

MEETING OF TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 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, SEPTEMBER 24, 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 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 type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" 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, 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 August 27, 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: The library held its annual Staff Development Day on Friday, September 6th. The event aimed to increase the quality of staff customer service and foster unity between departments. Ms. Pu and Stevens Institute made the top 10 list in this year's 2024 NJBiz Education Power 50. This is an annual statewide list recognizing influential leaders in education and this year the #1 spot went to Hoboken Public Library - the people's university. Ms. Pu attended her first Urban Libraries Council's Federal Advocacy Taskforce meeting. This is a new taskforce that will work closely with ULC's DC lobbyists in advancing legislation priorities for urban public libraries in the country. The library is partnering with the Hoboken Business Alliance on a new Hoboken artists in residence initiative. The library will be one of the sites where the artists in residence can hold workshops. The library is also partnering with Brooklyn Public Library United Against Book Bans and The Association of Rural and Small Libraries in organizing a nationwide Freedom to Read Day of Action on October 19. Board of Trustee member Jack Silbert and Hoboken Historical Museum staff member Bill Curran are holding Saturday morning storytime at Hoboken's Firehouse Museum. The Information and Digital Services Department on the second floor had two new desks installed. One is situated in the public computer area and the other in the Reading Room. The winning designs are now available on library cards for adults, teens, and children in celebration of Library Card Sign-Up Month. The children's card is available only at the BookBike, the teen card only at the Teen Desk, and the adult card at all locations. The library celebrated Voter Registration Week 9/16-9/21. The week kicked-off with a day-long voter registration drive outside the Main Library, staff engaged with over 150 passers-by and registered 15 new voters. Community Engagement Librarian Natalie Castillo planned and hosted a special Boots, Bingo, and Ballots event with 15 attendees, using special Beyonce-themed Bingo boards; it was a creative event which attracted diverse attendees of all ages. The library's new partnership with Play! Hoboken is proving fruitful, with two regularly scheduled weekly Dungeons and Dragons events for the month of September. One session is for teens ages 12 and up; the other session is for tweens ages 9-11. The programs have been fully booked.

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

—Ms Pu: Reported for the Buildings and Grounds Committee. The library received three quotes for the water intrusion issue on the second and third floors. We are waiting for the final quote. Clarke Caton Hintz provided the quote for the second floor renovation. It will be presented after the next Buildings & Grounds Committee meeting. We have not received the third floor reimbursement from the Historic Trust, but we will be following up on that soon.

—Mr. Thoens: 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. 11999-12061 totaling \$465,714.57; to pay via PayPal \$136.98 to 800-FLOWERS INC, \$676.51 to Cricut Inc., and \$367.77 to Inserra Supermarket; in Part B, to pay expenses for library materials with checks no. 12062-12065 totaling \$21,135.26; and to pay \$3,925,000 from the capital reserve budget. Also before the Board is a resolution to void checks #11864 and #11940. Mr. Thoens asked if there were any questions concerning financial matters. There being none, payment of Part A bills and the resolution to void checks was added to the consent agenda.

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

—Ms. Blaney: 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. 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. Thoens | <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: We are waiting for the economic proposal from the union and hoping to schedule a bargaining session. Ms. Pu discussed the recent staff changes noted in the Director’s report.

7. President’s Report

—Dr. Abernathy: Dr. Abernathy spoke about his participation in Staff Development Day.

8. Friends & Foundation

—Ms. Blaney: The Friends & Foundation raised over \$1,000 at the library festival book sale. They are planning to hold an event at the library on November 15. The first book club was held on September 18; twelve people attended.

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 August 27, 2024 Board meeting
- b. Excuse the absence of Mr. DeBenedetto and Ms. Mirchandani
- c. Approve the payment of Part A bills
- d. Approve payment of BCB bills.
- e. Approve the resolution to void checks

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

—Ms Murcko: Seconded.

—Adopted by roll call vote as follows: YEAS: 6 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 type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" 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. Thoens | <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. Silbert: Moved to adjourn.

—Mr. Freeman: Seconded.

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:56pm.