

MEETING OF TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 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, SEPTEMBER 28, 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	Schedule conflict.
Ms. Jennifer Evans, School Superintendent's Designee****		X	Schedule conflict.
Mr. Jason Freeman, Mayor's Designee****	X		
Ms. Raakhee Mirchandani**		X	Family illness.
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.

---Dr. Abernathy: Proposed excusing the absences of Ms. Blaney, Ms. Evans and Ms. Mirchandani, which were all previously noticed to the board. Excused absences were added to the consent agenda without objection.

3. Acceptance of Minutes

---Dr. Abernathy: Asked if trustees had any comments or corrections to the minutes of the August 24, 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.

---Mr. Sacha Chavez: Reminded the trustees that October 16th is the final event of the Open Mic Club in Church Square Park, which he organizes; this year it will include a flamenco performance.

5. Director's Report

---Ms. Pu: Highlighted several items from the Director's Report: Summer Reading has just ended, library card sign-up month begins in October, the Pumpkins and Pages event is scheduled in Church Square Park, and the library will be represented at the Hoboken Arts and Music Festival next weekend. Weather permitting, Storytime in the Park will continue into the fall. There was minor flooding in the main building during the very heavy rains that accompanied hurricane Ida; the facilities staff cleaned it up quickly. There was also some flooding in the Annex and some materials were damaged, but the Teen Zone is open again; the library still cannot return to the public schools due to COVID restrictions, but some library packets were sent to the schools. She has been meeting with other library directors around the state via Zoom, as well as in person with the North Bergen and Gutenberg Resource Center leadership, and she was also interviewed on Councilman Phil Cohen's "Coffee with Cohen" Webcast. With the Personnel and Policy Committee, she developed her Fourth Quarter goals, which are before the board. In September the library received its \$50,000 grant check from the New Jersey Historic Trust (NJHT) for the 2018 design costs of the Third Floor renovation and HVAC projects; a report to NJHT is in preparation related to the costs of the 2019 Historic Preservation Capital Grant, and a resolution will be before the board to reserve \$604,926.00 of FY 2021 operating funds for capital improvements.

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

---Mr. Chapka: Reported for the Buildings and Grounds Committee: After consulting the architect, contractor and monitoring company, it may be possible to keep the building open and stay within code and law while doing abatement on the additional asbestos that was found.

---Dr. Abernathy: Asked how long the abatement would take. About two weeks.

---Mr. Chapka: The containment plan for the new abatement work was just received, so interested trustees can see it; additional expenses will need to be approved for this new work. Two well-preserved pocket doors were found and staff is working with architect Clarke Caton Hintz (CCH) to reuse them in the YA area; this will also support library policy of historical preservation. The new heating system is not on schedule to go live in October; the contractor is arranging for temporary heating on the second and third floors.

---Dr. Abernathy: Asked what the temporary heating would be. It will consist of industrial-type portable electrical heaters with timers.

---Dr. Abernathy: Asked what is the new ETA for the HVAC installation. There is no definite date because the components are still being fabricated; the roof is also being reinforced to support the equipment.

---Dr. Abernathy: Asked what is the source of the delay. Problems getting parts made and long delivery times due to supply chain problems; hopefully a better estimate will be available for next month's meeting.

---Mr. Chapka: Continued: There was flooding during very heavy rains from hurricane Ida; the flood gates held but there was water intrusion in the large program room; this is being investigated to find where the water got in. Water intrusion was not extensive but up to an inch in the large room; there was no woodwork or floor damage.

---Ms. Murcko: Asked if the water intrusion is a sign of things to come and what can be done. Ida and the previous storm both had extreme, record rainfall; more normal storms are not a problem, but the impact isn't known yet.

---Ms. Murcko: Asked what type of water got inside. It was rainwater runoff that somehow found its way inside.

---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. 354-355 totaling \$252,762.43; 2.) in Part A, to pay library operating expenses with checks no. 2524-2585 totaling \$75,662.09 and to pay via PayPal \$149.40 to Zoom Communications; 3) in Part B, to pay expenses for library materials with checks no. 2586-2593 totaling \$20,904.40. Also before the board are two resolutions: i) a resolution to void checks no. 9136, 9406 and 9418, and (ii) a resolution to reserve \$604,926.00 of FY2021 operating funds for capital improvement projects and to move the funds to the library BCB Construction Account.

---Mrs. Serrano: Asked if there were any questions about the bills and resolutions. There being none, approval of the Part A bills, the resolution to void the checks, and the resolution to reserve FY2021 funds and move them to the BCB Construction Account were 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: 5 NAYS: 0 RECUSED: 1 ABSTAIN: 0

Trustee	Yes	No	Recused	Abstain
Mr. Freeman	X			
Ms. Murcko			X	
Mrs. Serrano	X			
Mr. Silbert	X			

Mr. Thoens	X			
Dr. Abernathy	X			

---Ms. Murcko: Reported for the Personnel and Policy Committee: The committee worked with the director to outline goals for the fourth quarter; an executive session was scheduled for discussion.

7. Executive Session

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

---Mrs. Serrano So moved.

---Mr. Silbert: Seconded.

---Adopted by voice vote as follows: YEAS: 6 NAYS: 0 RECUSED: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

The board entered executive session at 7:02 p.m. and returned to open session at 7:35 p.m.

---Dr. Abernathy: Summarized the executive session: it discussed personnel and legal matters related to the shared services agreement, no board votes or actions were taken.

8. President’s Report

---Dr. Abernathy: Noted that the annual “Pumpkins and Pages” event in Church Square Park will be on Saturday, October 2nd. He encouraged the trustees to take the opportunity to attend and meet local officials there.

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

---Mrs. Serrano: Reported for the Library Foundation: The merger of the Library Foundation and the Friends of the Library is progressing and should be complete by December or January 2022.

10. Old Business

---Dr. Abernathy: Called for any old business.

---Mr. Silbert: Noted that Mayor Bhalla will be at the Pumpkins and Pages event at 11:40 a.m.

11. New Business

---Dr. Abernathy: Presented the proposed Shared Services Agreement with the City of Hoboken to the trustees for discussion and a vote.

---Dr. Abernathy: Moved the board approve the Shared Services Agreement with the City of Hoboken.

---Ms. Murcko: Seconded.

---Adopted by roll call vote as follows: YEAS: 5 NAYS: 0 RECUSED: 1 ABSTAIN: 0

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

12. Consent Agenda

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

- a. Excuse the absences of Ms. Blaney, Ms. Evans and Ms. Mirchandani.
- b. Accept the minutes of the August 24, 2021 board meeting.
- c. Approve payment of Part A bills, including BCB bills for capital improvements.
- d. Approve resolution to void checks.
- e. Approve resolution to reserve \$604,926.00 of FY2021 operating funds for capital improvement projects.
- f. Endorse the Director's Fourth Quarter 2021 goals.

---Mr. Freeman Seconded.

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

Trustee	Yes	No	Recused	Abstain
Mr. Freeman	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.