

Board of Trustees Minutes – June 19, 2018

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Free Public Library of Elizabeth, NJ, was held on June 19, 2018. President Ted Freedman called the meeting to order at 5:35pm. A quorum was established by roll call.

ROLL CALL

Present: Ted Freedman, Aaron Goldblatt, Kenyetta Jackson, Kristin Kelly, Anne Russell, Connie Pires Sanchez, Pearl Serratelli and Earnestine Smith. Absent: Eloy Delgado.

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

Visitors: No Visitors

MINUTES

Mr. Freedman requested removing from pg. 4, line 4 that reads “Mr. Freedman recommended refraining from recurrent bills until next year’s budget is establish” He did not recall saying that. Additionally, Mr. Freedman requested that pg. 4, line 8 be removed “Mr. Freedman also attended a CDBG meeting.” Mr. Freedman also recommended editing pg. 7 lines 5 and 6 that read “Mr. Freedman encouraged the Board to attend the Trustees Institute meeting in Middletown on May 19th. The Library will pay for their transportation and registration”. Instead it should read: “Mr. Freedman encouraged Board Members to attend the NJLTA Executive Board meeting on May 19th in Middletown NJ (library), and also to try to attend the NJLTA (New Jersey Library Trustee Association) Trustee Institute on October 27th at the National Conference Center, Exit 8- NJ Turnpike East Windsor NJ, as previously mentioned. Let Ms. Chmiel and myself know of your plans. EPL will pay registration and transportation expenses.” Ms. Russell stated that on pg. 4, line 10 her name is missing from the votes approving the April and May Treasurer Reports.

It was moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Goldblatt to approve the minutes from May 15th Board of Trustees meeting as amended. Vote: Mr. Ted Freedman, Mr. Aaron Goldblatt, Ms.

Kristin Kelly, Ms. Anne Russell, Ms. Pearl Serratelli and Ms. Earnestine Smith. Abstentions – Mrs. Kenyetta Jackson, and Mrs. Connie Pires Sanchez.

Mr. Freedman recommended that a letter, stating his or her approval of the resulting contract, be requested from the attorney who represented the Library during Union negotiations.

As follow up Ms. Chmiel established that Check # 27684 (\$26) was a reimbursement for a lost book fee. The book in question was returned within 30 days of the fee payment, as per our policy.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

As the Treasurer was not in attendance, Ms. Chmiel proceeded to present the report.

- We have been tracking the budget closely this month since it is the end of the FY. On June 5th Roel Laurel printed a report that showed \$450,000 left, and approximately a week later he provided another report showing a balance of \$409,815.62. As of today the Library has a balance \$299,413.93, with no more payroll to process this fiscal year. We will have some recurrent bills such as utilities, Baker & Taylor, Midwest Tape, and supply orders.
- WT. Cox Information Services provides our periodicals and magazines. The annual cost used to be \$35,000 a year for those items.
- As a result of closely watching our budget all year, and having a healthy balance a month before the end of our current fiscal year, a decision was made to replace the public computer chairs. The Library ordered about 120 chairs at \$100 each for the Main Branch. The Library also ordered some maintenance equipment (valves, tools), and mounting equipment for the new marketing display screens deployed throughout the Library.
- Answering Ms. Serratelli's question about obtaining a new door to the Elmora conference room, Ms. Chmiel responded that the Library is looking into that. Ms. Chmiel explained that a multitude of events had occurred since first reviewing this project, including the resignation of Mr. Luck's predecessor and bathroom renovations. Now this door is once again a priority. Anderson Windows is coming to give us a quote. Home Depot offers the door for \$1,000; however, Ms. Chmiel wants interior blinds to be controlled from outside the meeting room

which Home Depot may not carry. Mrs. Pires Sanchez recommended Windows Factory, a local company.

- The Library will end this FY in good fiscal shape; last year we had a balance of \$250,000 but two years ago we had to use a little of our reserve. The Energy Savings programs will be an additional aid to our budget.
- The employee pension went over the projected budget \$18,539.92 due to new staff hires and mandated percentage increases. The Library pays what the State bills us.
- This year's prescription line is much lower than in previous years; the Library had budgeted \$132,000, what was expended in the previous year. Prescription costs are highly variable and beyond our control. For the new FY we budgeted an additional 10% toward Personnel costs.
- Mrs. Pires Sanchez recommended using Amazon's new Purchase Order Rate for Municipalities.
- It was moved by Ms. Serratelli, seconded by Mr. Goldblatt to approve the June Treasurer report. Vote: Mr. Ted Freedman, Mr. Aaron Goldblatt, Mrs. Kenyetta Jackson, Ms. Kristin Kelly, Ms. Anne Russell, Connie Pires Sanchez, Ms. Pearl Serratelli and Ms. Earnestine Smith. Abstentions - none.

PRESENTATION OF BILLS:

Some May and June bills are not reflect on June Bill List.

- As of June 15th, Mr. Freedman noted only one check for \$431 payable to Catholic Community Service for Security. He wondered why no lease check was presented. The Library budgets \$15,500 a year to toward the Eport lease and as of June 15, only \$1,496 remains on that budget line. It was moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mrs. Pires Sanchez to approve June Presentation of Bills as Presented. Vote: By Acclamation. Abstentions - none.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Standing Committee didn't meet.

Mrs. Jackson inquired as to the purpose of the committees, especially the budget committee, if it is not consulted when large purchasing decisions, like that for the new computer chairs, are made. Ms. Chmiel explained that unexpended funds in a current budget fall under her purview, as director. "So if it is a managerial decision, what is the budget committee here to do?" Mrs. Jackson inquired. "To present the next year's proposed budget," Ms. Chmiel replied. Mr. Freedman noted that "the Budget Committee's purpose is to review current funding, and to see if anything needs to be adjusted for the coming year." Mrs. Jackson insisted that the budget committee should be consulted for equipment purchases and acquisitions decisions, if they, as the Board, are responsible for those decisions. Ms. Chmiel stated that she sees Mrs. Jackson's point; however this is about current established budget, not the future budget. (Discussion) Mr. Freedman recommended that the budget should be reviewed on a monthly or quarterly basis, to see how the percentages size up. Ms. Serratelli inquired if the budget committee meets every month, and observed that every committee should meet and perform their responsibilities. Ms. Chmiel noted the difficulty in making a quorum necessary to have decisions approved. Mr. Luck thanked Mrs. Jackson for bringing up this point, because every month there are no committee reports.

REPORTS OF AD HOC COMMITTEES

Ad Hoc Committees didn't meet.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Consult your packet for the complete report. Highlights include:

- "Swat Team" refers to a group of librarians that met last year to evaluate a project at LaCorte; the Library Board then agreed to set aside \$5,000 for this renovation. Last year the Board approved the \$5,000, and last month approved an additional \$6,000 from reserves to carpet one full side of the LaCorte branch.
- The Union County Prosecutors office sent a completed report on building security that will be reviewed before Staff Development day for training purposes. Mr. Goulart is to be commended for the excellent job he does in maintaining the integrity of the building.

- Ms. Chmiel is not satisfied with the elevator operation, as we haven't yet found a permanent solution to the fuses that are regularly blown. Mr. Freedman shared a patron concern about bringing her 80 years old husband to the Library and being unable to use the elevator to get him out. Ms. Chmiel noted that most recently the elevator rail track was full of trash and hard candy; Jersey Elevator informed Ms. Chmiel that the manufacturer had recommended using fuses of a higher amperage than originally indicated. Ms. Chmiel is uneasy with this plan; she doesn't want to instigate a bigger problem. Jersey Elevator reported that other locations had successfully made these changes. The Library is still in contact with the elevator consultant, and he advocates that we follow the manufacturer's recommendation.
- Answering Mrs. Jackson's question regarding the elevator issues, Ms. Chmiel replied that the company that installed it didn't want to renew the maintenance contract which leads her to think that there was a known malfunction that the installer was reluctant or unable to address. (Discussion) Sufficient signage will be posted to advise patrons needing assistance when there are future breakdowns.
- Board members didn't get an e-mail invitation to the Volunteers' Lunch due to an e-mail mistake on Mr. Luck's part. Ms. Chmiel added that it was a very short notice and that next year the Board will be notified further in advance. June is the tentative date. The Mayor wasn't invited since it was a very short notice and budget it was \$200. The Board and Ms. Chmiel agreed to invite the Mayor to every event at the library.
- For the third year in a row, Elizabeth Destination Marketing had have been planning a Hamiltonian Celebration in the City of Elizabeth. The two Snyder Academic directors have suddenly resigned. The Presbytery group would like to see more religious programming.
- It was moved by Mrs. Pires Sanchez, seconded by Mrs. Jackson to approve Director's report.
Vote: By Acclamation. Abstentions - none.

READING OF COMUNICATIONS

- A complete report regarding the NJLTA meeting submitted by Mr. Freedman was added to BOT package.

Ms. Serratelli stated the need for staff to provide a complete report when attending outside programs. Ms. Chmiel replied that Carolyn Rapisaldo and Nancy Berkenfeld have had reports included in the package.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- EMID Card updates and statistics are in Mr. Luck's report.
- Acrylic samples of the screen to be installed in front of the new bathrooms were presented to Board. The Board agreed how lovely the bathrooms are. There was a minor sink installation leak that was fixed.
- Mr. Freedman showed concern that the Elmora parking lot's standing water could lead to a mosquito infestation and recommended the water issue be addressed. Repaving the Elmora parking lot could cost \$200,000 or more. Grading is needed Ms. Chmiel added. Mr. Freedman recommended having someone from the City to evaluate the situation. Ms. Russell recommended consulting Councilman Torres. Ms. Chmiel has some questions for Groundwork Elizabeth about the bees; they were moved for the winter, but they haven't since returned.
- A new request for proposals regarding security service was announced due to a mistake in the first RFP. Legally, it had to be done. Ms. Chmiel requested the Board to reject the previous bids, in order to complete legal obligations. Ms. Chmiel added that as the Board had agreed, at the last meeting, that there was a strong suspicion that the first bids would need to be rejected, the imperative to reject all bids was implied.
- It was moved by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Ms. Serratelli to approve the motion to Reject All Bids. Vote: Mr. Ted Freedman, Mr. Aaron Goldblatt, Mrs. Kenyetta Jackson, Ms. Kristin Kelly, Ms. Anne Russell, Connie Pires Sanchez, Ms. Pearl Serratelli and Ms. Earnestine Smith. Abstentions - none.
- The August Board Meeting has been moved from August 7th to Wednesday, August 8th due to the National Night Out programming conflict; an appropriate announcement will be published. Ms. Chmiel reminded the Board that there isn't a July meeting. Ms. Russell and Mrs. Jackson noted that they won't be able to attend the August Board meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

- We have new security guard bids, with the lowest at \$88,500 for first year and \$90,000 for the second. The lowest bid was delivered to the City's Legal Dept for review; the vendor is one with which we have done business before. The Library is happy to move forward with a different company since we had several issues for the last five months with the current provider.
- It was moved by Ms. Smith, seconded by Ms. Russell to award Abbry Security the two-year Contract for Uniformed Security Guards. Vote: Mr. Ted Freedman, Mr. Aaron Goldblatt, Mrs. Kenyetta Jackson, Ms. Kristin Kelly, Ms. Anne Russell, Connie Pires Sanchez, Ms. Pearl Serratelli and Ms. Earnestine Smith. Abstentions - none.
- Switching to an on-staff cleaning crew created some savings in the Cleaning Services line of the current FY budget. Other budget lines are also either over- or under-budgeted. It was moved by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Ms. Serratelli to transfer \$62,150 from the Cleaning Services and Gross Salaries lines to lines for Audits; Postage; Internet Data Lines; Janitorial & Hardware Supplies; Heating & Air Conditioning; Photocopy Machines; GED Testing; Pension (Employee); Programs. Vote: Mr. Ted Freedman, Mr. Aaron Goldblatt, Mrs. Kenyetta Jackson, Ms. Kristin Kelly, Ms. Anne Russell, Connie Pires Sanchez, Ms. Pearl Serratelli and Ms. Earnestine Smith. Abstentions - none.
- We haven't received an official budget from the City. Ms. Chmiel presented a budget proposal based on current spending. The Eport lease line was increased. Pg. 36 shows a flat projected income of \$4,000,000 in municipal funding, and \$65,000 in state aid; the Library has added \$500 in income for meeting space fees. Monthly, we receive \$750 in income from City EMID agreement, and additional income from GED testing. Ms. Chmiel explained the savings realized by cutting the Otis Elevator contract and using copy machines instead of printers.
- The income of \$4000 for the book sale was questioned by Ms. Serratelli. Ms. Chmiel will check with Roel Laurel.

- It was moved by Ms. Serratelli, seconded by Mrs. Pires Sanchez to accept the proposed budget as it is. Vote: Mr. Ted Freedman, Mr. Aaron Goldblatt, Mrs. Kenyetta Jackson, Ms. Kristin Kelly, Ms. Anne Russell, Connie Pires Sanchez, and Ms. Pearl Serratelli. Abstentions - none
- It was moved by Mr. Goldblatt, seconded by Mrs. Pires Sanchez that the meeting move into Closed Session. Votes: By Acclamation.

PERSONNEL

- It was moved by Mrs. Pires Sanchez, seconded by Mr. Freedman to accept Sayuri Naito's Resignation. Vote: by acclamation. Abstentions - none.
- It was moved by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Mr. Goldblatt to accept Ahmad Chavis' Resignation. Vote: by acclamation. Abstentions - none.
- It was moved by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Mr. Goldblatt to hire Gladys Harrison as Security Supervisor at an annual salary of \$30,000. Vote: by acclamation. Abstentions - none.

It was moved by Ms. Russell seconded by Ms. Kelly to move the meeting out of Closed Session. Votes: By Acclamation.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mrs. Pires Sanchez, seconded by Ms. Russell to adjourn the meeting. Votes: By acclamation.

The meeting adjourned at 7: 45pm

Submitted by Ana V. Monje-Medina.