



BERGENFIELD LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

**Minutes
November 14, 2019**

Present

Thomas Neats, President
Dr. Nelson Reynoso, Vice President
Barbara Chittum, Recording Secretary
Marcela Deauna, Treasurer (arrived at 7:38 pm)
Fanny Cruz-Betesh
Thomas Lodato, Council Liaison
Laurie Phipps
Mayor Norman Schmelz (left at 8:00 pm)
Jay Shiner
Allison Moonitz, Director
Darlene Swistock, Interim Recorder of Minutes

President Neats called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm.

Notification of Public Meeting

President Neats read the report on public notification of this meeting.

Minutes

A motion was made by Ms. Phipps, seconded by Ms. Deauna, to accept the October 10, 2019 minutes. All in favor with the exception of Mr. Shiner who abstained because he was not present at that meeting. Motion carried.

Bills

A motion was made by Ms. Chittum, seconded by Ms. Cruz-Betesh, to approve the November amended bill list. All in favor. Motion carried.

Public Portion

Jeff Schlect from RSC Architects was invited to attend the meeting to answer questions about his firm's proposal for this project. The board was very concerned about the cost to renovate the Young Adult/Teen area. The preliminary on-site rough estimate was \$170,000, but the complete feasibility assessment was \$500,000 which included new furnishings.

Schlect indicated that the goal was to modify about 1,800 sf and maximize the space; the expected cost estimate was \$75-100/sf and their proposal was \$86.50/sf for a total cost of \$290,300. The board asked about specific ways to reduce the cost of the project. Schlect explained that since this is considered a small project, it will be difficult to get volume discounts but there are specific cost saving measures that can be explored. The projected architect's fee is about 10% of the project (approximately \$17,000). He reminded everyone that this is an investment into public space. The next step would be a resolution from the board and a resolution from the mayor and council. These documents are necessary in order to apply for the 1:1 matching grant from the state under the Library Bond Construction Act.

Ms. Moonitz introduced Emily Pagani, the new Administrative Assistant for the library, who will start on November 25. She replaces Evelyn Rizzo who recently retired.



Mr. Robert Huber, Childrens/Teen Services, spoke about the need for a renovated YA room. The current space can only accommodate 20 kids, not the 50+ kids that sometimes come. There have been up to 80 kids at times and they are forced to sit on the floor which has led to blocked spaces. The current space has many blind spots so staff are constantly monitoring the room. In addition, most of the furniture is broken; the library tried purchasing inexpensive furniture previously to save money, but maintaining it cost more than more expensive heavy-duty furniture in the long run.

Ms. Nadia Leshco attended the meeting and requested that Mighty Minds be able to use the facilities for weekly meetings on Wednesdays from 4-5 pm. Ms. Moonitz will send the meeting request information to her.

Correspondence

President Neats read a letter from the 125th Anniversary Committee thanking the library for their participation at the Historic Weekend at Cooper's Pond. Ms. Deauna and Ms. Cruz-Betesh represented the library at the event.

The Jefferson School Parents Organization sent a letter to thank the library for hosting its escape room at the Halloween Spooktacular event.

The board placed an ad in the Filipino School of New York-New Jersey's 10th Anniversary Journal with a notation that it was paid with private donations from the board of trustees and not taxpayer funds.

The Church of the Good Shepherd invited the board to its service on November 24. They recently held a fundraiser for local organizations and will be distributing the funds that day. President Neats and Ms. Moonitz will be attending and he asked other board members to stop by to show their support.

President's Report

President Neats advised that he was in contact with Ms. Moonitz regarding the candidates for the Administrative Assistant and Head of Youth Services positions, attended meetings for the 125th Anniversary and also attended the NJEA annual convention and brought back some programming ideas for the library.

Committee Reports

BCCLS and Friends

Nothing additional to report.

Building & Grounds

Ms. Moonitz advised that the library needs to find a new fire inspector as the Library's current vendor, CINTAS, recently lost its public works registration certificate. After collecting three quotes, she recommended F.A.S.T. who is used by the Borough DPW. An inspection is due in December.

A motion was made by Mr. Shiner, seconded by Ms. Chittum, to utilize F.A.S.T. for annual fire and sprinkler inspections for the library. All in favor. Motion carried.

Finance Committee

The financial summary was distributed and discussed. Ms. Deauna advised that the library has spent 87.2% of its budget for the year. Valley Bank will be acquiring Oritani Bank, but that should not immediately affect the interest rates of the 2 CDs. Mr. Shiner requested more information about fund transfers. To move funds from the operating account to the capital account, a resolution is needed and the moved funds must be intended for a specific purpose.



Personnel

Before the December meeting, Ms. Moonitz would like to meet with the Personnel Committee to discuss a revised organizational chart and promotion in anticipation of Louise Moroses' retirement at the end of the year.

Policy

In early 2020, Ms. Moonitz would like to discuss establishing "associations" in Polaris with the Policy Committee. This will allow family members to pick up materials for each other.

Director's Report

- Ms. Moonitz distributed copies of the 2018 Audit Report to all and there were no recommendations from the auditor.
- A summary of the Square Register reporting for October was distributed. The board previously talked about doing a test fine free program for children's materials in the summer of 2020 since many surrounding libraries are going fine free. Fine revenue last summer, including adults, averaged \$4,200. Ms. Moonitz will be conservative and use that figure in the budget for 2020 which will be discussed at the December board meeting.
- Ms. Moonitz is requesting that the Library close on Friday, December 13 for staff development. **A motion was made by Ms. Chittum, seconded by Ms. Cruz-Betesh to close the library for staff development on December 13. There were 3 nays and 1 abstention. Motion carried.**
- The Town Stigma Free Committee requested recurring use of the facilities for meetings on the first Thursday evening of the month. **A motion was made by Ms. Phipps, seconded by Dr. Reynoso to approve the use of the facilities on the first Thursday of the month from December 2019-December 2020. All in favor. Motion carried.**

Trustee Education

Ms. Moonitz shared the flyer for Hot Topics for Trustees: Relationships, Legislation, Community Outreach and More hosted by the BCCLS Trustee Committee on December 5. This counts towards the required 7 hours of Continuing Education for boards. She offered to register anyone who would like to attend. Dr. Nelson and Ms. Cruz-Betesh indicated they would like to attend.

Old Business

President Neats reminded everyone that the members of the board agreed to fund an ad in the 125th Anniversary Journal and if anyone else would like to contribute, they can do so at today's meeting.

New Business

Ms. Cruz-Betesh asked Ms. Moonitz about the school district's Martin Luther King Day of Service and Ms. Moonitz replied that no one had contacted her.

Ms. Moonitz asked about a resolution to request capital funding from the town for the renovation to the YA space. She advised that the library would have 90 days to apply after the application is live. There will be rounds of funding awards, but it is unclear if libraries need to reapply each time. Ms. Moonitz will determine the amount of the capital funding request for the project and prepare a resolution for the board for the December meeting.

A motion was made by Dr. Reynoso, seconded by Ms. Cruz-Betesh to move forward with drafting a resolution, up to \$300,000, contingent upon receiving a matching grant from the state. There was 1 abstention. Motion carried.



President Neats reminded the Board about the volunteer dinner at the Fiesta on December 1, the Church of the Good Shepherd program on November 24 and the 125th Anniversary Committee interfaith music program at Bergenfield High School also on November 24. He thanked Darlene Swistock for recording the minutes for the last 3 months and wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

The Spanish American Cultural Association is hosting a fundraiser breakfast for a high school senior scholarship at Bohemia in Hackensack on Sunday. In addition, Matthews Diner is donating 20% of its proceeds to the Lions Club on Friday.

Closed Session

A motion was made by Ms. Chittum, seconded by Ms. Deauna to move to closed session at 9:19 pm. Return to open session at 9:25 pm.

A motion was made by Ms. Phipps, seconded by Ms. Deauna to move to a 9-month suspension after the initial 45-day ban expires. There was 1 nay. Motion carried.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Ms. Phipps, seconded by Ms. Deauna, to adjourn the meeting. Meeting was adjourned at 9:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Chittum

Darlene Swistock, Recorder for
Barbara Chittum, Recording Secretary

dms: 11/16/19