconded. Voting yes: Ms. Chmielowicz, Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Spadafino, Ms. Tibbetts and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None.

B. Strategic Planning Committee

Mr. Arthur explained that the current strategic plan extends through 2022, but he would like to start setting up a committee to begin planning for a new one. He would like to see two Board members on the committee, along with members of the Friends and Foundation, and several library patrons. Mayor Cohen asked that anyone interested in serving on this committee to please contact him.

C. Daniel's Law Compliance

Mr. Arthur asked each Board member to fill out the form, to be kept on file in the library, in the event of any OPRA requests.

D. Food for Fines

Mr. Arthur explained that this program was run a few years ago to great success and the managers would like to try it again, for a specific period of time, possibly a week or a month. All are in favor of this and Ms. Tibbetts suggested having this as a permanent program. Mr. Arthur will come up with a concrete plan and will present it to the Board for a vote next month.

E. Resolution #10,786 Acceptance of the 2020 Audit of Library Accounts

East Brunswick Public Library

Board of Trustees

Resolution #10,786

Acceptance of the 2020 Audit of Library Accounts

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, Wiss and Company, LLP performed the audit for the year ending December 31, 2020 and presented the report on September 28, 2021.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that that the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees accepts the audit report from Wiss and Company, LLP.

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

Information Items:

There being no further business, Ms. Chmielowicz made a motion to adjourn at 8:48 pm. Ms. Spadafino seconded.

Respectfully submitted,
Ms. Nicole Tibbetts, Secretary