

# The Board of Trustees of Teaneck Public Library

## Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of the Board of Trustees

November 2, 2023

(Note: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this was a **hybrid meeting**, conducted in-person and via Zoom.)

### Call to Order, Attendance

Call to order at 6:31 PM, with the reading of the latest iteration of Section 5A of the Open Public Meetings Act, indicating that adequate notice of the meeting had been provided by way of an annual meeting schedule posted in the Library and on the Library's website, in *The Bergen Record*, *Teaneck Patch*, *The Jewish Link*, and *The Jewish Standard*, and in the Town Clerk's office.

Trustees Present: Gerald Reiner, President; Benjy Burnat, Vice President; Keisha Carter, Treasurer; Evalyn Brownstein; Lillian Lewis; Paul Ostrow.

Also Present: Karen Orgen, Council Member; Sandi Silverberg, President, Friends of the Teaneck Public Library; Shinae Hyun, Library Director.

Absent: Myron Chaitovsky, Secretary; Chondra Young, Mayor's Representative; Dr. Andre Spencer, Superintendent.

### Minutes

Upon motion by Paul Ostrow (Benjy Burnat, second) the minutes of the Board's October 5, 2023 meeting were accepted without objection.

### Friends Report

Sandi Silverberg, FTPL President, reported that the Friends have already paid \$2,500 for ESL programming and that it was a very busy October. The Sunday woodwind concert had 42 attendees; and the (first ever) Friday afternoon concert had 57 attendees. There is an upcoming concert on November 19. And the Friends will be co-hosting *Kid Flicks* for Teaneck International Film Festival in the Library (November 5).

Reminders have been sent for members to sign up. The Friends have begun to advertise heavily for the matching Bill Orr grant, as they only have until December 15 to get the entire \$10,000.

The Friends will support Scott Pleasants' *Poetry Park*, which will be virtual until a site is found; Scott is looking for space for an actual gathering. It will be launched as an online journal for poetry submissions. The Director requested an electronic flier to post on social media, which the Friends President will provide, or the Friends will post it on their social media, and the Director will share it.

## Treasurer's Report

For transparency purposes, the Board President clarified that Christmas (disbursements by the Board) is \$300 and retirement is \$600; receipts and invoices will be provided later.

Upon motion by Paul Ostrow (Evalyn Brownstein, second), the Treasurer's Report was accepted without objection.

## Director's Report

Director Shinae Hyun reporting:

1. Banned Books Week was October 1-7, with a special teen display. There were free giveaways of bookmarks, bracelets, and buttons as well.
2. Hispanic Heritage Month at the Library concluded with *Latin Dancing*. A short history of tango was presented, along with steps on how to try Latin dancing.
3. The highlight of the month was *Fall Fest*. Last year, there were over 300 attendees; this year, there were over 500. There was a petting zoo, pumpkin painting, and pumpkin bowling. The weather was beautiful and everyone had a great time.
4. The Library added *Tuesday Tips* programs, which included *Medicare* info. It was offered by the Bergen County Division of Senior Services and planned for one hour, but went on for two hours; attendees had a lot of questions. More Tuesday Tips programs will be planned.
5. Five additional ESL tutors have been added and scheduled for training in November. The problem is that tutors are available during the day, while the students are only available on the weekends.
6. Another challenge is Home Delivery Service. Items are borrowed from other libraries for this service and then delivered to Five Star, etc. However, books "disappear." The Library has been absorbing the cost (of having to repay the other libraries for the lost items). We have set a limit of two items per person. We will try to resolve the issue and streamline the process so books do not get lost.
7. *Spanish Storytime* has begun on FaceBook, as well as two different coding programs and a *Graphic Novel Book Club* for grades 3-4.
8. The MOU with FDU, mentioned last meeting, has been suspended because they want full (borrowing) privileges. Per BCCLS policy, they can only be granted a Courtesy Card; e-services are shared by the consortium.
9. The Library's beloved fish Strawberry died and the Youth Services staff offered books on pet loss and grief.
10. There is an upcoming exciting program - *Palace Project* - through the State Library, which is absorbing the costs. This one app will grab an available title for e-books and audiobooks from Libby and Overdrive (instead of separately searching those databases). Also, Biblioboard is a collective publishing tool available through Palace Project that will allow us to publish the e-book that Scott Pleasants is looking to do - to distribute and share poetry. Training is coming soon.
11. The Library budget hearing is coming up on November 7 at 8:30 AM.
12. DPW came to clean and put down mulch in front of the Library, with future planting plans. Thank you to Karen Orgen for getting this done for the Library.
13. At the Director's suggestion, the Township is offering an employee assistance program through Intervention Strategies for help with issues on family, mental health, finance, employment, etc.
14. Youth Services staff attended STEAM Ahead Boot Camp recently. More STEAM programs will be offered, starting with the Tween Tinker Club this winter.
15. For the FT Library Assistant position, 52 resumes have been received. Interviews are going well. The process will be expedited for someone to start December 1, as there will be two FT leaving.

## Update from the Superintendent of Schools

In the (understandable) absence of Dr. Andre Spencer, there was no update. Best wishes are sent to the Superintendent for tonight's football game. The Library will reach out to remind him there can be an appointed liaison (for board meetings in his absence).

*Approved by the Library Board of Trustees on December 6, 2023*

## **New Business**

Nothing was found with the Library Audit (#23-70), which meant everything was solid. It was suggested that the Director follow the auditor's recommendations to address the findings. The Director explained that because the Library uses Excel spreadsheets, everything is manually entered, so there is potential for human error. The Library may need to upgrade to QuickBooks at some point. Upon motion by Benjy Burnat (Keisha Carter, second), the Board accepted the Library Audit.

After DPW cleaned the ground in front of the Library, a plan for the Library Grounds (#23-71) was provided, including a proposed \$2,400 cost, which seemed high. It was proposed that the Library seek sponsorship from the Garden Club and the Friends to consider some alternatives, as well as less costly options. The Board President determined that the Director has the authority to "beautify" the grounds; no resolution is needed.

There was a concern about the memorial stones still being there (on the grounds); they honor the long-time employees who have left. With the recent clean-up, the memorial stones are not obstructed at all; they are more visible.

## **Old Business**

The Board President talked to four other architects to verify the cost of the Renovation Rendering (#23-72), because it seemed high, and discovered that it was in-line with the marketplace. The costs are high because of the four renderings with build-outs, and can accommodate later changes too.

The consensus is that the only way for the community to get "ownership" (of the renovations) is to see what is happening themselves. The Library owes it to the public to show them what is being done (for them). Right now, it is too abstract. The rendering and plans will later be accessible on the website. It was suggested prior to shutting down the Library for renovations, there could be a "countdown," to engage the community with messaging and input - "the more information, the better." Upon motion by Paul Ostrow (Keisha Carter, second), the Renovation Rendering was passed without objection.

## **Closed Session**

The Board left the meeting to conduct a closed session at 7:07 PM, which ended at 7:19 PM. When the regular meeting resumed, Gerald Reiner (Paul Ostrow, second) made a motion to ratify what was discussed, which the Director will then execute.

## **Adjournment**

Prior to ending the meeting, the Board was reminded: a) that the next board meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 6; b) the regular January and reorganization meeting will be held on Thursday, January 4, 2024.

Motion to adjourn by Paul Ostrow (Lillian Lewis, second) passed without objection at 7:21 PM.

Prepared by Deborah Young