

MEETING OF TUESDAY, JUNE 25 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, June 25, 2024 AT 6:30 PM.

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

1. Call to Order

Board President Abernathy called the meeting to order at 6:30 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	Excused
Mr. Kurt Thoens, Treasurer	X		
Ms. Amanda R. Blaney	X		
Ms. Malani Cademartori, School Superintendent Designee *		X	Excused
Mr. Damien DeBenedetto**	X		
Mr. Jason Freeman, Mayor's Designee*		X	Excused
Ms. Raakhee Mirchandani**		X	Excused
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 May 28, 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

—School Outreach Librarian Valerie Coughlin gave a presentation on the status of this year's school outreach and plans moving forward. Ms Pu highlighted items of note: She, Board President Jerome Abernathy, Library Counsel Douglas Zucker, Hoboken City Council Member-at-large Emily Jabbour, Mayor of Cranford Brian Andrews, and Paris-Bourbon County Library Director Mark Adler presented on book sanctuaries at the NJLA Annual Conference. Ms. Pu, the Hoboken Public Library Board of Trustees, and the City of Hoboken were honored with awards for Librarian of the Year, Library Service in the Trustee category, and Library Champion, respectively. The library held a successful and impactful panel exploring the state of censorship in America and the fight to protect intellectual freedom and the right to read. Ms. Pu attended the International Public Libraries Fundraising Conference. She and Dr. Abernathy held a virtual statewide presentation on book sanctuaries to library trustees. Union negotiations have begun. Special Collections Manager James Cox was invited to the 58th annual Puerto Rican flag raising and our literature about the grant was included in the program. The Uptown Book Locker is now operating at capacity. The library was awarded another year of \$50,000 funding from the NJ Department of Labor to support our patrons in receiving assistance with and information about Unemployment Insurance and Workers Rights. Youth Services has started a Speedcubing Club and a Pokemon Club. The new Communico app is anticipated to launch this fall. Fifteen new vinyls were added to the library's collection. Special Collections Manager James Cox is presenting at the Library of Congress Summer Fuse Festival on Monday, June 24 as part of our CCDI grant.

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

—Ms Pu: The Buildings and Grounds Committee will meet in July. Ms. Pu received an estimate from Clarke Caton Hintz for the next phase of renovations. The quotes looked at phasing the renovations floor-by-floor, depending on the library's budget.

Mr. Thoens: Asked for a cost estimate.

Ms. Pu: Excluding soft costs like environmental remediation and furniture, the second floor is estimated to cost just under \$2 million and the first floor over \$3 million.

—Dr. Abernathy: Reported for the Finance Committee: Dr. Abernathy described the financial matters before the Board for approval: 1) in Part A operating budget, to pay library operating expenses with checks no. 11781-11841 totaling \$75,414.53; to pay via PayPal \$279.15 to That's Great News and \$449.70 to Zoom Communications; and in Part B, to pay expenses for library materials with checks no. 11842-11845 totaling \$18,007.91. Also before the Board is a resolution to void check #11605 and check #11614. Dr. Abernathy asked if there were any questions concerning the financial matters. There being none, payment of Part A bills, Part B bills, and the resolution to void checks was added to the consent agenda.

—Ms. Pu: Reported for the Personnel and Policy Committee: Before the board is a new Library Suspension Policy. Approval of the policy was added to the consent agenda.

7. President's Report

—Dr. Abernathy: Reported on his experience at the New Jersey Library Association Conference, the impact the library and the City of Hoboken have had by becoming a book sanctuary library and city, and the awards with which the board, library, and Ms. Pu were presented.

8. Friends & Foundation

—Ms. Blaney: Thanked the library for sharing their tent with the Friends & Foundation at the Arts & Music Festival. The Friends & Foundation will be getting their own tent for future events. The organization received a grant for \$5,000 from St. Mary's Advocates. Some museum passes have been renewed and three museums have been added to the program. The Friends & Foundation will be starting a book club in the fall. \$3,870 was raised for Hudson Gives.

9. Executive Session

—Dr. Abernathy: Called for an executive session.

—Ms. Blaney: Seconded

—Adopted by voice vote as follows: YEAS: 5 NAYS: 0 Recused: 0 Abstain: 0

—Dr. Abernathy: Summarized the session: The session concerned union negotiations; no votes or board actions were taken.

10. Old Business

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

11. New Business

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

12. Consent Agenda

- a. Accept the minutes of the May 28, 2024 Board Meeting
- b. Excuse the absences of Ms. Murcko, Ms. Cademartori, Mr. Freeman, and Ms. Mirchandani
- c. Approve the payment of Part A bills
- d. Approve the payment of Part B bills
- e. Approve the resolution to void checks
- f. Approve the new suspension policy

—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

Attendance	yes	no	recuse
Ms. Blaney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Mr. DeBenedetto	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Mr. Thoens	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Mr. Silbert	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Dr. Abernathy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

12. Trustee Comments

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

—Mr. DeBenedetto: Moved to adjourn.

—Mr. Silbert: Seconded.

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:19pm.