

**Board of Trustees
Minutes
September 20, 2016**

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees for the Free Public Library of Elizabeth, NJ, was held on September 20, 2016. Vice President Mr. Freedman called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. A quorum was established by roll call.

ROLL CALL

Present: Eloy Delgado (Late), Ted Freedman, Kenyetta Jackson, Pearl Serratelli, Anne Russell Kevin Weaver. Absent: Veronica Alvero (Excused), Earnestine Smith, (Excused), and Christian Veliz. Visitors: No visitors.

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.

MINUTES

It was moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Ms. Serratelli to approve the minutes from August 9, 2016. Votes: ayes, Mr. Freedman, Ms. Russell, Ms. Serratelli, and Mr. Weaver. Nays- none. Abstentions- Mrs. Jackson.

TREASURER’S REPORT:

Mr. Weaver asked if, on page 13, “As of August 2016” was a typo mistake since it would seem to be a September Revenue Report. Ms. Chmiel said that it may need to be updated; she will check with Mr. Laurel. Ms. Chmiel stated that the budget now reflects the budget increase to a flat \$4 million. The increase is now official. Ms. Chmiel noted that this isn’t quite a 2% increase, but is \$73,000 added to our budget. Mr. Laurel has added most of the increases to Personnel

expenses. Ms. Serratelli said that three quarters of the budget are assigned to Personnel, and that we can't run the library without staff; Mr. Weaver noted that the percentage is actually 77%.

Ms. Chmiel noted that she has made some calculations regarding the Building and Maintenance Services budget, and that there could still be some shortfalls. Ms. Chmiel mentioned water purification and testing of the AC tower during the summer season, a 4-month contract. There is still no HVAC contract.

Ms. Chmiel commented that the most reasonable and least painful action that will save \$20,000 a year, would be to close the library on Fridays at 7:00 PM; there will be potential savings in staff.

Mr. Freedman asked why Fridays; why not other days. Ms. Chmiel replied that on Fridays the Children's Dept is already closed at that time; also we open late on Friday mornings. Mr. Weaver supported Ms. Chmiel idea. Mr. Freedman asked for statistics on those hours; Ms. Chmiel will have figures next meeting. Ms. Chmiel calculated that for 2 hours: five Library Assistants at \$12.25 per hour; one monitor at \$9.00; two Librarians at \$30.00 and one at \$34.00 an hour; plus maintenance at \$15.50 per hour; Security savings would also be realized. Mr. Weaver added that there would be further savings during those hours, including electricity and HVAC costs.

Mr. Freedman inquired about the water service contract; Ms. Chmiel stated that we work with a water testing service to monitor the safety of water in the cooling tower in the summer months.

It was moved by Mr. Weaver, seconded by Ms. Russell to approve the Treasure's Report.

Votes: ayes, Mr. Freedman, Ms. Russell, Ms. Serratelli, and Mr. Weaver. Nays- none.

Abstentions- Mrs. Jackson.

PRESENTATION OF BILLS:

Ms. Serratelli asked what Express Scripts Inc. refers to. Ms. Chmiel replied that it is our prescriptions and should be paid upon receipt, also noted the amount. Ms. Chmiel brought up

City of Elizabeth Department of Neighborhood invoice, noting that she had sent a request to City Hall asking to have the fee for the elevator inspection waived. Mr. Weaver asked if BFI was related to the walls behind Teens; Ms. Chmiel confirmed, and mentioned several compliments we have received about that area; Ms. Chmiel added that Mr. Mayor will be using one of the spaces for a meeting on October 17th.

It was moved by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Mr. Weaver to accept the Presentation of Bills.

Votes: ayes, Mr. Freedman, Mrs. Jackson, Ms. Russell, Ms. Serratelli, and Mr. Weaver.

Nays- none. Abstentions- none.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Standing Committees did not meet in August.

REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Special committees did not meet in August.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Consult your packet for the complete report. Highlights include:

- Ms. Chmiel noted that responses to the Custodial Bid will be discussed later in the agenda, and that Assistant Director Candidate Mr. Andrew Luck will be at the meeting answering Board questions, and that this too will be discussed later in the meeting. Mrs. Jackson asked if he was the only candidate; Ms. Chmiel replied that six applied, but only three were interviewed, Ms. Chmiel creating an interview panel of Aimee Fernandez and Louisa Bann. Ms. Chmiel informed Board of discrepancies in Security invoices; we will be validating the invoices against copies of the timesheets. Ms. Chmiel noted that every guard is being charge \$15.00 monthly for uniforms, an expensive burden. Officer Harrison's duties were described by Ms. Chmiel.

- Mr. Freedman asked if there were any concern about our heating system. Ms. Chmiel replied that Mr. Goulart is working with Lyndhurst Plumber to ensure that all burners are working to capacity.
- Ms. Russell suggested that if we need more Community Garden volunteers, Eagles scouts could be a solution. Mrs. Jackson suggested contacting St. Mary's Eagle Scouts. Ms. Russell offered to contact them.
- Mr. Freedman inquired about the new scanners for patrons to use at the print stations. Ms. Chmiel replied that the new scanners are easier to use, preventing patron frustration and is an example of an investment in technology that improves customer service.
- Ms. Serratelli asked where the new copy machines will be assigned. Ms. Chmiel replied that Elmora, LaCorte and Eport will get them. Mr. Freedman asked if we own the machines and the cost of them; Ms. Chmiel confirmed it, and stated that the cost of each machine was about \$2,000.
- Ms. Serratelli also asked why Nancy Berkenfeld is working on Spanish Collection instead of Jose Alvarez; Ms. Chmiel said that Nancy is doing a good job. This would be a discussion for a closed session.
- Mr. Freedman asked what a sensitizer was; Ms. Chmiel explained that the equipment activates or deactivates the tattletale tape used to deter theft of library materials.
- Mr. Freedman inquired about new cameras, and where they will be placed. Mrs. Jackson expressed surprise at the existence of internal cameras; Ms. Chmiel explained where the cameras were located and their purpose, also noting how long they have being here, and the convenience of having as protection in blind spots. Mr. Freedman shared the experience of a stolen lab top.

- Mr. Freedman volunteered to participate in Great of Elizabeth Chambers members' program October 24th. Ms. Chmiel said that we will host in the computer lab; Ms. Chmiel will provide Board members with registration information.
- Mr. Freedman commended summer reading participation at LaCorte, as compared to Elmora and Eport this year. Ms. Chmiel praised the staff for the increased participation and the initiation of new programs.
- Ms. Chmiel noted Nancy Smith's Farewell breakfast.
- Mr. Freedman asked who Leonard Grayson is; Ms. Chmiel identified him as an employee in the City Health & Human Services Dept, working under Krishna Garlic, and the point person for the City ID program.
- Ms. Chmiel communicated to the Board the presence of the FBI at the Library apropos the recent incident at the Elizabeth Train Station; Ms. Chmiel explained the events and the communication with the City Hall Legal Dept (A subpoena was received). Mr. Delgado stated that even though this was a terrible event, we are not here to engage in bigotry. We are here to serve the entire community; and we will not judge one segment of the community by the actions of one person, and will let the investigators do their job. "At the Library we are here to serve the public and protect them," Mr. Delgado stated. Ms. Chmiel appreciated Mr. Delgado's comments.
- Mr. Freedman asked about the agenda for NJLA Public Policy meeting; Ms. Chmiel replied that the designated topic was public access, as mandated by the Americans with Disability Act (ADA).
- Mrs. Jackson asked the purpose of the meeting regarding Social Workers; Ms. Chmiel replied that Mark Lamar coordinates Rutgers MSW student interns throughout the State; in

January he will have about 1500 students to place. Our application for student interns will be sent and, if approved, we will provide room in the Periodical area for social work interns who will work at no cost to the library.

- Mr. Freedman asked who manages the courier statistics. Ms. Chmiel replied Circulation staff, and explained the process.
- Mr. Freedman recognized how stable Sunday's attendance is. Ms. Chmiel stated that she is fully committed to Sunday hours at Elmora. It was noted that Sundays are very convenient for the community. Mr. Freedman added that Elmora needs a bigger place. Ms. Chmiel explained how the installation of new interior doors to the meeting room will allow the Meeting Room to be opened up as a Reading Room on a daily basis. It was moved by Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mr. Delgado to accept the Director's Report. Votes: ayes, Mr. Delgado, Mr. Freedman, Mrs. Jackson, Ms. Russell, Ms. Serratelli, and Mr. Weaver. Nays- none. Abstentions- none.

READING OF COMUNICATIONS

- Ms. Chmiel encouraged Board members to attend the LUCC Consortium annual reception, Tuesday September 27th, 2016 at Summit Public Library. Mr. Delgado, Mr. Freedman, Mrs. Jackson and Ms. Serratelli will attend.
- Ms. Chmiel also encouraged Board members to participate to the City Annual Plan meeting. Mr. Freedman will attend.
- Ms. Chmiel read a letter that was sent to Mr. Freedman and Mr. Delgado; a patron complained about the difficulty of saving work to a public computer desktop. Ms. Chmiel suggested that the difficulty was related to changes in the MS Office program and read her answer to the aforementioned letter, offering the writer information on our Computer classes.

UNFINISH BUSINESS

- There were three applicants for Custodial Bid; detailed explanation about differences between bidders, reason to accept North Jersey Friendship House contract, and attorney recommendations Ms. Chmiel noted. It was moved by Mr. Weaver, seconded by Ms. Russell to accept the Custodial Bid. Votes: ayes, Mr. Delgado, Mr. Freedman, Mrs. Jackson, Ms. Russell, Ms. Serratelli, and Mr. Weaver. Nays- none. Abstentions- none.
- Ms. Chmiel presented a Resolution for Monica Eppinger. Ms. Serratelli suggested adding, on line thirteen page 32, “initiated the Writers Cafe” (Discussion). Mrs. Jackson recommended a word change in line six, replacing ‘on’ with ‘of.’ It was moved by Mr. Delgado, seconded by Mr. Weaver to accept the Resolution for Monica Eppinger as amendment. Votes: By acclamation.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Ms. Chmiel presented the June Budget Comparison to clarify the need for a transfer of funds from the Capital account to the FY 15-16 operating budget. Fiscal year bills arrived after June, leading to a budget deficit. Ms. Chmiel is not comfortable with the deficit, and is watching our investment in office supplies, and other lines, very carefully, but does not endorse additional cuts in book orders. Ms. Chmiel noted that in FY 15-16 we budgeted \$115,000 for prescription costs but actually spent \$145,000; we budgeted \$300,000 for Pension costs at and were billed for \$315,000. These are two expenses over which we have no control.
- Mr. Delgado asked if we are stable in personnel. Ms. Chmiel replied that we will be three month without an Assistant Director; no longer have an Archivist; have a recently retired librarian; and were about fourth months without a Children’s Librarian; these represent some

savings in Personnel costs. Mr. Delgado asked if we have considered switching health insurance plans, and suggested exploring alternative health insurance plans, including Horizon; Mr. Delgado mentioned that the Linden Board of Education offers only one plan. (Discussion) Ms. Chmiel stated that she will conduct research on our options. Mr. Delgado noted the legal requirement that any plan offered must be equivalent to the state plan or better. Ms. Chmiel warned that if the difference in costs is negligible she couldn't endorse a change. It was moved by Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mr. Delgado to accept Budget Transfers from Capital Account FY 2016-2017. Votes: ayes, Mr. Delgado, Mr. Freedman, Mrs. Jackson, Ms. Russell, Ms. Serratelli, and Mr. Weaver. Nays- none. Abstentions- none.

- Ms. Chmiel noted that was important to have a Resolution for Coffee Service since there is no charge for usage of the Auditorium; Coffee Service would include supplies (cups, napkins, stirrers) at no additional charge. It was moved by Mr. Weaver, seconded by Ms. Russell to accept Resolution for Coffee Service in the Library Meeting Room. Votes: ayes, Mr. Delgado, Mr. Freedman, Mrs. Jackson, Ms. Russell, Ms. Serratelli, and Mr. Weaver. Nays- none. Abstentions- none.
- Ms. Chmiel encouraged Board members to review the Meeting Room Policy changes. Ms. Chmiel suggested that *private* organization should pay for Auditorium usage. Other changes were mainly clarifications of existing policy, Ms. Chmiel stated. Mr. Delgado asked if nonprofit organizations will be free of charge; Ms. Chmiel replied it would depend on the applicant. Ms. Chmiel thanked Board members for addressing this long outstanding issue. It was moved by Mr. Delgado, seconded by Mr. Weaver to accept Changes in the Library Meeting Room Policy. Votes: ayes, Mr. Delgado, Mr. Freedman, Mrs. Jackson, Ms. Russell, Ms. Serratelli, and Mr. Weaver. Nays- none. Abstentions- none.

- Ms. Chmiel requested Board assistance in reviewing the RFQs for bathrooms upgrades. Ms. Chmiel provided Mrs. Jackson and Mr. Freedman with the RFQ responses, and indicated the need to decide with which architect we should work. Mr. Delgado asked if the RFQs relate to the CDBG grant investment. Ms. Chmiel said yes, and added that \$68,000 will be grant money and the other \$68,000 the Library will come from our Capital account. She hasn't yet sent the RFQ responses to the City Hall Legal Dept.
- Ms. Chmiel introduced Mr. Andy Luck as our Assistant Director candidate; a Jersey City resident, he is committed to Urban Libraries and comes from a family of librarians. Mr. Luck has worked at Paterson Public Library for about 8 years. His resume was distributed to Board. Questions asked by the Board included outreach to public schools; services to Teens; the Paterson Library budget (approximately \$6 million); Paterson branch library activities. Mr. Luck explained a unique EZ card system that the library distributes during school visits. Mr. Delgado asked why Urban Libraries, what is their relevance in the 21st century? Mr. Luck replied that working in a city library had allowed him to bring new opportunities to enjoy multiple activities such as music, art, theater, food etc to the public. He noted how people appreciate these efforts and how we as librarians touch people's lives. Ms. Serratelli noted that we are not just a Library anymore, we are a refuge for people, we serve people, and libraries should be a safe place for all visitors.

Ms. Jackson asked about the grant program that initiated the Spiritual Jazz events at Paterson. Mr. Luck explained that the events were about enrichment by bringing Jazz celebrities into the community and connecting with them spiritually and culturally. Ms. Chmiel asked about the demographic makeup for program attendees; basically everybody comes, Mr. Luck replied, but mostly homeless and African American people, who are all deserving of cultural

enrichment. Additional questions included the size of the Paterson Library staff (50) and whether staff is unionized (Yes).

It was moved by Mr. Delgado, Seconded by Mrs. Jackson to move to closed session. Votes: ayes, Mr. Delgado, Mr. Freedman, Mrs. Jackson, Ms. Russell, Ms. Serratelli, and Mr. Weaver. Nays- none. Abstentions- none. It was moved by Acclamation to move out of closed session.

PERSONNEL

It was moved by Mr. Weaver, Seconded by Ms. Russell to accept Louisa Bann's resignation. Votes: ayes, Mr. Delgado, Mr. Freedman, Mrs. Jackson, Ms. Russell, Ms. Serratelli, and Mr. Weaver. Nays- none. Abstentions- none.

It was moved by Acclamation to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45pm

Submitted by Ana V. Monje-Medina