

East Brunswick Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
January 21, 2025

Attendees:

Otu Amankwah
Lisa Gurevich
Joseph Palombit
Colleen Talbot
Ashish Verma

Karen Parry, Library Director
Maria Carmelo, Executive Administrative Assistant
Dr. Arthur Lewin, Member Emeritus
Heidi Hu, Teen Representative

Mr. Amankwah called the meeting to order at 7:14 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 December 17, 2024:

Ms. Gurevich made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 17, 2024 meeting. Mr. Palombit seconded. Voting yes: Ms. Gurevich, Mr. Palombit, Ms. Talbot and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None. Abstaining: Mr. Amankwah.

Closed Session Minutes of December 17, 2024:

Ms. Gurevich made a motion to approve the closed session minutes of the December 17, 2024 meeting. Ms. Talbot seconded. Voting yes: Ms. Gurevich, Mr. Palombit, Ms. Talbot and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None. Abstaining: Mr. Amankwah.

Public Participation:

Ms. Hu presented the December Teen Report. TAG held their annual Holiday Party in December. The teens also wrote dozens of cards for residents of Care One and painted holiday ornaments. 28 volunteers held programs during the month of December and worked on collection organization and writing articles. Circulation volunteers continued helping the department with shelving.

The EB Friends of the Library were unable to attend tonight's meeting. President Deborah LeSeur sent a message to let everyone know that the Friends are organizing a Puzzle and Board Game Sale on February 2nd as well as planning a Bingo night on March 28th.

There was no Foundation Report.

Ms. Talbot presented the Township Report. The State of the Township address will be held at the Council Meeting next Monday. The 2025 budget process has begun and the town is operating on a temporary budget for the first quarter of 2025.

There was no School District Report.

There were no public comments.

Financial Report:

In the Financial Report, Ms. Parry shared that she and the library management team have finalized the 2025 budget.

Mr. Palombit made a motion to approve the January 22, 2025 Bill List. Ms. Talbot seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, 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:

There were no reports of standing or special committee reports.

Director's Report:

Ms. Parry presented the December 2024 Director's Report. Ms. Parry is a member of the Mayor's Mental Health Task Force. Signs and bookmarks with the logo "Mental Health IS Health" will be seen throughout East Brunswick, at local businesses as well as the library. A kind patron donated a Kinara to the library in honor of the celebration of Kwanzaa, and it was a very nice addition to the holiday display in the lobby of the library, alongside the Christmas Tree and Menorah. The Lunar New Year celebration at the library brought in 1,929 patrons last Saturday. The library will be hosting Muslim Heritage Day on February 1st with the East Brunswick Islamic Society, where there will be numerous activities including crafts, story times and food trucks.

Mr. Verma made a motion to approve the December 2024 Director's Report. Ms. Gurevich seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Gurevich, Mr. Palombit, Ms. Talbot and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

Consent Agenda:

Resolution #10,876

Naming 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; Karen Parry, Library Director; and Padmaja Krishna, Accounting Clerk.

Resolution #10,877

Naming Official Newspapers for 2025

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 #10,878

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 2025 from the following State contract vendors may exceed \$26,000:

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

Resolution #10,879

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, 2025, 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.

Ms. Talbot made a motion to approve Resolution #'s 10,876 – 10,879. Mr. Palombit seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Gurevich, Mr. Palombit, Ms. Talbot and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

Old Business:

There was no old business.

New Business:

Election of Officers

Mr. Amankwah opened up the floor for nominations.

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

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

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

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

Resolution #10,880

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 – Matthew Giacobbe, Esq. 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, 2025, through December 31, 2025, 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 – Matthew Giacobbe, Esq. will serve as Library Board Attorney.

Ms. Talbot made a motion to approve Resolution #10,880. Mr. Palombit seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Gurevich, Mr. Palombit, Ms. Talbot and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

Resolution #10,881

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 – Matthew Giacobbe, Esq.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees that it hereby appoints Cleary, Giacobbe, Alfieri, Jacobs, LLC – Matthew Giacobbe, Esq. as Library Board Conflict Counsel, effective January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025, in accordance with the response to the Request for Quotations for the provision of professional services for the position of East Brunswick Public Library.

Mr. Palombit made a motion to approve Resolution #10,881. Ms. Talbot seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Gurevich, Mr. Palombit, Ms. Talbot and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

Resolution #10,882

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 – Matthew Giacobbe, Esq. and Rainone Cofflin Minchello, LLC – Louis Rainone, Esq.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees that it hereby appoints Cleary, Giacobbe, Alfieri, Jacobs, LLC – Matthew Giacobbe, Esq., as Library Board Labor Relations Counsel, effective January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025, 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 – Matthew Giacobbe, Esq., Rainone Cofflin Minchello, LLC – Louis Rainone, Esq. will serve as Library Board Labor Relations Counsel.

Mr. Palombit made a motion to approve Resolution #10,882. Ms. Talbot seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Gurevich, Mr. Palombit, Ms. Talbot and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

Resolution #10,883

Appointment of Auditor for 2024 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 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Township of East Brunswick has appointed PKF O'Connor Davies, LLP to perform its 2024 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 2024 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.

Mr. Palombit made a motion to approve Resolution #10,883. Ms. Talbot seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Gurevich, Mr. Palombit, Ms. Talbot and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

Resolution #10,884

Temporary 2025 Library Budget

WHEREAS, the Township of East Brunswick will approve the municipal budget, including the library appropriation, later in the year 2025; and

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

WHEREAS, it was determined that 26.25% of the 2024 budget, the maximum allowable quarterly temporary budget for the first quarter of 2025, is \$1,215,484.00.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees approves a temporary budget of \$1,215,484.00.

Mr. Palombit made a motion to approve Resolution #10,884. Ms. Talbot seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, 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. Palombit made a motion to adjourn at 8:32 pm. Ms. Talbot seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Mr. Wayne Christie, Secretary