

**Board of Trustees**  
**Minutes**  
**May 24, 2016**

The monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees for the Free Public Library of Elizabeth, NJ, was re-scheduled from May 17, and held on May 24, 2016 at the Main Branch.

Vice-President Mr. Freedman called the meeting to order at 5:30pm. A quorum was established by roll call.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Ted Freedman, Pearl Serratelli, Ernestine Smith, Kevin Weaver

Absent: Veronica Alvero (excused), Eloy Delgado (excused), Kenyetta Jackson (excused), Anne Russell (excused), Christian Veliz

Visitors: Shirley Kety resides at 235 Summit Rd. in Elizabeth, NJ 07208; Robert Kern.

Ms. Chmiel, Library Director announced that adequate notice of this meeting had been provided by a notice in the Star Ledger. Also a notice was posted on the bulletin boards of the Main library and branches.

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Mrs. Kety, a former Board Member stated that the Library's telephone greeting should be recorded in the official language, English.

**MINUTES**

It was moved by Mr. Weaver, seconded by Ms. Serratelli to approve the minutes from the April 19<sup>th</sup> Board of Trustees meeting with the following amendment: on page 8, lines 3 and 4 of the last paragraph reads: "It was moved by Mr. Delgado, seconded by Ms. Serratelli to adjourn the meeting. Votes: Ayes-Mr. Delgado, Mr. Veliz, Ms. Serratelli, Mr. Weaver, Mr. Freedman. Nays

- none. Abstentions - none.” Ms. Serratelli and Mr. Velez were absent from the April meeting; Minutes should read *“It was moved by Mr. Delgado, seconded by Mr. Weaver to adjourn the meeting. Votes: Ayes- Mrs. Alvero, Mr. Delgado, Mr. Freedman, Mrs. Jackson, Ms. Russell, Mr. Weaver. Nays - none. Abstentions - none.”* Vote: Ayes - Mr. Freedman, Ms. Serratelli, Ms. Smith, Mr. Weaver. Nays - none. Abstentions - none.

### **TREASURER’S REPORT**

Mr. Weaver stated that the budget was on target for the end of the fiscal year on June 30; current balance in the operating account as of May 23<sup>rd</sup> was \$880,000; payroll account \$9,000; with \$900,000 in the Capital improvement account; for a total of \$1.7 million. Ms. Serratelli inquired about June expenditures. Mr. Weaver replied that the budget will be tight. Ms. Chmiel agreed and said that she has spoken to Roel Laurel about line item transfers that would be presented to the Board at the June meeting. Ms. Chmiel noted that the greatest concern has been personnel costs, with three more payrolls expected before the end of the fiscal year. The Memorial Day weekend will lower the payroll. The Finance Committee has been meeting to discuss this issue. Concern was expressed about the property tax reassessment that the City is being forced to perform and how that could affect the City and the Library budgets.

Mr. Weaver explained that he accessed the account balances through our PNC portal. Ms. Chmiel mentioned that she had requested this information from Roel, but if Mr. Weaver is retrieving it there is no additional need.

Mr. Freedman inquired about the financial savings that were expected to be realized by joining LMxAC. Ms. Chmiel replied that while there are hard savings realized (Boopsie app, for example), other savings are reflected in personnel and administrative areas. Ms. Chmiel noted that last month the Board accepted a working budget in which she combined the lines for

Internet Services Provider and Internet data lines into an amount that was less than what was budget for FY 15-16. Ms. Chmiel mentioned that we currently have an offer from LMxAC to upgrade our Router, with significant savings, and that there will be similar potential saving over time on different projects.

Mr. Freedman inquired if the LMxAC expense of \$35,000 will be onetime expense; Ms.

Chmiel replied that this would be an annual expense, but it would be budgeted differently. Mr.

Weaver noted that we have a better handle on costs over time.

There was a discussion on staff trainings, and how the cost for those was handled. Mr.

Freedman suggested that the Board should approve those expenditures. Ms. Chmiel explained that all participation in events outside the Library must be approved because of the impact upon the schedule, as well as upon the budget. Most library-organization sponsored events are fairly inexpensive; and any staff member wanting to participate in an event must submit a form indicating the benefit to the Library. Ms. Serratelli asked if participation in library conventions was part of staff training. Ms. Chmiel replied they were, and that staff participation in these events was often crucial. Mr. Freedman suggested assigning a dollar limit for individual events. The Board agreed \$500 is fair. [No Resolution was motioned.]

Ms. Chmiel noted that Library provides health care coverage to families of staff, not just to staff; this also increases our financial liability.

Ms. Chmiel noted indications that the Library would receive a 2% increase in financing from the City this year. Ms. Chmiel agreed that the Library will continue to monitor usage statistics (foot traffic; computer usage; materials circulation) to determine the least popular hours at all locations.

It was moved by Mr. Weaver, seconded by Ms. Serratelli to approve the Treasure's Fiscal Year

2015-2016 report as of May 2016. Vote: Ayes - Mr. Freedman, Ms. Serratelli, Ms. Smith, Mr. Weaver. Nays - none. Abstentions - none.

## **PRESENTATION OF BILLS**

Ms. Chmiel commented that Check #30216, is an upgrade to a Gold Contract on the Rahway Sliding Doors; we had had a Bronze Contract; Check # 30217 is for the monthly cleaning contract.

Mr. Freedman asked what E-Rate First is; Ms. Chmiel replied that is a consultant we have hired to help with E-Rate, and optimizing what we purchase. Ms. Serratelli inquired about Check #30195; Ms. Chmiel replied that it is retiree health benefits for about 15 people. Discussion about retiree benefits. It was moved by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Mr. Weaver to accept the Monthly Bills as of May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Vote: Ayes - Mr. Freedman, Ms. Serratelli, Ms. Smith, Mr. Weaver. Nays - none. Abstentions - none.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

**Consult your packet for the complete report. Highlights include:**

- Mr. Freedman inquired about conditions at Peterstown Community Center; Ms. Chmiel explained that is being fitted out as an emergency shelter.
- There has not been official word on the grant for community gardens; we have received unofficial word that our project will be viable.
- Mr. Weaver asked about seeking support for chiller and a/c system and how much a new chiller will cost; Ms. Chmiel replied that Carrier wanted \$15,000 just for the seasonal shutdown and about \$100,000 could be the cost of a new chiller. We want to be able to replace the system with new technology (discussion).
- Ms. Serratelli inquired about having an appraisal to review our LHR Collection. Ms.

Chmiel replied that we are looking into an auction house to appraise. (discussion)

- We are poised to sign an agreement with the Kean University Social Work program that would bring 2 student interns working here for 14 hours a week each.
- Ms. Serratelli asked about Active Shooter training; Ms. Chmiel explained in detail the training that took place April 22 through the Union County Sheriff's Department.  
(discussion)
- Ms. Chmiel noted the number (450) of visitors, who access the NY Times pass.
- Ms. Chmiel praised Rachelle and Nancy B's World Book program at Elmora
- Ms. Serratelli noted positive response to and big audience for Nancy B's Jewish American Heritage program at Elmora Branch.
- Ms. Chmiel spoke of the need to purchase copiers for branches, due to high printing demand. Copiers are cheaper to run than printers.

It was moved by Mr. Weaver, seconded by Ms. Smith to accept the Director's Report. Vote: Ayes - Mr. Freedman, Ms. Serratelli, Ms. Smith, Mr. Weaver. Nays - none. Abstentions - none.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

It was moved by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Mr. Weaver to accept the two-year Security Guard Services bid by Aegis Security. Vote: Ayes - Mr. Freedman, Ms. Serratelli, Ms. Smith, Mr. Weaver. Nays - none. Abstentions - none.

Ms. Smith left the meeting due to family matters.

The issue of a potential budget meeting with the Mayor has been resolved.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

Ms. Chmiel explained the context of the PNC Bank Account Adjustment Notice.

Ms. Chmiel noted LMxAC network upgrade and will address questions to Eileen Palmer.

(Discussion about maintenance, discount and benefits)

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- The FY 14-15 Annual Report is almost complete; a letter from the Board President is requested.
- Ms. Serratelli reiterated the question posed by Mrs. Kety, as to why we are answering the telephone in Spanish; Ms. Chmiel replied that the first line only is in Spanish since 59% of the population is Spanish. It was agreed to change the initial greeting to English.

It was moved by Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mr. Freedman to move the meeting to closed session.

Vote: Ayes - Mr. Freedman, Ms. Serratelli, Mr. Weaver. Nays - none. Abstentions -none.

## **PERSONNEL**

It was moved by Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mr. Freedman to move out of closed session. Vote:

Ayes - Mr. Freedman, Ms. Serratelli, Mr. Weaver. Nays - none. Abstentions - none.

It was noted that no Personnel issues could be subjected to a vote, as Ms. Smith had already departed and there was no quorum.

It was moved by Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mr. Freedman to adjourn the meeting. Vote: Ayes -

Mr. Freedman, Ms. Serratelli, Mr. Weaver. Nays - none. Abstentions - none.

Meeting adjourned at 7:24pm

Submitted by: Ana Violeta Monje-Medina