

**MEETING OF TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 2023**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE HOBOKEN FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY, HELD IN THE LARGE PROGRAM ROOM OF THE HOBOKEN PUBLIC LIBRARY, 500 PARK AVENUE, IN HOBOKEN, NEW JERSEY ON TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 2023 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		Joined at 6:43 p.m.
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 Attorney Douglas S. Zucker Esq., Recording Secretary Clark Matthews and members of the library staff and public.

---Dr. Abernathy: Mr. Thoens advised he would be unable to attend. His excused absence was added to the meeting consent agenda.

**3. Acceptance of Minutes**

---Dr. Abernathy: Asked if trustees had any corrections or comments to the March 28, 2023 meeting minutes. There were none; acceptance of the minutes were added to the meeting 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: She and library social worker Emily Dalton participated in the social work panel organized by city and moderated by city council president Emily Jabbour. A postal mailing was done by a specialized company targeting new arrivals in town with over 600 postcards sent. Executive & Development Assistant Karla Aybar Reyes attended the March 28 Charity Meet & Greet to network with community charities and meet potential supporters. Ally Blumenfeld, the library Community Engagement Manager, submitted a grant application to the NJ Department of Labor for \$75,000 to subsidize staff time and outreach to low-income and under/unemployed residents and partnership programs with local agencies and businesses. Business Manager Carolyn Hartwick is enrolled in a Municipal Finance Administration course at Rutgers leading to certification as a qualified purchasing agent, which will be an advantage for library purchasing. In Facilities Director Mike Chapka's absence, she updated the trustees on the status of building renovations and operations: The certificate of occupancy (CO) for the renovated third floor has been issued and it will reopen unofficially on May 11<sup>th</sup>, with a grand reopening possibly coinciding with the Library Festival in the fall. Departmental goals and objectives are now being finalized in keeping with the new strategic plan. A pop-up library opened at the Wallace School and it was made easier for teachers to book library visits in the future. Community Engagement has been very active with their fair in March and expanded ESL and ASL classes being discussed.

---Mrs. Serrano joined the meeting at 6:43 p.m.

---Ms. Murcko: Asked how the outside materials lockers were working. Their operating system has been fixed and they seem to be working normally again. Discussion about the lockers.

---Mr. Freeman: Asked about timing planned for the new wayfinding signage. The first bid is completed and color-matching is being done; the second bid is out now.

---Ms. Murcko: Asked that the insurance classes offered to seniors at the Community Engagement fair not push Medicare Advantage plans; also she hoped the food pantry could avoid conflicts by coordinating with city community services. Discussion about community engagement classes and options.

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

---Mrs. Serrano: Reported for the Budget and Finance Committee: There is no committee report this month. 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. 410-411 totaling \$19,683.96; 2.) in Part A, to pay library operating expenses with checks no. 10828-10896 totaling \$156,267.26, and to pay via PayPal \$160.00 to Canva, \$1,000 to Meta and \$749.50 to Zoom Video Communications; and 3.) in Part B, to pay expenses for library materials with checks no. 10897-10900 totaling \$27,501.27. She asked if there were any questions concerning the bills to be paid. There being none, approval of the Part A and BCB bills were added to the consent agenda.

---Ms. Blaney: Moved the board approve payment of the Part B bills for library materials.

---Ms. Murcko: Seconded.

---Adopted by roll call vote as follows: YEAS: 6 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			
Dr. Abernathy	X			

---Ms. Murcko: Reported for the Personnel and Policy Committee: The director briefed the committee on the December 23 grievance presented last month and the committee is arranging for the grievance to go to arbitration; no date has been set as yet. Union negotiations are also going forward, with no date set for the next session. Discussion about date for the negotiating session.

## 7. Hoboken Public Library Friends & Foundation Report (HPLFF)

---Ms. Blaney: Reported for the Library Friends & Foundation: The 2023 Hudson Gives campaign will be on May 11<sup>th</sup> and donations can be given after May 2<sup>nd</sup>; HPLFF is participating and an e-mail blast is planned in advance of the dates.

---Ms. Mirchandani: Asked if HPLFF could share their Hudson Gives materials so they could be posted to Instagram. Discussion about sharing arrangement.

## 8. President's Report

---Dr. Abernathy: This month's President's Report will be a presentation by Mr. Freeman on the proposed uptown city administration complex, including space for a library branch.

---Mr. Freeman: The proposed city administration complex would be at 1500 Clinton Street and developed by Bijoux Properties. Present plans allocate 10,000 sq. ft. of space for a library branch in the building, which would include program space. This space was negotiated with the developer as a giveback; the library would be an anchor tenant and is expected to bring foot traffic to the building. The space has 20-foot ceilings and includes outdoor space; the hope is to complete the project within three years. The developer would deliver a vacant space "box"; it would be up to the city and the library to fill it.

---Ms. Murcko: Commented that she saw research that claimed libraries bring improvements to neighborhoods where they are located; she asked if this is the Academy Bus property. No it isn't. Further discussion about the height of the proposed building; it will be 8 and 12 stories.

---Ms. Murcko: Asked what needs to happen for the project to proceed. There will need to be an amendment to the city redevelopment plan; and work will need to start on a proposed light rail stop at 15<sup>th</sup> Street.

---Mr. Silbert: Asked if the next block to the building is the city sewage authority. Discussion about improvements and infrastructure that would need to be added in the area. Further discussion about a Zoom conference on the proposal.

### 9. Old Business

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

### 10. New Business

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

### 11. Consent Agenda

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

- a. Excuse the absence of Mr. Thoens.
- b. Accept the minutes of the March 28, 2023 meeting.
- c. Approve payment of Part A bills for library operations.
- d. Approve payment of BCB Capital Improvement bills.

---Ms. Murcko: Seconded.

---Adopted by roll call vote as follows: YEAS: 7 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			
Dr. Abernathy	X			

### 13. Trustee Comments

---Dr. Abernathy: Invited any comments by the trustees. There were none.

---Mr. Freeman: Moved to adjourn.

---Dr. Abernathy: Seconded.

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m.