

East Brunswick Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
March 15, 2022

Attendees:

Otu Amankwah	John Arthur, Library Director
JoAnn Chmielowicz	Michael Bobish, Assistant Library Director
Wayne Christie	Daragh McAuley, Exec. Admin. Assistant
Mayor Brad Cohen (Arr. 8:08)	Angel Albanese, CFO, Township of East Brunswick
Patricia Palumbo	Sofia Sepulveda, Student Representative
Aarti Punjabi	Howard Sorkin, President, EBPL Foundation

Ms. Chmielowicz called the meeting to order at 7:40 pm. A roll call was made and a quorum was present. Ms. Chmielowicz stated that the meeting was advertised and the Open Public Meeting Act requirements were met.

All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes of February 15, 2022:

Mr. Christie made a motion to approve the minutes of February 15, 2022. Mr. Amankwah seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Chmielowicz and Mr. Christie. Voting no: None. Abstaining: Ms. Palumbo and Ms. Punjabi.

Public Participation:

Sofia Sepulveda, the student representative, read the teen report for February. Ms. Sepulveda reported that 49 volunteers completed a total of 128 volunteer hours during the month. Eight programs were held, including debate meet-up and several sessions of the ABC's of Coding. A total of 94 teens attended the programs. The Fact of the Day on the Bulletin Board has proven to be very popular.

The Friends of the Library were not in attendance, but submitted a report which was read by Mr. Arthur. The Friends are preparing for the Bling Sale, to be held March 19 and 20, and they are currently holding a Spring Flower Bulb sale. The always popular Bunco will be returning on June 3.

Dr. Sorkin, the President of the Foundation Board, reported that they are waiting for the strategic plan results before they organize any fundraising efforts.

There was no report from the Township.

Mr. Christie reported that he attended the latest NJLTA Board meeting, where the issue of banning books was discussed. In addition, the biannual NJLTA training will be held via Zoom sometime in the fall.

Treasurers Report:

Mr. Arthur reported that the passport revenue is close to the pre-pandemic levels. It was suggested that more advertising be done about the library passport services. Mr. Arthur also pointed out that the budget expenditures are also on track, and that the large bill on the bill list is the purchase of the iPads for the NJHealth Connect Grant.

Mr. Amankwah made a motion to approve the February 14 and March 16, 2022 bill list. Ms. Palumbo seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Chmielowicz, Mr. Christie, Ms. Palumbo and Ms. Punjabi. Voting no: None.

Correspondence:

There was no correspondence.

Reports of Standing and Special Committees:

No committees met this month.

Director's Report:

Mr. Arthur reported that more patrons are attending programs in person. The bands are booked for the Summer Music Series paid for by the Middlesex County Arts Grant. The ESL instructor job was posted for the English Language Immersion Institute for the NJ Department of Labor Grant. Mr. Arthur also thanked everyone involved with the Lunar New Year event.

Mr. Christie made a motion to approve the staff changes in the February 2022 Director's Report. Ms. Palumbo seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Chmielowicz, Mr. Christie, Ms. Palumbo and Ms. Punjabi. Voting no: None.

Old Business:

A. Staff Appreciation Week

Mr. Arthur shared that a breakfast or lunch is usually provided for the staff one day during this week, and it was suggested that lunch be purchased from the Village Deli, as it was last year. Ms. Chmielowicz asked the Board if any of them would like to do something for the staff, to please contact her so they can discuss it.

B. Budget Lines Change

Mr. Arthur would like to reduce the number of budget lines from 78 down to 24, as he feels this would be easier to manage. He worked with Ms. Albanese from the Township to determine the final budget lines, and the Finance Committee reviewed the end result. Mr. Arthur will work with the managers to determine their portion of each budget line.

Mr. Christie moved to approve the change to the budget lines. Mr. Amankwah seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Chmielowicz, Mr. Christie, Ms. Palumbo and Ms. Punjabi. Voting no: None.

New Business:

A. Resolution #10,804 Additional Temporary 2022 Library Budget

Resolution #10,804

Additional Temporary 2022 Library Budget

WHEREAS, the library administration reviewed the 2022 budget with the managers, the Board of Trustees, and township administration; and

WHEREAS, the Township of East Brunswick budget has not yet been passed; and

WHEREAS, the library needs funding in order to operate; and

WHEREAS, it was determined that an additional 26.25% of the 2021 budget is required for the 2nd quarter of the year,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees approves an additional funding of \$1,126,577.00, for a total of \$2,253,154.00.

Mr. Christie moved to approve the above resolution. Mayor Cohen seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Chmielowicz, Mr. Christie, Mayor Cohen, Mr. Palumbo and Ms. Punjabi. Voting no: None.

B. Resolution #10,805 Hiring a Strategic Planning Consultant

Resolution #10,805

Hiring a Strategic Planning Consultant

WHEREAS, the library is required to have a strategic plan; and

WHEREAS, the current strategic plan ends in 2022; and

WHEREAS, a strategic planning committee has already been formed; and

WHEREAS, in the past, the library has hired a strategic planning consultant to assist in this task.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees authorizes the strategic planning committee to hire a strategic planning consultant for a maximum amount of \$10,000.00, which will be paid out of the strategic planning reserve account.

Mr. Arthur received quotes from several strategic planning companies. He would like to hire a consultant to run focus groups and perform surveys only and feels that \$10,000 will be sufficient to perform these tasks. The report writing will be handled by library staff.

Mayor Cohen moved to approve the above resolution. Ms. Punjabi seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Chmielowicz, Mr. Christie, Mayor Cohen, Ms. Palumbo and Ms. Punjabi. Voting no: None.

Information Items:

Mr. Arthur directed the Board to read the 2021 Annual Report, which was included in the board packet. He commented that it was a busy year, despite the pandemic.

Mayor Cohen asked what was the status of the Children's Room renovation, as he feels that this project should be moving forward. The Board discussed renovating the bathrooms first, as they need to be ADA compliant. Mr. Arthur will schedule a meeting with the Building Committee in the next month to discuss the next steps.

There being no further business, Mayor Cohen made a motion to adjourn at 8:32 pm. Mr. Amankwah seconded.

Respectfully submitted,
Mr. Wayne Christie, Secretary