

**MEETING OF TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 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, NOVEMBER 22, 2022 AT 6:30 P.M.**

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

**1. Call to Order**

Board 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 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		Joined at 6:36 p.m.
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 Douglas S. Zucker, Esq., Recording Secretary Clark Matthews and members of the library staff and public.

**3. Acceptance of Minutes**

---Dr. Abernathy: Approval of the October 25, 2022 meeting minutes was postponed until the December trustees' meeting.

#### **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: She attended this year's meeting of the New Jersey Library Association (NJLA) in Atlantic City as co-chair of the NJLA Public Policy Committee. She also attended the opening of North Bergen's new downtown library, which co-locates the library and athletic facilities; it is the fourth such co-located library in the U.S. She attended an advocacy meeting at Montclair together with the NJ State Librarian Jennifer Nelson, which was sponsored by that library's friends, foundation and board of trustees; it was a very informative meeting and she plans to invite Ms. Nelson to board training here. Strategic planning consultant M.J. Gómez Associates was here to report on community surveys, conduct workshops and meet with the strategic planning committee, library leadership and stakeholders.

---Mr. Freeman: Arrived at 6:36 p.m.

---Ms. Murcko: Asked how much square footage the library has in North Bergen's new facility. The library has about 20,000 sq. ft.

---Ms. Pu: Continued her report: Library renovations are starting to wind down; most furniture has been installed; Youth Services is moving books back into the building and Special Collections Librarian James Cox is moving the collections back and organizing them to be more accessible to the public. The Community Engagement team will be organizing more programs on legal issues, including taxes and elder law. The media collection is being relocated to create more seating; there has been a decline in CD borrowing, so the space is being shifted.

---Ms. Murcko: Asked if there are plans to deaccession CDs in the same way books are. There are no plans to do so yet, but CDs have always been deaccessioned.

---Ms. Pu: Continued: Compliance training is starting to roll out; technical initiatives, including single sign-on ID, are also rolling out with IT Director Phil Mendez in charge.

---Ms. Mirchandani: Asked what constitutes a pop-up library, for example the one at Connors School.

---Ms. Pu: Explained the possible components that can be part of a pop-up library; these are available to other schools as well as at the Service Center at the Hoboken Housing Authority (HHA). Discussion about making this a community service because some pre-K and primary schools do not have libraries.

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

---Mr. Chapka: Reported for the Buildings and Grounds Committee: Work is concluding on the upper floor renovations and preparations are underway for final inspections and certifications. Change order no. 13 is before the board for approval to correct water intrusion into the renovated MakerSpace, which could damage the renovated interior; the problem wasn't correctly addressed due to leadership changes at architects Clarke Caton Hintz (CCH) and misunderstandings with the general contractor (GC). CCH recommends wrapping the existing sills to stop this; the change order for this work is for \$25,383.00.

---Dr. Abernathy: Asked if this problem qualifies as an error or omission. There were many different elements to the issue, not just CCH.

---Dr. Abernathy: Asked if repair of the window sills was part of the scope of work. It wasn't; GC Merrill & Garaguso tried a simple repair at no charge, but it didn't work.

---Mr. Chapka: Continued the committee report: Second floor work is concluding; minor work remains on the first floor. Punch lists will be issued soon.

---Ms. Pu: Asked how long the window repairs will take. Fabrication will be needed and there are eight windows; until the work is done the staff will need to monitor the sills when it rains. After discussion the resolution to approve change order no. 13 was added to the meeting consent agenda.

---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. 393-396 totaling \$56,880.03; 2.) in Part A, to pay library operating expenses with checks no. 10467-10529 totaling \$598,668.01 and to pay via Paypal \$83.40 to Doodle AG; and 3) in Part B, to pay expenses for library materials with checks no. 10530-10537 totaling \$33,593.27. Also before the board are two resolutions: i.) a resolution to void check no. 10408; and ii) a resolution to reserve any unspent FY2022 operating funds for capital expenditures following the annual library audit. She asked if there were any questions concerning the bills to be paid or the resolutions; there being none, approval of the BCB and Part A bills and the resolutions were added to the meeting consent agenda.

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

---Dr. Abernathy: 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 director briefed the committee on the new standardized onboarding process for new hires, which includes an orientation; also anti-discrimination and sexual harassment training that will be mandatory for all staff. The committee also heard about the meeting at the Montclair library with the state librarian Jen Nelson, which would be of interest to the board.

---Ms. Pu: Described the Montclair meeting and the remarks by Ms. Nelson, which concerned library advocacy and building relationships with state government and matters related to library funding, especially capital needs. The year 2025 is taking on importance because the New Jersey state library funding mandate of 1/3-mil of

property tax is up for review at that time. She has invited Ms. Nelson to speak to the Hoboken board at some point on these issues, possibly at the board retreat.

## 7. President’s Report

---Dr. Abernathy: Reported that increasing costs are becoming an issue and the trustees should be mindful of them when doing cost analyses. During COVID, there was an increase in appropriations, but there are now rising costs that must be factored in. Also, he hopes to take city council members on a tour of the new North Bergen library facility.

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

---Ms. Blaney: Reported for the Library Foundation: The Friends and the Foundation have merged! They are meeting jointly to decide on future projects. They have secured a Web URL and are working on a new logo and identity for the combined group, which will be followed by writing content.

## 9. Old Business

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

## 10. New Business

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

## 11. Consent Agenda

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

- a. Approve BAI to authorizing change order no. 13 to fix water intrusion, not to exceed \$25,383.00.
- b. Approve payment of Part A bills.
- c. Approve payment of BCB Capital Improvement bills.
- d. Approve resolution to void check.
- e. Approve resolution to reserve any excess FY 2022 operating funds after the annual library audit for capital improvements.

---Mr. Silbert: 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**

---Mr. Silbert: Had some suggestions: 1) he saw a compact sign for events and announcements at Riverview Park in Jersey City Heights recently and wondered if something similar could be used here; and 2) the Brooklyn Public Library has added a “Legacy Media Collection” for vinyl records and he thought there would be interest here too. Discussion of both ideas.

---Mr. Freeman: Asked if the library can have a sale, like a garage sale. It can’t sell materials; legally they must be given away.

---Mr. Silbert: Asked whether the library can loan items like tools, in the same way it loaned toys during COVID at the “Toybrary.” Discussion about a “Library of Things” and about possibly loaning umbrellas at the circulation desk on rainy days.

---Mr. Freeman: Moved to adjourn.

---Mr. Silbert: Seconded.

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:18 p.m.