

Board of Trustees Minutes –MAR 19, 2024

Call to Order: The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Free Public Library of Elizabeth, NJ, was held in person and remotely via Zoom on March 19, 2024. Ms. Pearl Serratelli called the meeting to order at 5:32 pm. **A quorum was established by roll call.**

ROLL CALL: Present: Pearl Serratelli, Dorothy McMullen, Julia Krisanits-Lehman, Earnestine Smith, Lorraine Tidd. Absent: Eloy Delgado, Martin Weingast, Lisa Torres, Chynice Roman. Also present were Mary Faith Chmiel, Library Director; Assistant Director Robert Barbanell; and Helen Speros, Office Manager, taking minutes.

Announcement of Compliance with The Sunshine Law: In compliance.

Welcome to Visitors: Ms. Pearl Serratelli states there are no visitors.

Comments from the Public: None.

READING OF THE MINUTES (FEBRUARY 2024) (Action Item): It was motioned by Ms. Pearl Serratelli to accept the February 2024 Minutes from the previous meeting and seconded by Ms. Julia Krisanits-Lehman. AYES: Ms. Pearl Serratelli, Ms. Julia Krisanits-Lehman, Dr. Dorothy McMullen, Ms. Earnestine Smith, Ms. Lorraine Tidd. Abstention: Mr. Martin Weingast NAYS: none. Absent: Eloy Delgado, Lisa Torres, Chynice Roman. Mr. Martin Weingast attends 5:36pm

TREASURER’S REPORT (Feb 2024) (Action Item): sent separately and handed out.

- It looks like we are in decent shape with 1.5 million but Roel states after pensions, health benefits and prescriptions are paid, we will be in the red. Mary Faith has written to Tony regarding concern for our budget. Insurance costs are high \$200,000. We are also undergoing Union negotiations and increases in salaries. Advised staff to budget tightly for programming and supplies. We still have three more months to go. Budgeted 650k for health 200k remaining but additional payments to be made. MaryFaith explains we pay health benefits for our retired employees of 25 years.

Ms. MaryFaith Chmiel asks if anyone has questions regarding the Treasurer Report and asks for a motion to accept. It was motioned by Ms. Lorraine Tidd to accept the Treasurer’s Report and seconded by Dr. Dorothy McMullen. AYES: Martin Weingast, Pearl Serratelli, Dorothy McMullen, Lorraine Tidd, Earnestine Smith, Julia Krisanits-Lehman. Abstention: None NAYS: none. Absent: Eloy Delgado, Chynice Roman, Lisa Torres.

PRESENTATION AND APPROVAL OF BILLS (Jan/Feb 2024) (Action Item): Ms. Pearl Serratelli motions for approval to pay the bills. It was seconded by Ms. Earnestine Smith to accept the Bills List. AYES: Martin Weingast, Pearl Serratelli, Dorothy McMullen, Lorraine Tidd, Earnestine Smith, Julia Krisanits-Lehman. Abstention: None NAYS: none. Absent: Eloy Delgado, Chynice Roman, Lisa Torres.

REPORTS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES: None

REPORTS OF AD HOC COMMITTEES: None

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Consult your packet for the complete report.

MaryFaith discusses the following:

- The new trustees were given a tour and anyone else is welcome to take a tour.
- Robert completed the State Aid Report. Tax appointments continue
- HVAC remote meeting- they are asking for money for the filtering system which we thought was included in the original specs. Chynice Roman arrives 5:47pm.
- Work on the Elmora roof has started but has not been worked on in the last 2 weeks. Many delays. They have water leaks in the building. Downside of going with the lowest bid. Parking lot budgeted for 192k and roof 331k
- Patron overdosed- Frankie (Security) administered CPR and 3 doses of Narcam were administered by library visitors; patron survived.
- Electric auction savings anticipated.
- Elmora parking lot project amount 331k but we only spent 111k. State Library money. Trying to get approval to use remaining on sidewalks, driveway apron, curbing, 3 dirt pads for 3 trees, Sign "Library Parking Only", and a ramp to the front door.
- We want to polish the 4th floor, Rahway entrance, and stairwells/landings. The Rahway door is broken, we received a quote and waiting to hear back as to when they can come in to fix it.
- ADT alarm sends messages. Robert explains the system needs to be bypassed when closing.
- There is a dumpster at the main library for appliances and old computers. A grant was submitted for new computers.
- Scheduling a Staff development day for May 10, 9am; the library is closed. Free programming to save money. NJSYC Cyber security, CSC. We will pay for food.
- Alex still out on Maternity leave but will be back soon. IAS getting recognized for information in flex space. Chair Yoga popular. Britanie success stories.
- Frank Brinley exhibit 10/19. He was born and raised in Elizabeth will be presenting a book "I Grew up in Elizabeth" in 1970s-1980s.
- LHR had a researcher from Japan. Teens active; Sometimes an unruly group. Britanie success stories.
- Reports - Other Departments

Ms. Pearl Serratelli motions for approval to accept the Director's Report. It was seconded by Ms. Lorraine Tidd. AYES by Acclamation: Martin Weingast, Pearl Serratelli, Dorothy McMullen, Chynice Roman, Lorraine Tidd, Earnestine Smith, Julia Krisanits-Lehman. NAYS: none. Absent: Eloy Delgado, Lisa Torres.

READING OF THE COMMUNICATIONS:

- 2nd check from Dan Russell received for \$1,000. \$1,000 previously received. They still owe \$500 of the \$2,500 donation.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Sotheby's Auction We sent a counteroffer of \$175k offer for item still being held at Sotheby's but have not heard back yet.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Resolution on Electricity Auction- Presented last month. A new resolution brought forth for approval to purchase electricity at a cheaper rate. The 18-month term is best.

Ms. Pearl Serratelli makes a motion to approve the Resolution on Electricity Auction and it is seconded by Ms. Lorraine Tidd. AYES by Acclamation: Martin Weingast, Pearl Serratelli, Dorothy McMullen, Chynice Roman, Lorraine Tidd, Earnestine Smith, Julia Krisanits-Lehman. NAYS: none. Absent: Eloy Delgado, Lisa Torres.

- Reimbursement of \$879 for tuition re-imburement remotely at Valdosta State University for Frank Castro. Aimee and Alexandra are going to the same school, also remotely. They have to stay at the library for 1 year afterwards. Valdosta has issues removing themselves from the ALA – Frank researched and the school is exempted and they will get ALA approval. Need MLA. Jazlyn is going remotely to Rutgers for MLA.

Ms. Pearl Serratelli makes a motion to approve the tuition re-imburement and it is seconded by Dr. Dorothy McMullen. AYES by Acclamation: Martin Weingast, Pearl Serratelli, Dorothy McMullen, Chynice Roman, Lorraine Tidd, Earnestine Smith, Julia Krisanits-Lehman. NAYS: none. Absent: Eloy Delgado, Lisa Torres.

CLOSED SESSION/ OPEN SESSION:

Ms. Pearl Serratelli motions to go into closed session and it was seconded by Ms. Lorraine Tidd. AYES by Acclamation: Martin Weingast, Pearl Serratelli, Dorothy McMullen, Chynice Roman, Lorraine Tidd, Earnestine Smith, Julia Krisanits-Lehman. NAYS: none. Absent: Eloy Delgado, Lisa Torres.

Ms. Lorraine Tidd motions to come out of closed session and it was seconded by Ms. Pearl Serratelli. AYES by Acclamation: Martin Weingast, Pearl Serratelli, Dorothy McMullen, Chynice Roman, Lorraine Tidd, Earnestine Smith, Julia Krisanits-Lehman. NAYS: none. Absent: Eloy Delgado, Lisa Torres.

PERSONNEL

Ms. Pearl Serratelli motions to accept Angela Passeggi resignation and was seconded by Dr. Dorothy McMullen. AYES by Acclamation: Martin Weingast, Pearl Serratelli, Dorothy McMullen, Chynice Roman, Lorraine Tidd, Earnestine Smith, Julia Krisanits-Lehman. NAYS: none. Absent: Eloy Delgado, Lisa Torres.

Ms. Pearl Serratelli motions to accept Carol Jones Retirement 04/30/2024 and it was seconded by Ms. Lorraine Tidd. AYES by Acclamation: Martin Weingast, Pearl Serratelli, Dorothy McMullen, Chynice Roman, Lorraine Tidd, Earnestine Smith, Julia Krisanits-Lehman. NAYS: none. Absent: Eloy Delgado, Lisa Torres.

Ms. Lorraine Tidd motions to accept a retro increase to 2/1/2024 for Edwin Lopez to \$105k as Building Superintendent and it was seconded by Ms. Earnestine Smith. AYES by Acclamation: Martin Weingast, Pearl Serratelli, Dorothy McMullen, Chynice Roman, Lorraine Tidd, Earnestine Smith, Julia Krisanits-Lehman. NAYS: none. Absent: Eloy Delgado, Lisa Torres.

ADJOURNMENT: Ms. Lorraine Tidd motions to adjourn at 7:00pm and it was seconded by Ms. Pearl Serratelli. AYES by Acclamation: Martin Weingast, Pearl Serratelli, Dorothy McMullen, Chynice Roman, Lorraine Tidd, Earnestine Smith, Julia Krisanits-Lehman. NAYS: none. Absent: Eloy Delgado, Lisa Torres.

Submitted by Helen Speros