

MEETING OF TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 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 TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2019 AT 6:30 P.M.

----- Meeting Excerpt -----

1. Call to Order

President Abernathy called the meeting to order at 6:30 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 23, 2019 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.

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		
Ms. Amanda R. Blaney		X	
Ms. Jennifer Evans, School Superintendent's Designee*	X		
Mr. Stephen Marks, Mayor's Designee*	X		Joined meeting at 6:34 p.m.
Mr. Jack Silbert	X		
Mr. Kurt Thoens**	X		Via phone conference call.

**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., Mr. Michael Hanrahan and Mr. John Hatch of Clarke Caton Hintz (CCH) and members of the library staff and public.

---Dr. Abernathy: A resolution to excuse the absence of Ms. Blaney due to family commitments was added to the meeting consent agenda without objection.

3. Approval of Minutes

--Dr. Abernathy: Asked if there were any questions or corrections to the minutes of the October 22, 2019 board meeting. There being none, the minutes were added to the consent agenda.

4. Public Comments

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

5. Presentation of Revised Capital Plan

---Dr. Abernathy: Introduced Mr. Hanrahan and Mr. Hatch of the library's capital planning consultants Clarke Caton Hintz (CCH) to present CCH's revised capital plan for the present library renovations and future expansion into the library properties at 256 and 258 Fifth Street.

---Mr. Marks: Joined the meeting at 6:34 p.m.

---Mr. Hanrahan/Mr. Hatch: Presented the revised capital plan by reviewing the present state of work and renovation plans:

Third-floor renovation work is currently out to bid; Second-floor and Mezzanine renovations are part of Phase II, except for HVAC replacement and related work; and First-floor work will only involve HVAC-related work in this phase II. Planned Phase III is the envisioned expansion of the library with a new library annex adjacent to the present main building; this annex will largely but not completely meet the American Library Association (ALA) library space guidelines for the community, which are for 50,000 sq. ft. of library space; presently Hoboken has 20,000 sq. ft. of library space, 16,000 of which are usable in the existing facilities. He showed three design concepts and elevations for a new annex building.

---Ms. Murcko: Asked about the use of the basement areas of the 256/258 townhouses. They have to be filled in; flood mitigation is part of the design of the annex.

---Mr. Hanrahan: Continued:

Three or four zoning variations would be required, depending upon the height, lot depth, roof terrace and other aspects of the design concept adopted. The first design concept adds 31,000 sq. ft. of library space; the others, with a larger entranceway and/or setback, add 30,000 sq. ft. Cost estimates in 2019 dollars are the same for all three annex concepts. For all three phases of renovation (Phases I and II) and expansion (new library annex, Phase III), costs are: Phase I: \$6,059,348; Phase II: \$4,959,491; Phase III library annex: \$18,118,069.

---Dr. Abernathy: Asked if the approximately \$11 million of Phase I and II work on the main library building included soft costs and contingencies, and if the capital plan could be distributed to the board. The plan includes soft costs and budgets for contingencies.

---Ms. Evans: Asked about plans for the Park Avenue staircase and if it will be usable. It can be resotored, but it cannot be used as work space.

---Ms. Evans: Asked about sprinklers in the plans. They are not needed in the old building, but will be in any new annex.

6. Director's Report

---Mrs. Podles: Highlighted several items from the Director's Report: Circulation improved 5% and there was much better program attendance, around 70 people for many events with over 100 attending Senior Day. Also,

program attendance at the Hoboken Housing Authority (HHA) branch is much better because they are making more space by clearing away the furniture to do children's programs.

---Ms. Murcko: Asked if the library should budget for new flexible furniture for the branch. Discussion about acquiring such furniture.

---Mrs. Podles: Continued her report: There were two large expenses this month for pension contributions and health insurance. She directed the trustees' attention to a summary of the 2019 Board Retreat, which she hoped was useful; the retreat itself generated many ideas.

---Ms. Murcko: Asked about a new children's librarian since Katie Fernandez has resigned. New interviews are starting; HR Consultant Michael Shao has pre-screened candidates for the position.

7. President's Report

---Dr. Abernathy: Summarized the Board Retreat, especially the need for fundraising and a plan for coordinated fundraising by all library stakeholders and supporters: the Friends, Library Foundation, Board, grants, etc.

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

---Mr. Chapka: Reported for the Buildings and Grounds Committee: Renovations have started at 258 Fifth Street; demolition is done with electrical upgrades complete in the basement, but additional work is needed in the upper floors. The chimney may need repointing; the contractor is exploring options for fixing the chimney without additional cost. Discussion about the electrical work in the basement; even though it won't be used, the electricians must be up to code.

---Mr. Chapka: Continued the report: Three additional board approvals are needed for additional work by contractor Javier Construction of Clifton, NJ, due to problems revealed in the demolition at 258 Fifth Street: (i) the upper floors of the building have 100-year-old cloth-insulated wiring that requires replacement and related diagnostic work by Javier Construction to bring the building up to code, total cost \$18,926.99; (ii) there is water damage to floor joists, which will need reinforcement, total cost \$1,750.00; and (iii) additional plumbing demolition, capping, removals and restoration are needed for the bathrooms, total cost \$3,450.00.

---Dr. Abernathy: Asked if there were questions about the three board action items for the work; they were added to the consent agenda.

---Mr. Chapka: Continued: The 3rd floor library renovation has encountered a problem with the original tin ceiling; it is much more deteriorated than initially anticipated and CCH now recommends preserving only 20% for reuse and recreation of the remaining 80% of the 3rd floor tin ceiling.

---Mrs. Podles: Noted that an extended library closing will be needed for asbestos remediation related to this project, and a shift of operations, circulation and programming to the branch libraries will be needed for at least four weeks. Discussion of reasons for and timing of the expected closure.

--- Mrs. Podles: Reported for the Budget and Finance Committee: The draft 2020 Library Budget is complete and before the trustees; New Jersey's statutory funding mechanism of 1/3 mil. of property taxes yielded 2020 operational funding of \$5,780,509. She summarized changes in the budget, including planned salary increases for staff and hiring library assistants to replace the temporary Pro Libra personnel.

---Dr. Abernathy: Asked what are the big changes for 2020. A new vehicle is needed for book transport, banking, and related operations; with the expected long library closure due to remediation and renovations, there will also be a big need to move library and BCCLS materials in bulk, especially due to the sorting requirements of BCCLS.

---Dr. Abernathy: Asked about RFID tagging of library materials. It is already done in the main library collections but still needs to be done in the branches; she added it to the 2020 budget. A vote on the 2020 budget is anticipated at the December 2019 board meeting.

---Mrs. Serrano: Continued the Budget and Finance Committee report: 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) checks no. 334-336 totaling \$74,808.18; 2.) in Part A, to pay FY 2019 library operating expenses with checks no. 8085-8152 and 8159-8161 totaling \$391,905.93; 3) to pay via PayPal \$500.00 to Facebook; and 4.) in Part B, to pay expenses for library materials with checks no. 8153-8157 totaling \$23,679.90. She noted that the Part A operating expenses include payments of \$188,378.37 to the City of Hoboken for employer pension obligations and \$125,833.03 for insurance.

---Mrs. Serrano: Also, two resolutions are before the board to: (i) reserve \$350,000 of FY 2019 operating funds and restrict them for use in capital projects, and (ii) reserve any unspent FY 2019 operating funds determined from the audit of FY 2019 financial statements and restrict those funds for use in capital projects.

---Mrs. Serrano: Asked if there were questions about the bills to be paid, the resolutions, or other matters. There were no questions. The Part A bills to be paid and resolutions to reserve and restrict FY 2019 funds for capital projects were added to the consent agenda.

---Mr. Marks: Moved the board approve payment of Part B bills for library materials.

---Mrs. Serrano: Seconded.

---Adopted by roll call vote as follows: YEAS: 6 NAYS: 0 RECUSED: 1 ABSTAIN: 0

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

---Mrs. Murcko: Reported for the Personnel and Policy Committee: There were no immediate personnel or policy issues to report. She proposed approaching the library development consultant for more prescriptive input on coordinating fundraising.

9. Library Foundation Report

---Mrs. Serrano: Reported the Library Foundation's 2019 Annual Appeal mailing has dropped. Planning is continuing for the October 10, 2020 Library Foundation fundraiser gala dinner to be held in the Stevens banquet room to mark the Hoboken Free Public Library's 130th anniversary.

10. Friends of the Library (FOTL) Report

---Mrs. Freiser: Reported for the Friends: The 2019 Novel Night fundraiser, “A Moveable Feast” exceeded planned goals and was enjoyed by all. The Friends' English as a Second Language (ESL) classes continues to get record attendance with students from more countries than ever before; students come from as far as Newark and families are attending.

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. Consent Agenda

---Ms. Evans: Moved the board approve the meeting consent agenda as follows:

- a. Excuse the absence of Amanda Blaney.
- b. Accept the minutes of the meeting of October 22, 2019.
- c. Approve resolution authorizing payment to Javier Construction to upgrade wiring of 258 Fifth Street, not to exceed \$18,926.26.
- d. Approve resolution authorizing payment to Javier Construction to repair joists of 258 Fifth Street, not to exceed \$1,750.00.
- e. Approve resolution authorizing payment to Javier Construction to cap and conform plumbing of 258 Fifth Street, not to exceed \$3,450.00.
- f. Approve payment of Part A bills for non-media expenses and capital spending.
- g. Approve resolution reserving \$350,000 of FY 2019 operating funds for capital projects.
- h. Approve resolution reserving unspent FY 2019 operating funds after library's 2019 audit for capital projects.
- ci.

---Mrs. Serrano: Seconded.

---Adopted by roll call vote as follows: YEAS: 6 NAYS: 0 RECUSED: 1 ABSTAIN: 0

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

14. Executive Session

---Dr. Abernathy: Announced an executive session to discuss legal matters.

---Mr. Marks: Moved to enter executive session.

---Mrs. Serrano: Seconded.

---Adopted by voice vote as follows: YEAS: 8 NAYS: 0 RECUSED: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

The board of trustees entered executive session at 7:45 p.m. and returned at 8:36 p.m.

---Dr. Abernathy: Summarized the session: the board discussed a memorandum of understanding with the City of Hoboken; no votes or actions were taken.

---Ms. Evans: Moved to adjourn.

---Dr. Abernathy: Seconded.

---Adopted by voice vote as follows: YEAS: 8 NAYS: 0 RECUSED: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

The board of trustees adjourned at 8:37 p.m.