

BERKELEY HEIGHTS FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

December 11, 2023

Prepared: December 18, 2023

Approved: January 9, 2024

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This meeting was contained in a list of meetings approved on December 12, 2022. Advance notice has been advertised in the Courier News, Star Ledger, BHPL' s Website and forwarded to TAPinto Berkeley Heights, and the Clerk's Office.

Roll Call: The meeting was called to order by Sheila Buthe at 7:07 PM.

PRESENT: Sheila Buthe, Ann Bunyaner, Donna Boyd, Linda Nessenson, Diane Azalone

ABSENT: Diane O'Halloran, Kevin Hall

ALSO PRESENT: Phil Israel, Interim Director; Laura Fuhro, Assistant Director.

SECRETARY'S REPORT –

Buthe noted an incomplete sentence and a sentence fragment under BOARD REPORTS-Marketing. Nessenson suggested that the correction should read "A list of how and where the Library advertises was requested by Hall".

Boyd asked for corrections to the third paragraph on page 2. After short discussion, the paragraph was revised as:

"Boyd noticed that the copy of the Policy on Photography and Recording handed out for review did not seem to be the adopted version. Boyd said she would contact Kristen at Wiley, Malehorn, Sirota & Raynes and ask for the adopted version."

Buthe called for a motion to approve the corrected Minutes of November 13, 2023. Bunyaner seconded the motion and all agreed.

TREASURER'S REPORT –

Israel noted that the report shows that less than half of the discretionary budget was spent and could have implications next year with return of funds. He reported that he has been working with the staff to set up a new process of book ordering that will provide for continuity in book ordering through staff participation.

Nessenson told Israel that next month the Library will need to request a print out of the Library's salaries and wages from the Township's end of the year spreadsheet.

Buthe called for a motion to approve the Financial Worksheet. Nessenson so moved, Bunyaner seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Buthe called for a motion to approve the Bill List. Nessenson so moved. Bunyaner seconded the motion and all approved.

CORRESPONDENCE AND GIFTS – None

BOARD REPORTS –

Facilities- Boyd reported that the 8 new Library street signs have been delivered and asked that DPW be requested to save one old sign as an artifact.

At this point Nessenson noted that it is difficult to determine from the Financial Spreadsheet that the payment to Library Crossroads LLC for the 2024-2026 Strategic Plan has been made in full. Israel said he would contact James Keehler.

Marketing- Israel commented that the open rate for the online marketing materials is incredible.

Strategic Plan- Buthe called for a motion to accept the 2023-2025 Strategic Plan. Bunyaner so moved. Nessenson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

CITIZEN HEARING – Mary Jean Barnes of 68 Plymouth Drive said that she has borrowed from several libraries that use auto renew for overdue books and would be pleased to find this feature at the BHPL. Ms. Barnes asked about the gap of missing issues in the periodical collection. Israel said that a billing problem had led to the problem and it has been corrected.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Israel reported that he is working on the circulation stats and has found that the book circulation is stable. Additional items have arrived to be added to the Library of Things. There is an ongoing effort to coordinate the two tech teams and the software supplier in getting the Museum pass program up and running. A voucher has been signed for the \$75,000 owed from the Town in the last quarter.

Israel reported that he had received today only five printed copies of the audit and asked if the Board would want to review it tonight or at next month's meeting. Nessenson suggested that the review be added to next month's agenda with copies emailed before the meeting.

Israel has reached out to the Township Administrator about 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment related training for staff. Buthe said that she had contacted Kristen at Wiley, Malehorn, Sirota & Raynes, who said that she would be available for staff training.

LIAISON REPORTS – Azalone reported that it was a quiet month, and that next year’s schedule is being prepared.

OLD BUSINESS –

Rules of Conduct- The Board reviewed and edited the draft of the Free Public Library of Berkeley Heights Rules of Conduct and Policies on Library Use, with possible additions and clarifications as suggested by attorney Kristin Hayes. A final version of the document will be prepared for approval. Bunyaner made a motion to amend the current Rules of Conduct and Policies on Library Use by removing the bullet point that says “taking photographs without approval of the Library Director”. Nessenson approved the motion and all agreed. Final approval will be scheduled for after the arrival of the new Director in January.

Library direction signs- see Board Reports- Facilities

NEW BUSINESS –

Early closing December 23, 2023- Israel reported that no staffing is available after 1pm on December 23, and asked that the Library be closed at that time. Buthe called for an early closing on December 23. Bunyaner made a motion that the Library close at 1pm on Saturday, December 23. Buthe seconded the motion and all agreed.

Library Calendar for 2024- Israel relayed staff comments that it can be problematic for the Library to be open on days when the Municipality is closed. Nessenson suggested that the Police Dept. be called the week before the next such occasion to notify them that the Library doors will need to be unlocked and locked by them. Buthe called for motion to approve the Berkeley Heights Library Holiday Closings for 2024. Nessenson seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Board Meeting Dates for 2024- Buthe called for a motion to accept the Board Meeting Dates for 2024. Bunyaner so moved and all approved.

Executive Session – as necessary- not necessary

Adjournment – There being no further business, Buthe called for a motion to adjourn. Bunyaner so moved, Azalone seconded the motion and all agreed. The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.