

MEETING OF THURSDAY, JUNE 20, 2019

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE HOBOKEN FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY, HELD IN THE SMALL PROGRAM ROOM IN THE LOWER LEVEL OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY, 500 PARK AVENUE, HOBOKEN, NEW JERSEY ON THURSDAY, JUNE 20, 2019 AT 6:30 P.M.

Meeting Excerpt

1. Call to Order

President Abernathy called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m. and certified that pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, notice of the meeting had been given in the annual meeting notice, which was adopted at the July 24, 2018 meeting of the Library Board, which notice was provided to the Jersey Journal and the Hoboken Reporter, had been posted at the Library, Hoboken City Hall and filed with the Hoboken City Clerk. Notice of the changed meeting date was posted at the Library, Hoboken City Hall, and filed with the Hoboken City Clerk.

2. Roll Call

Roll call was taken:

Attendance	Present	Absent	Notes
Dr. Jerome Abernathy, President	X		
Mrs. JoAnn Serrano, Treasurer	X		
Ms. Susan Murcko, Secretary**	X		Joined teleconference at 6:40 p.m.
Ms. Amanda R. Blaney	X		
Mr. William Coughlin, Mayor's Designee*		X	
Ms. Jennifer Evans, School Superintendent's Designee*		X	
Ms. Ana Sanchez		X	
Mr. Jack Silbert	X		

**Ex officio* under NJ state law.

**Present via remote connection.

Also in attendance were: Library Director Lina Podles, Recording Secretary Clark Matthews, Library Counsel Michael Cerone Esq. and members of the library staff and public.

—Dr. Abernathy: Noted that absent a quorum, the trustees' meeting would proceed without conducting business or votes as a committee of the whole.

3. Acceptance of Minutes

—Ms. Murcko: Joined the meeting via telephone conference at 6:40. The meeting proceeded with a quorum; a proposal to excuse the absences of Mr. Coughlin, Ms. Evans and Ms. Sanchez was added to the consent agenda.

—Dr. Abernathy: Asked if the trustees had any corrections or comments regarding the minutes of the board meeting of May 28, 2019. There being none, approval of the minutes was added to the consent agenda.

4. Public Comments

—Dr. Abernathy: Invited comments from the public. There were no public comments.

5. Director's Report

—Mrs. Podles: Highlighted several items from the Director's Report: The new Literacy Coordinator has started now working with teenagers as a part-time library trainee and two related programs for teens are starting at the Pop-up Branch on Grand Street. The Hoboken Housing Authority (HHA) Learning Center is proving very popular; young people are waiting on the steps for the 3 p.m. opening; there is already a request for additional hours geared to adults and the new Literacy Specialist is looking to add morning hours. The Director is starting to give consideration to phasing out the name "Pop-up Branch" for the Grand Street location and phasing in permanent staff to replace the Pro Libra contractors. In working with Clarke Caton Hintz (CCH), it is apparent that planned air conditioning/HVAC work is going to have a major impact on the building; in some places cuts will need to be made in floors and walls and access to the areas will need to be blocked off. This work will be complicated and will also involve partial asbestos removal. Three prequalification requests for the upcoming 3rd floor and HVAC installation project were received and reviewed by CCH, and all three were found to be qualified; the hope is that all of the applicants will go into the bidding in August. The second floor paint removal and remediation project is done and the Reference Department is being moved back to the second floor; the third floor reopens next week. The board has been provided a copy of the draft Employee Handbook and she requested trustees to send questions about it so that HR consultant Michael Shao can answer them at the next meeting. The June 8 Book Fair in Church Square Park was very successful, marking the fourth bi-annual fair in eight years. The Friends of the Library

(FOTL) dinner drew a full house at Amanda's Restaurant, with many trustees and staff in attendance. She concluded by introducing the Library's Marketing and Communications Manager, Mark Curiale, to report on marketing activities.

6. Marketing Report

—Mr. Curiale: Reported on marketing programs and priorities: He used his first six months to study people and processes in order to develop a marketing brand and vision that supports the goals of the library's 2017–21 Strategic Plan. The goals were developed with metrics to quantify progress and success.

—Dr. Abernathy: Asked if the new library web site was providing metrics. It is; discussion about metrics.

—Mr. Curiale: On the web site, a new logo was developed and logo usage was standardized; major events are promoted on the home page, and Facebook/Instagram social media is used to drive traffic, especially for events and programs. The library newsletter is now called a program guide and is published monthly; the monthly E-News email blast tracks both "opens" and "click-throughs." Other initiatives include rolling signage on the library's new delivery bike, gathering useful information via surveys, using blow-in promotions in the Hoboken Reporter for events and programs, and the new library bags. Library calendaring has now been standardized on LibCal, which consolidates multiple library public and staff calendars and avoids conflicts.

—Mr. Curiale: Concluded by presenting the analytics mapping of the city by ward, and discussing the objective increasing library patronage in the outermost "four corners" of Hoboken: the 5th and 2nd wards in the north, and 4th and 1st wards in the south. Discussion followed.

7. Committee Reports, including Finance Committee and Payment of Bills

—Mrs. Podles: Reported for the Buildings and Grounds Committee: The committee recommends approval of a proposed board action item (BAI) authorizing CCH to redesign the second and third floors to include redesigned office space on the second floor and plan for interior design and furnishing of the third floor children's and teen rooms, design costs \$6,000 and furniture design and installation administration not to exceed \$22,500, total \$28,500. After discussion the BAI was added to the consent agenda.

—Mrs. Serrano: Reported for the Budget and Finance Committee: There is no committee report this month. She described the financial matters before the board for approval (all in part 3 of the board package): 1.) to pay from the capital improvement construction account at Bayonne Community Bank (BCB) check no. 327 for \$16,160.87; 2.) in Part A, to pay FY 2019 library operating expenses with checks no. 7696–7761 and 7766–7776 totaling

\$105,420.98 and to pay via Paypal \$500.00 to Facebook; 3.) to approve a resolution voiding checks no. 7621, 7551, and 7418; and 4.) in Part B, to pay expenses for library materials with checks no. 7762-7765 and 7777 totaling \$27,426.69.

—Mrs. Serrano: Asked if there were questions about the bills to be paid or other matters. There were no questions. The Part A bills to be paid and resolution to void check were added to the consent agenda.

—Mrs. Serrano: Moved the board approve paying the Part B bills for library materials.

—Ms. Blaney: Seconded.

—Adopted by roll call vote as follows: YEAS: 4 NAYS: 0 RECUSED: 1 ABSTAIN: 0

Trustee	Yes	No	Recused	Abstain
Ms. Blaney	X			
Ms. Murcko			X	
Mrs. Serrano	X			
Mr. Silbert	X			
Dr. Abernathy, President	X			

—Ms. Murcko: There is no report from the Personnel and Policy Committee this month.

—Mrs. Podles: Presented a draft policy to the board for a 12-week trial period “Fine-Free” for Hoboken Library materials for the summer: previously, the library has relied on amnesties to waive overdue fines, but often patrons, especially children, stop using the library because fines are due; the no-fines policy on library materials would help to prevent this. The policy does not apply to any interlibrary materials borrowed via BCCLS and fines will be retained for museum passes, wireless hot spots and technology lending; also, the policy only governs fines, not lost or missing materials, which must be paid. She wants to try the policy with board approval from July 1 to September 23, 2019.

—Ms. Blaney: Requested a report on this program as it goes on to see if it is really working. Discussion about her experiences as a children’s school librarian and interim reports on the policy.

—Ms. Murcko: Thought it should be made very clear that this policy only applies to Hoboken materials and not to BCCLS materials. Discussion about BCCLS lending. Further discussion on which checkouts are covered, e.g., materials taken out prior to June 2019; these checkouts would be covered. The policy was added to the consent agenda for adoption.

8. President’s Report

—Dr. Abernathy: Noted the library's need for renovation and expansion in coming years mean that major fundraising needs to be done. He proposed starting to search for a consultant to study and plan a capital campaign, and asked the trustees for ideas in this vein for discussion at the next meeting. Past capital fundraising was done by interested groups like the Friends of the Library (FOTL) and the Library Foundation for particular purposes or by the board for grant funding, with occasional consulting used for projects; now a long-term and coordinated approach seems to be warranted, including seeking big-ticket grants.

—Ms. Murcko: Thought the roles of the different stakeholders are different and any consultant should train and harmonize the activities of the different participants toward agreed goals and plans. Discussion about reaching out to other libraries doing this; the director will do so. Further discussion about approaching the Library Trustee Institute for insights and advice; it will be approached too.

9. Friends of the Library (FOTL) Report

—Dr. Abernathy: There was no report from the Friends this month.

10. Library Foundation Report

—Mrs. Serrano: Reported the foundation was at the June Book Fair and collected excellent prospect information.

11. Old Business

—Dr. Abernathy: Called for any old business; there was none.

12. New Business

—Dr. Abernathy: Called for any new business; there was none.

13. Executive Session

—Dr. Abernathy: Asked for a motion to enter executive session to discuss legal matters concerning property.

—Mrs. Serrano: Moved the board enter executive session.

—Ms. Blaney: Seconded.

—Adopted by voice vote as follows: YEAS: 5 NAYS: 0 RECUSED: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

The board entered executive session at 7:38 p.m.

The board returned to public session at 7:50 p.m.

—Dr. Abernathy: Summarized the executive session: the board discussed legal matters related to library property; no votes or actions were taken.

13. Consent Agenda

—Ms. Blaney: Moved the board approve approve the meeting consent agenda as follows:

- a. Accept minutes of board meeting of May 28, 2019.
- b. Excuse the absences of trustees Coughlin, Evans and Sanchez.
- c. Authorize BAI for CCH services to redesign the third floor administrative space and for furniture of children's and teen room, total not to exceed \$28,500.
- d. Approve payment of FY 2019 Part A bills for non-media operating expenses and capital spending and resolution to void checks.
- e. Approve the temporary No Fines Policy for July 1–September 23, 2019.

—Mrs. Serrano: Seconded.

—Adopted by roll call vote as follows: YEAS: 5 NAYS: 0 RECUSED: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

Trustee	Yes	No	Recused	Abstain
Ms. Blaney	X			
Ms. Murcko	X			
Mrs. Serrano	X			
Mr. Silbert	X			
Dr. Abernathy, President	X			

—Mr. Silbert: Moved to adjourn.

—Dr. Abernathy: Seconded.

—Adopted by voice vote as follows: YEAS: 5 NAYS: 0 RECUSED: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

The board of trustees adjourned at 8:18 p.m.