

MEETING OF TUESDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2021

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, OCTOBER 26, 2021 AT 6:30 P.M.

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

1. Call to Order

Board President Abernathy called the meeting to order at 6:32 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 27, 2021 meeting of the Library Board, and 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 as amended at the outset of the Coronavirus-19 (COVID-19) emergency provides the internet and 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 Jennie Pu, Recording Secretary Clark Matthews, Library Counsel Michael Cerone, Esq. and members of the library staff and public.

3. Acceptance of Minutes

---Dr. Abernathy: Asked if trustees had any comments or corrections to the minutes of the September 28, 2021 meeting. There being none, acceptance of the minutes was added to the consent agenda.

4. Public Comments

---Dr. Abernathy: Invited comments from the public. There were none.

5. Director's Report

---Ms. Pu: Highlighted several items from the Director's Report: This month the Director's Report has a new format, with new a template and bullet points. The fall "Pumpkins and Pages" Reading Festival was a success, with over 1,000 people attending and a visit by Hoboken mayor Bhalla; she expressed special thanks to Grace Church for their help with the festival. Work on the new HVAC continued, with construction materials deliveries sometimes going directly through the third-floor windows via crane, as shown in the report. A permanent Maker Space is now planned for the third floor, with a board action item (BAI) for additional design and administration services by architects Clarke Caton Hintz (CCH). She spoke as a participant in the Library Journal's panel last week. Department heads have submitted their 2022 budgets so the budgeting process can start next month. Youth services dropped off in September due to the start of school, but circulation and tech lending saw a big increase. Three successful events were run by marketing: the "Pumpkins and Pages" Library Festival, Library Card signup month, and a booth at the Hoboken Arts and Music Festival. Storytime in the Park programs are continuing, with up to 80 attendees recently. Metrics for the library website and newsletter are both exceeding industry averages. She thanked Mayor Bhalla for his role in the Library Festival.

---Ms. Mirchandani: Said she appreciated the new format of the board package.

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

---Mr. Chapka: Reported for the Buildings and Grounds Committee: There were no major incidents with the recent heavy rains and Facilities Manager Raul Sanguinetti was on top of the situation.

---Dr. Abernathy: Asked if there was any water intrusion in the building. There was none; extra precautions were taken but they were not needed.

---Mr. Chapka: Continued: Before the board is a change order for \$52,637.00 from contractor AbateTech for the additional asbestos abatement work. The third floor ceiling has been strengthened and HVAC installation is going forward; the temporary heating has been installed and is working well so far, with adequate heat. The rear stairwell was secured, jacked up and joined to the wall with a steel plate. Scaffolding is going up as the work continues. He was preparing a BAI for reusing the pocket doors that were uncovered but the architect and general contractor are still working on an estimate, so that will be for next month's meeting.

---Ms. Murcko: Asked if there were any updates on the water intrusion from hurricane Ida. There was no physical damage, just man-hours of cleanup.

---Dr. Abernathy: Asked if the source of the water was located. No, it is not known.

---Dr. Abernathy: Asked about the change order for adding a dedicated Makerspace to the third floor.

---Ms. Pu: Explained how the library was among the very first to offer a Makerspace program; CCH went ahead with their redesign of the former staff break room into a Makerspace room and the change order reflects CCH's fees for the redesign. The idea is to make Makerspace available to patrons now because it has become extremely popular; second floor renovation plans also include a Makerspace, but that renovation might be years away.

---Mrs. Serrano: Reported for the Budget and Finance Committee: There is no 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) checks no. 356-357 totaling \$388,589.97; 2.) in Part A, to pay library operating expenses with checks no. 9598-9651 totaling \$145,296.80 and to pay via PayPal \$42.48 to Namecheap, Inc.; 3) in Part B, to pay expenses for library materials with checks no. 9652-9660 totaling \$25,881.12.

---Mrs. Serrano: Noted that the operating expenses include flood insurance premiums for one year. She asked if there were any questions about the bills. There being none, approval of the Part A bills was added to the consent agenda.

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

---Mr. Freeman: 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	X			

---Ms. Pu: Described the resolution before the trustees that is needed to start the process of obtaining funds from the New Jersey Historic Trust (NJHT) grant for renovations; it will involve steps like creating signage for the library crediting NJHT for funding; the marketing team has already designed the required signage. The resolution was added to the meeting consent agenda for board approval.

---Ms. Murcko: Reported for the Personnel and Policy Committee: The committee met and discussed scheduling a board retreat, as well as scheduling a speaker from the non-profit Every Library to discuss funding, bonding, networking with local and state officials, and other issues.

---Dr. Abernathy: Added that Every Library is the only library superPAC in the country and they have helped libraries with a range of issues including referendums, municipal and government relationships and funding, and they have case studies and experience that will benefit library fundraising and planning.

---Ms. Pu: Regarding the library's Covid-19 mask policy, she proposed extending it through January 31, 2022. The proposal was added to the consent agenda.

7. Executive Session

---Dr. Abernathy: Asked for a motion to enter executive session to discuss personnel matters.

---Mrs. Serrano So moved.

---Ms. Murcko: Seconded.

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

The board entered executive session at 7:08 p.m. and returned to open session at 7:39 p.m.

---Mr. Freeman: Left the meeting during the executive session.

---Dr. Abernathy: Summarized the executive session: discussed personnel matters were discussed and no board votes or actions were taken.

8. President's Report

---Dr. Abernathy: There was no report this month.

9. Library Foundation Report and Friends of the Library (FOTL)

---Mrs. Serrano: Reported for the Library Foundation: There will be a meeting of the Library Foundation board later tonight to plan for the 2021 Annual Appeal.

10. Old Business

---Dr. Abernathy: Called for any old business. There was none.

11. New Business

---Dr. Abernathy: Called for any new business. There was none.

12. Consent Agenda

---Mrs. Serrano: Moved the board approve the meeting consent agenda as follows:

- a. Accept the minutes of the September 28, 2021 board meeting.
- b. Approve BAI authorizing acceptance of the CCH proposal for design changes to third-floor restoration to include a dedicated Makerspace and YA restoration, not to exceed (NTE) \$15,500.
- c. Approve CCH proposal for additional construction administration services, NTE \$35,000.
- d. Approve change order for additional asbestos abatement work, NTE \$52,637.
- e. Approve payment of Part A bills, including BCB bills for capital improvements.
- f. Approve resolution to execute agreement with NJHT regarding grant application.
- g. Extend the present library masking policy through January 31, 2022.

---Ms. Evans: Seconded.

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

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

---Mrs. Serrano: Moved to adjourn.

---Dr. Abernathy: Seconded.

The meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.