

Board of Trustees

Minutes

September 19, 2017

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Free Public Library of Elizabeth, NJ, was held on September 19, 2017. President Ted Freedman called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. A quorum was established by roll call.

ROLL CALL

Present: Ted Freedman, Kenyetta Jackson, Anne Russell, Pearl Serratelli, Aaron Goldblatt.

Absent: Eloy Delgado (Excused), Kristin Kelly (Excused), Kevin Weaver (Excused) and Earnestine Smith (Excused).

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 library branches.

Visitors: No visitors

MINUTES

Mr. Freedman voiced the importance of respecting fellow Board members' time. "If you feel that your commitment to this organization is overwhelming you, please make the necessary action to remove yourself from it. It is our priority. We represent 129,000 people, we support the community, we also have to support the Leadership of this Library, but we can't do it if we can't meet the requirement of the Law, if we can't make the quorum." Mr. Freedman encourages Board members to fulfill their commitment with the community. He requested adding to June 20, 2017 Minutes, "Mr. Freedman requested that Ms. Chmiel investigate the legality of a four-member Quorum in terms of the Law" Ms. Chmiel expressed concern about the results; if legality requires a five-member Quorum, "half of the time we would not meet." Ms. Chmiel will reconfirm Quorum legalities.

It was moved by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Ms. Serratelli, to approve with amendment the June 20, 2017, Board Minutes. Votes: Ayes –Mr. Freedman, Mrs. Jackson, Ms. Russell, Ms. Serratelli, and Mr. Goldblatt. Nays- none. Abstentions- none

TREASURER’S REPORT:

In the absence of the Treasurer, Ms. Chmiel proceeded to present the report. Ms. Chmiel noted that there were several Treasurer reports to be approved since there were several months when the Board did not meet. Ms. Chmiel reported on the current Library finances. Referring to Page 9, Ms. Chmiel presented the first report on the fiscal year ending on June 30th, 2017. On page 15, she indicated the \$3,000 spent for Janitorial and Hardware; and detailed the labor and expenses required to maintain the parking lot. The ultimate goal is to maintain the lot sufficiently so as to avoid the need for resurfacing. In response to Ms. Serratelli’s question about \$800 spent for the Elevator, Ms. Chmiel stated that that represented two months’ payment toward the elevator maintenance contract; Ms. Chmiel noted that in her report they will have more details about the elevator operation. She also expressed concerns at the service provided under our previous contract with Current Elevator. Under Personnel, in response to Mr. Freedman’s question about \$2,100 paid to Civil Service, Ms. Chmiel noted two issues: one was the cancelation of a test called for a now-vacated position; the second concerned Krystal Corbett and her Pension enrollment. Ms. Corbett never enrolled herself in the Division of Pensions benefits program. Ms. Chmiel fought over a year, repeatedly asking why we had to pay for her pension if we didn’t get money from her. Why we would have to pay from our budget something she didn’t do if that was part of her duties? She clearly had no intention to going back in to Civil Service or the State Pension system. ~~“She cost us a fortune, I don’t know why she did that to us. It was deliberate and planned what she did.”~~ **[DID I SAY THIS? Let’s take it out]** The Pension bill has already been paid, Ms. Chmiel added.

Mr. Freedman inquired about \$3,500 spent for programming; Ms. Chmiel replied that that reflects reimbursable grant funds which we have spent. At the end of the grant period, we will submit receipts and be reimbursed. It was moved by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Ms. Russell, to approve the June, August and as of September 1st Treasurer’s Report. Votes: Ayes –Mr. Freedman, Mrs. Jackson, Ms. Russell, Ms. Serratelli, and Mr. Goldblatt. Nays- none. Abstentions- none

PRESENTATION OF BILLS:

Mrs. Jackson noted a typo on 2016 Presentation of Bills that should be 2017. Besides summer programming money spent, Ms. Chmiel noted Triangle Communications LLC refers to new radios and batteries acquired for our walkie talkies. WT. Cox refers to the new Periodical contract; Ms. Chmiel noted that we have better service in terms of handling items and pricing. Mr. Luck commented that he and Cathy Abbate have implemented a tracking system for Newspapers. JM Glass Corporation refers to the third floor door window that was broken again. In response to Mr. Freedman's question about World Book use, Ms. Chmiel stated that it is a yearly digital subscription that it is a good research tool. As for the print editions, we have updated it at four locations, including Children's. It was moved by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Ms. Russell, to approve the July Presentation of Bills. Votes: Ayes –Mr. Freedman, Mrs. Jackson, Ms. Russell, Ms. Serratelli, and Mr. Goldblatt. Nays- none. Abstentions- none.

Ms. Chmiel highlighted Children's Dept programs that are covered under the Freeholders Grant. Ms. Chmiel stated that Binsky & Snyder Service was for getting the AC up and running for the summer. USA Architect expenses are charged against the Capital Reserve. It was moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Ms. Serratelli, to approve the August Presentation of Bills. Votes: Ayes – Mr. Freedman, Mrs. Jackson, Ms. Russell, Ms. Serratelli, and Mr. Goldblatt. Nays- none. Abstentions- none.

Mr. Luck described the Fire Department sign. Ms. Chmiel stated that Gray Overhead Door Co refers to the garage door repair. E-Rate First is our consultant who saves the Library significant money each year. It was moved by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Mrs. Jackson, to approve the September Presentation of Bills. Votes: Ayes –Mr. Freedman, Mrs. Jackson, Ms. Russell, Ms. Serratelli, and Mr. Goldblatt. Nays- none. Abstentions- none

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Standing Committees didn't meet.

REPORTS OF AD HOC COMMITTEES

Ad Hoc Committee reports should be during Closed Session.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Consult your packet for the complete report. Highlights include:

- Mr. Goulart reported to Ms. Chmiel the existence of a water heater above children bathrooms on the first floor; Ms. Chmiel authorized him to replace it since it is damaged.
- Shutdown of the AC was covered under our old Carrier contract; with that contract expired, they quoted us \$17,000 just for the shutdown. We have two proposals as of today for the shutdown but they are not easily compared.
- There was a partial power failure at LaCorte branch. This was a City headache, not ours.
- The first floor Express computer and copy station has been relocated, anticipating the bathroom construction. We will do a display in October, related to Bathroom Renovation, in the display case outside the Children's Dept.
- We hope the City will help us with the trees that are encroaching onto neighboring properties.
- **More information will be discussed in closed session.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Ms. Chmiel and Mr. Luck expressed concern about billing for the City ID. Ms. Chmiel has discussed the situation with Ms. Krishna Garlic, head of Health & Human Services at City Hall. The MOU will be reviewed and changes can be made in November; for now we will continue under the current agreement. Wanda is managing the City ID room at the library. Penny Meredith is fully and positively handling it, Ms. Chmiel added.
- For the Bathroom Renovation, the contractor will build a barrier wall to reduce dust and noise. They don't anticipate demolition beginning before mid-October. We are looking for storage space and a workable traffic pattern for the construction crew. Public bathroom service will be available on the 4 floor.
- We haven't had any complaints about our gardening; the only concern expressed has been about the presence of bees. The bees are not disturbing the public; they actually are good for our crops. Ms. Chmiel explained to Mr. Goldblatt the Elmora gardening program.
- Ms. Chmiel reminded the Board about a resolution to transfer funds to balance the 2016-2017 budget. This would be a line item transfer. In response to Mr. Freedman's question about the \$20,000 in savings, Ms. Chmiel stated that it is as a result of not hiring or replacing

some of the staff. It was moved by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Mr. Goldblatt, to approve the line item Budget transfer FY 2016-2017. Votes: By Acclamation

NEW BUSINESS

- Welcome to Mr. Aaron Goldblatt
- We are carrying over \$200,000 from last FY to this FY. Ms. Chmiel encourages the Board to approve the transfer of these funds in order to balance this year's tight fiscal budget which saw no increase.; it will be a transfer from last year's Operating budget to this year's Operating budget. It was moved by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Mr. Goldblatt, to approve the Budget transfer of funds from FY 2016-2017 to FY 2017-2018. Votes: By Acclamation.
- It was moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Freedman, to approve the LHR fee adjustments. Votes: By Acclamation.

READING OF COMUNICATIONS

- USA Architects Letter of Recommendation
- EMID incentives
- Mrs. Veronica Alvero has become Principal at Dr. Antonia Pantoja School No. 27

It was moved by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Ms. Serratelli that the meeting move into closed session. Votes: By Acclamation

PERSONNEL

It was moved by Mrs. Jackson, seconded by Ms. Russell to approve Jose Alvarez's resignation. Votes: By Acclamation.

It was moved by Ms. Serratelli, seconded by Mr. Freedman to approve Sarley Ortiz's resignation. Votes: By Acclamation.

It was moved by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Mr. Goldblatt to approve hiring Alison Blumenfeld as Head of Reference Dept. at an annual salary of \$61,000, plus Union increase. Votes: By Acclamation.

It was moved by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Mr. Goldblatt to approve hiring Sheriea Johnson as Part-Time Clerk at an hourly wage of \$12.70, plus Union increase. Votes: By Acclamation.

It was moved by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Mrs. Jackson to approve hiring Kit Yam-Chan as Part-Time Library Assistant at an hourly wage of \$12.15 an hour, plus Union increase. Votes: By Acclamation.

It was moved by Mrs. Jackson, seconded by Ms. Russell to move the Meeting out of closed session. Votes: By Acclamation

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Mrs. Jackson to adjourn the meeting. Votes: By acclamation.

The meeting adjourned at 7: 15pm

Submitted by Ana V. Monje-Medina