

MEETING OF TUESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2024

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, JANUARY 23, 2024 AT 6:30 PM.

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

1. Call to Order

Board Secretary Susan Murcko called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm and certified that pursuant to the Open Public Meeting Act, notice of the meeting had been given in the annual meeting notice, which was adopted at the July 25, 2023 meeting of the Library Board and such notice was provided in the Jersey Journal and Star Ledger, was posted to the library website and at the Hoboken City Hall, and filed with the Hoboken City Clerk. The meeting notice was amended at the outset of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) emergency to provide the internet and telephone conference number and access code in advance of the scheduled meetings.

2. Roll Call

Attendance	Present	Absent	Notes
Dr. Jerome Abernathy, President	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Ms. Susan Murcko, Secretary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Mr. Kurt Thoens, Treasurer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ms. Amanda R. Blaney**	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ms. Malani Cademartori, School Superintendent Designee **	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Mr. Damien DeBenedetto	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Mr. Jason Freeman, Mayor's Designee*	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ms. Raakhee Mirchandani	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Mr. Jack Silbert	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**Ex officio* under NJ state law

**Present via remote connection

Also in attendance were: Library Director Jennie Pu, Library Attorney Douglas S. Zucker Esq., Assistant Library Director Andrew Luck, Recording Secretary Karla Aybar Reyes, and members of the public.

3. Acceptance of Minutes

—Ms. Murcko: Asked if the Trustees had any corrections or comments regarding the minutes of the Board meeting of December 19, 2023. There being none, approval of the minutes was added to the consent agenda.

4. Public Comments

—Ms. Murcko: Invited comments from the public. There were none.

5. Director's Report

—Ms. Pu: Highlighted some items of note: After receiving the closeout documents from Clark Caton Hintz last month, the library submitted all quarter reports for the \$750,000 reimbursement from the NJ Historic Trust. Ms. Pu was invited to speak with Bill Ritter on WABC about book sanctuaries and the freedom to read. The library was awarded a \$69,449.39 Library of Congress grant for the project, “The Puerto Rican Experience in Hoboken and America.” The Library of Things has launched on the second floor of the library. Marketing is forthcoming. Computers4People will be using the library as a drop off point for those participating in their computer donation program. The library will be accepting laptop donations starting in February. The drop off point for BCCLs deliveries has been moved to the ground level foyer for the elevator at the main library. LiteracyNJ, who administers ESL classes at the library, held an MLK celebration where students and teachers shared their success stories and inspiration. The Science Fiction and Fantasy Book Club celebrated its 10th anniversary. Students from Stevens University volunteered at the library, putting together over 120 Community Care Kits for MLK day of Service. The kits will be distributed at the Point-in-Time count at the library on January 24. The Youth Services Winter Wonderland was a success. The library will celebrate the Lunar New Year on February 16 in partnership with The Mandarin Team at Cresthill Academy in Hoboken. The Social Services team is working with the City of Hoboken and city social workers on how to better address homelessness in Hudson County. The first ASL winter session class exceeded expectations by reaching full capacity. The library has hosted many successful Makerspace programs; we will continue to promote these on social media. Library staff work accounts have been transferred to the domain: @hobokenlibrary.org. Communico modules development continues. The goal is to launch the app mid-year.

—Ms. Murcko: Asked if the library will consider incorporating the experiences of those affected by the Hoboken fires in their project for the Library of Congress award.

—Ms. Pu: Responded that part of the intention of this project is to collect oral histories from that population.

—Ms. Murcko: Asked for examples of incident reports that have been filed at the library.

—Mr. Luck: Explained that a low-end report can touch on a minor confrontation with a patron that might become a recurring issue. A more extreme report might detail an inappropriate remark made to a staff member.

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

—Mr. Chapka: Reported on behalf of the Buildings and Grounds Committee: There were no problems with the heating system during the cold snap. The chandelier, which was the final warranty item, was completed a few weeks ago. There are a few commissioning documents that have yet to arrive. The current focus is the day-to-day operations at the library.

—Mr. Thoens: Reported for the Finance Committee: Mr. Thoens described the financial matters before the Board for approval: to pay from the Capital Improvement Construction Account at Bayonne Community Bank (BCB) checks 442 and 443 totaling \$52,250.00; 2.) in Part A, to pay 2023 library operating expenses with checks no. 11413-11435 totaling \$27,920.65, in Part A, to pay 2024 library operating expenses with checks no. 11442-11480 totaling \$111,752.02; to pay via PayPal \$5,372.08 to Adobe, \$40.95 to Book People, and \$83.40 to Doodle AG; and in Part B, to pay expenses for library materials with checks no. 11436-11441 totaling \$22,330.49. Also before the Trustees is a resolution to adopt the FY 2024 budget and a resolution to engage Wielkottz & Company to perform an audit of the FY 2023 library financial statements. Approval of the Part A and BCB bills and the resolutions were added to the consent agenda.

—Mr. Freeman: Moved the Board to approve payment of the Part B bills for library materials.

—Ms. Murcko: Seconded.

—Adopted by roll call vote as follow: YEAS: 6 NAYS:0 RECUSED: 1 ABSTAIN: 0

Trustee	Yes	No	Recused	Abstain
Ms. Blaney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ms. Cademartori	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. DeBenedetto	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Mr. Freeman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ms. Murcko	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Silbert	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Thoens	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

—Ms. Murcko: Reported for the Personnel and Policy Committee: The union bargaining committee continues to meet. There have been no updates. Board members will be contacted by Mr. Silbert and Ms. Murcko to set up individual meetings for Ms. Pu’s yearly evaluations.

7. Friends & Foundation

—Ms. Blaney: Reported on behalf of the Hoboken Public Library Friends & Foundation: A Friends & Foundation event is being planned.

8. Old Business

—Ms. Murcko: Called for any old business.

—Mr. Freeman: Reported that the Hoboken City Council adopted a new design plan for Church Square Park and adopted a public art plan for installation of public art.

9. New Business

—Ms. Murcko: Called for any new business. There was none.

10. Consent Agenda

- a. Excuse the absence of Dr. Abernathy and Ms. Michandani.
- b. Accept the minutes of the December 19, 2023 board meeting.
- c. Approve payment of Part A bills for library expenses.
- d. Approve payment of BCB Capital Improvement Bills.
- e. Adopt the FY 2024 budget.
- f. Approve the resolution to engage Wielkotz & Company to perform an audit of FY 2023 library financial statements.

—Mr. Freeman: Moved the Board to approve the meeting consent agenda.

—Mr. Silber: Seconded.

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

Trustee	Yes	No	Recused	Abstain
Ms. Blaney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ms. Cademartori	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. DeBenedetto	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Freeman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ms. Murcko	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Silbert	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Thoens	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. Trustee Comments

—Ms Murcko: Invited any comments by the Trustees.

—Mr. Freeman: Congratulated Ms. Aybar Reyes on her new title as library Chief of Staff.

—Mr. Freeman: Moved to adjourn.

—Mr. DeBenedetto: Seconded.

—Adopted by voice vote as follows: YEAS:7 NAYS:0 RECUSED: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

The meeting adjourned at 7:02pm.