

## **Board of Trustees Minutes - November 21, 2017**

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Free Public Library of Elizabeth, NJ, was held on November 21, 2017. Treasurer Eloy Delgado called the meeting to order at 5:35 pm. A quorum was established by roll call.

### **ROLL CALL**

Present: Eloy Delgado, Ted Freedman (Late), Aaron Goldblatt, Kristin Kelly, Anne Russell (Late), Pearl Serratelli, Earnestine Smith. Absent: Kenyetta Jackson (Excused), Kevin Weaver (Excused)

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

Visitors: No visitors

### **MINUTES**

It was moved by Mr. Delgado, seconded by Mr. Goldblatt to approve the minutes from September 19<sup>th</sup> Board of Trustees meeting. Vote: by acclamation. Abstentions - Mr. Delgado. It was moved by Mr. Goldblatt, seconded by Ms. Serratelli to approve the minutes from October 17<sup>th</sup> Board of Trustees meeting. Vote: by acclamation. Abstentions- Mr. Delgado and Ms. Serratelli

### **TREASURER'S REPORT:**

Mr. Delgado proceeded to present the report.

- Remaining budget is accurate. We are planning to ask the City for an increase in the Library budget. Ms. Chmiel stated that the Library did not spend the previous year's entire budget, as we were considerably understaffed.
- In the budget's "Technology" section, line item "Software/LMxAC" shows \$56,000 spent for this FY. Ms. Chmiel stated that joining the consortium saved the Library considerable money. This specific service benefits patrons by sending messages about available holds, due date reminders, and overdue notices, thus reducing calls and wasted staff time. Overdue notices are also mailed by the consortium which allows the Library to clean up our patron records, Ms. Chmiel added.
- Postage for each Board package cost \$3.50. Ms. Chmiel asked the Board if they would like to pick these up from the Library.

- It was moved by Ms. Serratelli, seconded by Mr. Goldblatt, to approve the November, Treasurer's Report. Votes: Ayes –Mr. Delgado, Mr. Goldblatt, Ms. Kelly, Ms. Serratelli, and Ms. Smith. Nays- none. Abstentions- none

#### **PRESENTATION OF BILLS:**

- Moreno Fruzzetti, was part of 2017 Fall Concert Series.
- Piano tuning cost us \$150.
- Responding to Mr. Delgado's question, Ms. Chmiel replied that according to the NJ State web site, prescription plans will change, and health benefit costs will remind flat. Mr. Delgado recommended investigating for possible increase.
- The auditor completed their review of FY 2016-2017.
- It was moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Ms. Serratelli, to approve the November Presentation of Bills. Votes: Ayes –Mr. Delgado, Mr. Goldblatt, Ms. Kelly, Ms. Russell, Ms. Serratelli, and Ms. Smith. Nays- none. Abstentions- none

#### **REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

- Standing Committees didn't meet.

#### **REPORTS OF AD HOC COMMITTEES**

- Nominating Committee met to prepare a slate for 2018. Ms. Serratelli established 2018 nominations as follows: reinstate for one more year, President Mr. Freedman, Vice President Mr. Weaver, Treasurer Mr. Delgado, and Secretary Ms. Serratelli. Ms. Chmiel will confirm Mr. Weaver's reappointment to the Board.

#### **FURTHER BUSINESS**

- Mr. Delgado felt that the four vote Quorum should remain as it is. Ms. Russell stated that four votes don't seem to be a fair representation for the City since most of those votes affect financing. Those financial decisions are postponed for full Quorum approval Mr. Delgado established.
- To Mr. Goldblatt's question, Mr. Delgado replied that all Board members are appointed by the Mayor. Kristin Kelly is the current mayoral alternate.
- Ms. Chmiel read the 2017 current Committee Appointments list.

#### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

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

- Responding to Ms. Serratelli's question about the Library windows, Ms. Chmiel replied that the cleaning service - Friendship House - has not yet completed that task. Ms. Chmiel consulted Mr. Bolanowski – the City Attorney - and he recommended getting quotes from other window cleaning services and deducting that amount from Friendship House's payment. Friendship House has violated their contract with the library by not cleaning the windows as stipulated.
- Answering to Mr. Delgado's question about the Teen Department's programming and events, Ms. Chmiel stated that the Halloween program had 65 participants. On a daily basis after 3:30pm the Teen Department is busy with positive energy. The department head Tracy Robinson has three rules: keep your voice down, no bad language, and no physical contact. It is a popular area in the Main Library. Tracy is looking in to start the Great Stories Project again next year with the Mayor's contribution, but without ALA. She is hoping to get the ALA Grant the following year.
- The patron traffic count is down at the main Branch, but a faulty electronic counter is suspected. Mr. Goulart is working to fix it; the equipment is old.
- Wiring issues appear to be causing electric outages on the second floor. We are preparing to upgrade the Wi-Fi and so will need an electrician's opinion. Ms. Serratelli expressed that it is upsetting that a previous director spent millions in exterior renovations and ignored major plumbing and interior problems (AC, wiring, etc.) that needed repair.
- The Library is moving forward with the Energy Audit completed this year. The consulting company explained that there are various approaches that can be taken. Replacing our lights will save money, but typically these projects combine lights and HVAC. Ms. Chmiel stated that the Library will have to invest, but eventually will get that money back. This project will start at Elmora. Ms. Serratelli expressed again that everything from the previous administration was dumped on Ms. Chmiel's administration and that in the past maintenance was very poor.
- Mr. Papetti, the Director of Public Works and his staff did a good job pruning the trees at Elmora. A neighbor there wanted the Library to pay for damage caused by a falling limb from one of our trees. Ms. Chmiel advised them to contact their own insurance.
- The Library is hosting a Trinitas Health Screening Check Wednesday, January 10, 2018 and Tuesday, February 20, 2018. Ally Blumenfeld and Nancy Berkenfeld are working together.
- It was moved by Ms. Serratelli, seconded by Mr. Goldblatt, to approve the Director's Report. Votes: Ayes –Mr. Delgado, Mr. Freedman, Mr. Goldblatt, Ms. Kelly, Ms. Russell, Ms. Serratelli, and Ms. Smith. Nays- none. Abstentions- none.
- Mr. Luck commented about several security incidents at the Main Library.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- Amendments to the MOU with the City of Elizabeth's Health and Human Services regarding the implementation of the EMID program will be sent to Ms. Krishna Garlic, the department's director. Library will potentially print promotional materials in house. Ms. Chmiel stated that Municipal ID is recognized by police officers, participating banks and all EPS Schools; it is not accepted at airports.
- Mail was sent to Ms. Kelly Martins requesting permission to use the City Logo on a sign that will be placed on the plywood wall at the bathroom renovation site.
- The Library has been awarded a second Community Development Block Grant. Ms. Chmiel will keep Board informed.
- Mr. Freedman reminded the Board about a presentation by Ms. Pavlak, president of the NJ Library Trustees Association (NJLTA) at the December 19, 2017 Board meeting. The presentation is related to Board responsibilities and Library commitments.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- Ms. Chmiel recommended allowing food to be eaten at the library. Currently this is not allowed, but people eat in the Library all the same. People could be referred to the Flex Space area in order to eat snack food and drinks. Meals would not be allowed. Food and drink consumption would still not be permitted at Public PCs or in the Local History Room. No smelly or hot meals will be allowed. Mr. Freedman recommended a 3 months trial.
- Board Meeting Dates, 2018. September 11 was changed to September 12, 2018. It was moved by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Ms. Russell, to approve the Proposed 2018 Board Meeting Dates with amendment September 11<sup>th</sup> to September 12<sup>th</sup>. Votes: Ayes – Mr. Freedman, Mr. Goldblatt, Ms. Kelly, Ms. Russell, Ms. Serratelli, and Ms. Smith. Nays- none. Abstentions- none.
- 2018 Holiday Closings. To Ms. Serratelli's question, Ms. Chmiel replied that as per Union agreement the Library should close Friday 29<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 PM for New Year Eve. The Library will be closed Saturday, Sunday and Monday. April 1<sup>st</sup> and May 20<sup>th</sup> Elmora branch will be closed. It was moved by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Mr. Goldblatt, to approve the Proposed 2018 Holiday Closings Dates with Elmora's Sundays closing amendment. Votes: Ayes – Mr. Freedman, Mr. Goldblatt, Ms. Kelly, Ms. Russell, Ms. Serratelli, and Ms. Smith. Nays- none. Abstentions- none.
- MOU with New Jersey Department of Education to become a GED Testing Site will be signed and returned. Edwin and Ally will go to Trenton December 19<sup>th</sup> to take a full training about legalities.
- Mr. Freedman requested the Library's periodicals circulation statistics. Ms. Chmiel expressed that it is irrelevant due to no heavy circulation. Patrons enjoy reading them at the Library.
- The Library received two proposals for legal representation in its labor contract negotiations. The hourly rates for both proposals were the same. Ms. Chmiel's recommendation is to wait

until a new contract is agreed on. Then representation can be chosen to review the contract and the personnel manual.

- RFQ for Architectural Services at Elmora women's room, as per recommendation by Mr. Eduardo Rodriguez to spent CDBG allocation; we aren't getting as much funding as we had hoped.
- Ms. Serratelli noted a Groundwork Elizabeth incident at Elmora. Ms. Chmiel will inform them about it.

### **READING OF COMUNICATIONS**

Ms. Chmiel read the Ordinance notice of Public hearing (was included in Board package) about Elmora's grounds; Ms. Chmiel explained the potential water contamination by Purepac Pharmaceuticals.

It was moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Ms. Serratelli that the meeting move into Closed Session. Votes: By Acclamation.

It was moved by Ms. Serratelli, seconded by Ms. Smith to move the meeting out of Closed Session. Votes: By Acclamation.

### **PERSONNEL**

- It was moved by Mr. Goldblatt, seconded by Ms. Russell to promote Tracy Robinson to Librarian I, at an annual salary of \$45,000. Votes: By Acclamation.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Goldblatt to adjourn the meeting. Votes: By acclamation.

The meeting adjourned at 7: 26pm  
Submitted by Ana V. Monje-Medina.