

**MEETING OF TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 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, OCTOBER 22, 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 23, 2024 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ms. Susan Murcko, Secretary**	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Mr. Kurt Thoens, Treasurer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Excused absence
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"/>	Excused absence
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, Assistant Library Director Andrew Luck, Library Attorney Douglas S. Zucker Esq., 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 September 24, 2024. Ms. Murcko noted an error in the number of affirmative votes in that month’s consent agenda. The amended minutes were 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: USA Today spoke to Ms. Pu, Chicago Public Library, Harris County Library (TX), and Paris-Bourbon County Library (KY) in a national article on the book sanctuary movement. Ms. Pu was also featured in an NPR segment on books bans on September 24, kicking off Banned Books Week. That segment aired nationally to an audience of over 30 million listeners. The Library received notice from Preservation NJ that it is receiving the Preservation Project Award. On September 30, Ms. Pu, along with NJLA Director Brett Bonfield, provided private testimony in support of the Freedom to Read Bill at the NJ State House. The Bill was voted out of the Senate Education Committee and is on track to be voted by the full senate at the end of this month. Ms. Pu was invited to Anne Arundel County Library, Maryland on September 25 to partake in the ceremony of their library and county becoming the first book sanctuary in Maryland. She was also invited to a private ceremony and reception honoring author George RR Martin in his hometown library, Bayonne Public Library. The Library received its preliminary third of a mil appropriation from the New Jersey State Library, showing a 7% increase projected appropriation. Ms. Pu attended the wedding of Lola Shelton, Executive Director of Live Oaks Public Library. Under her leadership, the City of Savannah became the first book sanctuary in Georgia. The final draft of the Library’s EAP was submitted by Atriade. The annual Library Festival took place in Church Square Park on Saturday, October 21. There were over 1,000 attendees enjoying the festival, which included two new features: an Art Showcase featuring works by Art with Liz students, and the Maker Tent showcasing Makerspace tools and a Maker Bar project. The Library celebrated the Freedom to Read Day of Action in partnership with libraries across the county while tabling at the City of Hoboken’s Harvest Fest on Saturday, October 19. Activities included Banned Books Trivia with prizes, DIY Freedom to Read buttons, and a Banned Books Story Time with Library Trustee Jack Silbert. Special Collections Manager, James Cox, is working with library staff to put together the Omeka website that will display the results of his research and outreach for the Connecting Communities Digital Initiative (the Library of Congress award). The site will officially launch on December

11, but will live and expand beyond that as the Library continues to collect materials from the Puerto Rican community. Hoboken Historical Museum donated a display case to Special Collections and will eventually provide artifacts to display.

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

—Ms Pu: Reported for the Buildings and Grounds Committee. The Library settled on a vendor for the water intrusion repair. Included in the project will be the removal of the ivy in the garden. Ms. Pu, Dr. Abernathy, and Business Manager Carolyn Hartwick met with Clarke Caton Hintz and received the project costs for phases one and two of the renovation. The Board of Trustees Buildings and Grounds Committee will meet to discuss whether the renovation should begin with the first or second floor of the library.

—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. 12066-12133 totaling \$373,618.97; to pay via PayPal \$494.86 to Digi-Key Corporation and \$268.59 to That’s Great News; in Part B, to pay expenses for library materials with checks no. 12134-12137 totaling \$19,147.79; and to pay \$1,727.25 from the capital reserve budget. Also before the Board is a resolution to reserve funds for capital improvements and a resolution authorizing the award of a non-fair and open contract for branding design services to Felt Hat. Dr. Abernathy asked if there were any questions concerning financial matters. There being none, payment of Part A bills and the resolution authorizing the award of a non-fair and open contract for branding design services were added to the consent agenda.

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

—Mr. DeBenedetto: Seconded.

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

Attendance	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"/>
Dr. Abernathy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

—Ms. Silbert: Moved the Board to approve the resolution to reserve funds.

—Mr. DeBenedetto: Seconded.

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

Attendance	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"/>
Dr. Abernathy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

—Ms. Murcko: Reported for the Personnel and Policy Committee: The union sent its economic proposal, which will be reviewed by the Personnel and Policy Committee at their next meeting. A library privacy policy is in the works.

—Ms. Murcko: Asked for clarification in the privacy policy regarding court order and sharing video footage.

### **7. President’s Report**

—Dr. Abernathy: There was no president’s report.

### **8. Friends & Foundation**

—Ms. Blaney: The Friends & Foundation’s second book club is scheduled in person at the library on October 28. There will be a fundraiser for the Friends & Foundation at the library on November 15. Tickets will be available for purchase by the end of the week.

—Ms. Blaney: Asked how much of the ivy will be cut in the garden.

—Ms. Pu: All of it will be removed, as it’s damaging the building. Ms. Pu will inform the Friends & Foundation.

**9. Old Business**

—Dr. Abernathy called for any old business. There was none.

**10. New Business**

—Dr. Abernathy: Presented a resolution reappointing Douglas S. Zucker, Esq. as library counsel. He asked whether there were any comments. There being none, the resolution was added to the consent agenda.

**11. Consent Agenda**

- a. Accept the amended minutes of the September 24, 2024 Board meeting
- b. Excuse the absence of Ms. Mirchandani and Mr. Thoens
- c. Approve the payment of Part A bills
- d. Approve the resolution authorizing the the award of a non-fair and open contract for branding design services
- e. Approve the resolution reappointing Douglas S. Zucker, ESQ. of Weiner Law Group, LLP as Library Council

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

—Dr. Abernathy: Seconded.

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

Attendance	Yes	No	Recused	Abstain
Ms. Blaney	<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"/>
Ms. Cademartori	<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"/>
Dr. Abernathy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## **12. 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:7 NAYS:0 RECUSED: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

The meeting adjourned at 7:15pm.