

MEETING OF TUESDAY, MAY 26, 2020

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE HOBOKEN FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY,
HELD IN A ZOOM ONLINE VIDEO CONFERENCE IN HOBOKEN, NEW JERSEY ON TUESDAY, MAY 26, 2020
AT 6:30 P.M.**

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

1. Call to Order

President Abernathy called the meeting to order at 6:31 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 Hudson Reporter, was posted at the Library website and at Hoboken City Hall, and filed with the Hoboken City Clerk. The meeting notice was amended at the outset of the Coronavirus-19 (Covid-19) emergency to provide the telephone conference number and access code in advance of the scheduled meeting.

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. Jason Freeman, Mayor's Designee***	X		
Ms. Raakhee Mirchandani**	X		
Mr. Jack Silbert**	X		
Mr. Kurt Thoens**	X		

**Ex officio* under NJ state law.

**Present via remote connection.

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

3. Approval of Minutes

--Dr. Abernathy: Asked if there were any questions or corrections to the minutes of the May 14, 2020 special board meeting. There being none, the minutes were added to the consent agenda.

4. Public Comments

---Dr. Abernathy: Invited public comments.

---Mr. Sacha Chavez, staff union representative: On behalf of the staff, he wished everyone well and added that the staff all look forward to getting back to work in real time and real space.

5. Director's Report

---Mrs. Podles: Highlighted several items from the Director's Report: Programming has been going very well during the library closure due to the emergency; both library staff and program producers are using several different video production platforms for events. Some are streamed as live programs, which are then posted as videos, while others are pre-produced; some program videos have been viewed thousands of times by the end of the month; it was not determined how many views are Hoboken residents vs. non-residents. Either way, despite the emergency April and May had a full schedule of programs, and they have been exceptionally popular; June is shaping up the same. The director shared a poem dedicated to first responders that was written by teens during an online program; the poem was sent to Hoboken Hospital, which replied with thanks. There have been ongoing communications with the city Finance Department about back payments due the library. The governor has announced that libraries and museums can reopen during the Stage 2 reopening plan, but the details are to come. There is a new initiative for 2020 in which each lead librarian will create a topical video on the state of the different library services and specialties; the staff will try to have another of these videos produced next month.

---Mr. Freeman: Noted that checks from the city are being processed and he hoped they will arrive soon.

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

---Mr. Chapka: Reported for the Buildings and Grounds Committee: As the library closure continued, the enhanced maintenance and cleaning did too. He is working with the director to create a building cleaning procedures program and plan, including spacing out workspaces, rearranging computers per the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) distancing recommendations, moving the YA Department to the third floor, installing plexiglass shields at the circulation desk, and installing room dividers and social distancing markers. Protective equipment and sanitizing supplies have been stockpiled per CDC guidelines.

---Dr. Abernathy: Reported for the Personnel and Policy Committee: While recognizing that the timing and extent of future reopening is not yet known, the director has developed a reopening plan based on present state and CDC policy guidance. He asked the director to present the working plan in its present form.

---Mrs. Podles: The reopening plan was developed with the Facilities Director and library staff; it envisions multiple stages that will parallel the stages of the state reopening plan, but while the state plan has five stages, the library plan presently omits Stage 5 due to the great uncertainty of the epidemic. The library is presently in Stage 1, the facility is closed to the public. Stage 2, "prepare for opening," will be implemented when it is cleared by state and local authorities; this stage involves dividing the staff into four teams so there will be redundancy in case one or more teams need to quarantine due to Covid-19 exposure. One of the big issues is that library materials circulate – unlike restaurants and stores, things return to the staff and building, and procedures and equipment to handle them safely are being developed, along with "curbside" pickup. In Stage 3, the building will remain closed to the public but pickup boxes will be installed for unattended patron pickups and in-person pickups from staff can be arranged by appointment. Public programs will remain online, along with staff and board meetings. In Stage 4, the public will be allowed into the library building, subject to guidelines. Lastly, Stage 5 is supposed to be the "new normal," but the feeling was that it is still far to soon to know what that will involve.

---Mr. Freeman: Asked if the library has been given any guidance on disinfecting books. Yes, there are guidelines from the American Library Association (ALA) and CDC; returned materials will be quarantined for 72 hours and may be "fogged" to disinfect. Discussion about book disinfection bags being acquired by the library, as

well as UV lights, but the feeling is that UV exposure should be limited. Further discussion about monitoring the periodic updates to the CDC and ALA guidelines and incorporating those updates into plans and practices.

---Mr. Thoens: Asked about the problem of people refusing to wear masks. Discussion about patrons being excluded from the building until Stage 4.

---Mr. Cerone: Advised consideration of a revision to the library patron policy so patrons will be required to comply with public safety guidelines, otherwise the patron will be required to leave. Discussion about revision to the policy and making appropriate signage.

---Ms. Evans: Asked about people who do not have masks. Masks will be available for patrons who need them.

---Mrs. Serrano: Reported for the Budget and Finance Committee: There is no formal committee report this month. She described the financial matters before the board for approval: 1.) in Part A, to pay from the capital improvement construction account at Bayonne Community Bank (BCB) check no. 343 for \$1,262.00; 2.) to pay library operating expenses with checks no. 8535-8578 totaling \$135,830.03 and to pay via PayPal \$1,000.00 to Facebook; 3.) in Part B, to pay expenses for library materials with checks no. 8579-8583 totaling \$23,215.17 and 4.) to adopt the resolution to void checks no. 8341, 8369, 8381 and 8388.

---Mrs. Serrano: Asked if there were any questions about the bills to be paid or resolution to void checks.

---Dr. Abernathy: Asked about the check to D-Tech International USA for \$31,635 for technology equipment. It is for the book pickup kiosk to be used for unattended materials pickups by patrons. Approval of the Part A bills and resolution to void checks was added to the meeting consent agenda.

---Mrs. Serrano: Moved the board approve payment of Part B bills for library materials.

--- Ms. Blaney: Seconded.

---Adopted by roll call vote as follows: YEAS: 8 NAYS: 0 RECUSED: 1 ABSTAIN: 0

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

7. President's Report

---Dr. Abernathy: After two months of the emergency, he is starting to feel some relief because the "unknown unknowns" of the situation are being reduced. It is finally possible to evaluate what fundraising, stimulus, and even infrastructure spending will look like in the future, and it may be positive. The public sector may be stopped by the emergency but the public sector will not be.

8. Library Foundation Report

---Mrs. Serrano: Reported for the Library Foundation: The Foundation participated in the annual “Hudson Gives” fundraising day and it went well, with around \$2,000 being raised; the exact figure is not certain yet.

9. Friends of the Library (FOTL) Report

---Dr. Abernathy: In the absence of an officer of the Friends, there was no report.

10. Old Business and New Business

---Dr. Abernathy: There was no old or new business.

11. Consent Agenda

---Mr. Freeman: Moved the board approve the meeting consent agenda, as follows:

- a. Accept minutes of special meeting of May 14, 2020.
- b. Approve payment of FY 2020 Part A bills for non-media expenses and capital spending.
- c. Adopt resolution to void checks.

---Mrs. Serrano: Seconded.

---Adopted by roll call vote as follows: YEAS: 9 NAYS: 0 RECUSED: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

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

---Ms. Murcko: Moved to adjourn.

---Mrs. Serrano: Seconded.

---Adopted by without objection by voice vote as follows: YEAS: 9 NAYS: 0 RECUSED: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

The board of trustees adjourned at 7:27 p.m.