

MEETING OF TUESDAY, APRIL 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, APRIL 23, 2024 AT 6:30 PM.

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

1. Call to Order

Board President Abernathy 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	X		
Ms. Susan Murcko, Secretary	X		
Mr. Kurt Thoens, Treasurer		X	
Ms. Amanda R. Blaney**	X		
Ms. Malani Cademartori, School Superintendent Designee **	X		
Mr. Damien DeBenedetto*	X		
Mr. Jason Freeman, Mayor's Designee*		X	
Ms. Raakhee Mirchandani**		X	
Mr. Jack Silbert		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., Assistant Library Director Andrew Luck, and Recording Secretary Karla Aybar Reyes.

3. Acceptance of Minutes

—Dr. Abernathy: Asked if the Trustees had any corrections or comments regarding the minutes of the Board meeting of March 26, 2024. 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 none.

5. Director's Report

—Ms. Pu: Highlighted items of note: Board President Jerome Abernathy, Ms. Pu, and other members of the library staff attended the bi-annual Public Libraries Association (PLA) Conference in Columbus, Ohio. Dr. Abernathy was interviewed by the media and attended the panel “Black Men in Public Libraries.” The library held a Board Retreat featuring guest speakers Dr. Mary Lomax Ghirarduzzi and Kurt Hader. Also in attendance were members of the Hoboken Public Library Friends & Foundation and library staff. The library was awarded the American Library Association (ALA) “Libraries Transform Communities Engagement Grant”, one of only two libraries nationwide and the first awardee from New Jersey. The grant will be used to initiate a Homelessness Advisory Group, a monthly program that empowers unhoused patrons. Ms. Pu has been named the 2024 winner of ALA’s Ernest A. DiMattia Award for Innovation and Service to Community and Profession. She will be attending the ALA conference in June to accept the award. The book drop and book lockers, both at the Main Library and at the Hoboken Historical Museum were wrapped to be in line with our new branding colors. Ms. Pu gave an Instagram Live interview with the Sikh Coalition on book bans and the right to read. As of April 19, there are 19 book sanctuary libraries, 4 book sanctuary municipalities in New Jersey, and the first book sanctuary city in Georgia, in the city of Savannah. The Library of Things collection continues to grow and attract a high degree of attention from residents. Assistant Director Andrew Luck, Information and Digital Services Manager Aimee Harris, and Library Social Worker Emily Dalton took a trip to the Manville Public Library to investigate how they interact and engage with their patrons through programming and displays. The library circulated 600 free pairs of NASA approved eclipse viewing glasses for the solar eclipse and the Youth Services Department circulated pinhole eclipse viewing kits. Both of these giveaways were depleted by the weekend. The library purchased a new, custom-order BookBike for the 2024 BookBike season. Community Engagement Assistant Natalie Castillo kicked off our new program, Memory Cafe, with over 20 participants at Fox Hill Gardens. Youth Services programs this month included four egg hunts, a Russian celebration, and a Purim celebration. The IT Department has a new hire, Jason Biegel; he will be working primarily in the MakerSpace.

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

—Ms Pu: There are no Buildings and Grounds Committee updates this month.

—Dr. Abernathy: Reported for the Finance Committee: Mr. Thoens described the financial matters before the Board for approval: 1) in Part A operating budget, to pay library operating expenses with checks no.11625-11690 totaling \$136,021.82; to pay via PayPal \$99.00 to Automattic Inc., \$426.50 to Bitstream, \$100.00 to Advance Local Media LLC, \$177.97 to Tribute Store US LLC, and \$299.80 to Zoom Video Communications; and in Part B, to pay expenses for library materials with checks no. 11691-11695 totaling \$26,752.41. Also before the Trustees is a resolution to void checks. Dr. Abernathy asked if there were any questions concerning the financial matters. There being none, payment of Part A bills and the resolution were added to the consent agenda.

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

—Dr. Abernathy: Seconded.

—Adopted by roll call vote as follow: YEAS: 4 NAYS:0 RECUSED: 1 ABSTAIN: 0

Trustee	Yes	No	Recused	Abstain
Ms. Blaney	X			
Ms. Cademartori	X			
Mr. DeBenedetto	X			
Ms. Murcko			X	
Dr. Abernathy	X			

—Ms. Murcko: Reported for the Personnel and Policy Committee: An updated Meeting Spaces Policy is included in this month’s board packet. The policy allows community users to reserve and use library spaces and outlines the rules for use. Ms. Pu’s 2024 director’s goals are included in this month’s board packet. Ms. Murcko asked if anyone had questions about the Meeting Spaces Policy or director’s goals. There being none, both were added to the consent agenda. Library consultants have started to update the emergency action plan.

7. President’s Report

—Dr. Abernathy: Commented that this year is the soft launch of the library’s fundraising efforts and that the effort’s pace will accelerate.

8. Friends & Foundation

—Ms. Blaney: Thanked Ms. Pu for the Friends & Foundation training and the Board Retreat. She reported that May 11 is the annual Hudson Gives Campaign. The Friends & Foundation supplied breakfast for library staff in recognition of Library Workers Day on April 12. The library reading garden has undergone spring cleaning. The Friends & Foundation plan to sponsor a Wednesday night concert series at Church Square Park.

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

- a. Accept the minutes of the March 26 board meeting
- b. Approve payment of Part A bills
- c. Approve the resolution to void checks
- d. Approve the Meeting Spaces Policy
- e. Approve Ms. Pu’s 2024 director’s goals

—Dr. Abernathy: Moved the Board to approve the meeting consent agenda.

—Ms. Murcko: Seconded.

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

Trustee	Yes	No	Recused	Abstain
Ms. Blaney	X			
Ms. Cademartori	X			
Mr. DeBenedetto	X			
Ms. Murcko	X			
Dr.Abernathy	X			

12. Trustee Comments

—Dr. Abernathy: Invited any comments by the Trustees. There were none.

—Mr. DeBenedetto: Moved to adjourn.

—Dr. Abernathy: Seconded.

—Adopted by voice vote as follows: YEAS:5 NAYS:0 RECUSED: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

The meeting adjourned at 7:02pm.