

MEETING OF TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2022

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE HOBOKEN FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY, HELD IN THE LARGE PROGRAM ROOM OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY AT 500 PARK AVENUE IN HOBOKEN, NEW JERSEY ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2022 AT 6:30 P.M.

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

1. Call to Order

Board President Abernathy called the meeting to order at 6:33 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 26, 2022 meeting of the Library Board and such 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 internet and telephone conference number and access code in advance of the scheduled meetings.

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. Malani Cademartori, 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, Library Counsel Michael Cerone, Esq., Recording Secretary Clark Matthews and members of the library staff and public.

3. Acceptance of Minutes

---Dr. Abernathy: Asked if the trustees had any corrections or comments regarding the minutes of the board meeting of August 23, 2022. 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 comments.

5. Director's Report

---Ms. Pu: Highlighted several items from the Director's Report: The strategic planning consultants are reaching out for interviews. Mayor Bhalla visited the Learning Center at the Hoboken Housing Authority (HHA) and tried out the library BookBike. She introduced Karla Aybar, the new Executive Development Assistant. The first furniture deliveries to the renovated 3rd floor have taken place; the finishing work continues. September is Library Card Signup Month and the Library Festival in the park is coming up next month. The new Special Collections Manager, James Cox, has started work and met with Bob Foster of the Hoboken Historical Museum. Popup libraries at the HHA buildings are taking place once a month now. English as a Second Language (ESL) classes are completely full; more classes are being added in conjunction with LiberacyNJ. The library BookBike is offline for the moment for repairs. The new social worker intern from NYU has started work. The library will be launching a new platform with BCCLS: it is the new BCCLS app, which the library is developing in-house. An all-day civil service training workshop with state trainers was conducted successfully at the library. She is exploring technologies for automated materials handling. The personnel and policy committee has been discussing in-person programming, and a board action item for a new program policy is in this month's board packet.

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

---Mr. Chapka: Reported for the Buildings and Grounds Committee: The 3rd floor and HVAC renovation project is starting to wrap up after 18 months. The floor is now installed and looks good; the new HVAC is operational; bathrooms are being completed; punch lists are being created. The general contractor (GC) is still aiming for completion on October 28. Fire alarm integration still needs to be done. Furniture deliveries have started. The 2nd and 1st floors still have work to do, but the GC anticipates completion at the end of October.

---Dr. Abernathy: Asked about the water intrusion issues with the 3rd floor windows. The work is done on the windows and there was no leakage during the recent rainstorms.

---Mrs. Serrano: Reported for the Budget and Finance Committee: She described the financial matters before the board for approval: 1.) to pay from the Capital Improvement Construction Account at Bayonne Community Bank (BCB) checks no. 384-385 totaling \$351,555.47; 2.) in Part A, to pay library operating expenses with checks no. 10313-10381 totaling \$137,262.82 and to pay via Paypal \$101.00 to Canva; and 3) in Part B, to pay expenses for library materials with checks no. 10382-10388 totaling \$19,157.76. She asked if there were any questions concerning the bills to be paid; there being none, approval of the BCB and Part A bills were added to the meeting consent agenda.

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

---Mr. Silbert: Seconded.

---Adopted by roll call vote as follows: YEAS: 7 NAYS: 0 RECUSED: 1 ABSTAIN: 0

Trustee	Yes	No	Recused	Abstain
Ms. Blaney	X			
Mr. Freeman	X			
Ms. Mirchandani	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 met several times during the past month and has developed a policy for library programs; the intent is to ensure that programs reflect community needs as assessed through outreach, community engagement, feedback and needs assessment. programming policy, which is before the board for approval. The Library Programming Policy is before the board for adoption. There was discussion about the policy and it was added to the meeting consent agenda for adoption.

---Ms. Murcko: The committee also considered criteria for hiring library counsel experienced in personnel and labor practice. The board president and committee polled colleagues and evaluated their recommendations; after discussions the committee recommends awarding the contract to Weiner Law Group, LLP. A resolution authorizing award of this as a non-fair and open contract for counsel of the Hoboken Public Library, with related disclosures, is before the board for approval. Discussion about the evaluation of counsel; it involved seeking experience in labor and union negotiations, HR, first amendment practice, civil service law and work with unionized libraries; also consideration was given to diversity, equity and inclusion. Further discussion about the contract; it is not a retainer but an hourly agreement; agreed rate is \$175 per hour. Approval of the contract with Weiner Law Group LLP was added to the meeting consent agenda.

7. President's Report

---Dr. Abernathy: Reported that Jennifer Evans has been replaced by Malani Cademartori as ex officio representative of the Hoboken Schools Superintendent and she is the vice chair of the board of education; he looks forward to working with Ms. Cademartori.

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

---Ms. Blaney: Reported for the Library Foundation: The merger of the Friends and the Foundation continues in the final stages; they are hoping for finalization soon; the name of the new organization will be The Hoboken Public Library Friends and Foundation.

9. Old Business

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

10. New Business

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

11. Consent Agenda

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

- a. Accept the minutes of the August 23, 2022 board meeting.
- b. Approve payment of BCB Capital Improvement bills.
- c. Approve payment of Part A bills.
- d. Adopt proposed Hoboken Library Program Policy.
- e. Approve BAI to authorize award of non-fair and open contract for counsel to Weiner Law Group, LLP.

---Mr. Freeman: Seconded.

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

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

12. Trustee Comments

---Dr. Abernathy: Congratulated Ms. Mirchandani on her new book and her appearance on the NBC Today program. The trustees joined in congratulating her.

---Mr. Freeman: Moved to adjourn.

---Mr. Thoens: Seconded.

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.