

BOARD OF TRUSTEES Free Public Library of Berkeley Heights

March 11, 2024

Prepared: March 19, 2024

Approved:

This was contained in a list of meetings approved on December 11, 2023. 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.

The meeting was called to order by Ann Bunyaner at 7:05 PM.

ROLL CALL: Ann Bunyaner, Mary Jean Barnes, Linda Nessenson, Diane O'Halloran, Superintendent's Alternate Diane Azalone

Absent: Donna Boyd, Mayor's Alternate Chris Reilly

ALSO PRESENT: Amy Steinbauer, Director; Laura Fuhro, Assistant Director.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Based on an email request by Boyd, Bunyaner asked that the first sentence of the February Marketing Report be corrected to "Boyd reported that the Marketing Committee met and Board members were invited to send any thoughts on marketing to the committee." Azalone noted that under LIAISONS REPORTS, Gail Bradford should be listed as the President of the Board of Education. Bunyaner asked for a correction to the spelling of "Dori" under Director's Report.

Bunyaner called for a motion to accept the February 12, 2024 Minutes as corrected. Nessenson so moved.

Barnes seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Barnes asked if the Library has a credit card. Steinbauer said that she has been talking to Jodi and the bank about the process of opening a key card account. Steinbauer said that she will further investigate what the State may offer. Currently the staff members order through Amazon and are reimbursed. Nessenson reviewed the February 2024 Financial Worksheet. Bunyaner then called for a motion to approve the Financial Worksheet. Azalone so moved, Nessenson seconded the motion and all approved. O'Halloran noticed a ten cent error in the listing of one check on the bill list. Nessenson said that the amended bill list total should be \$23,079.71. Bunyaner called for a motion to amend and approve the bill list. Nessenson so moved, Azalone seconded the motion and all agreed.

CORRESPONDENCE AND GIFTS: None

BOARD REPORTS:

Bunyaner asked Steinbauer about leaks in the back public space room and the Children's Department. Steinbauer replied that the contractor and lawyers did a walk through on 3/7/24, and they could see that things were worse since their last look. DPW has been asked to remove the monitor from the back room until the roof is fixed. Staff participated in a lay-out redesign that has begun with a rearrangement of the area from the main door through the Circulation area. Shifting of the adult fiction and non-fiction collections is being planned.

Bunyaner reported that the Personnel Committee is working on an evaluation process for the Director.

O'Halloran reported that a date has been set to meet with the Foundation next week.

Marketing – Plans submitted by Steinbauer for celebrating National Library Week were discussed. Nessenson suggested that a meet and greet with Steinbauer also be scheduled. Bunyaner made a motion to approve a budget of \$1,000 for the Meet and Greet event. Nessenson seconded the motion and all agreed.

CITIZEN'S HEARING: (Name and address) No citizens present

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Steinbauer reported that Dowling had prepared a newsletter that was sent out to area libraries. Steinbauer has continued to contact all local libraries and has made recent visits to Clark, Chatham, Mountainside and Long Hill. She has also met with New Providence and Long Hill to discuss possible joint programming. A Cookbook Book Club is being planned. Story Time to go themed book bundles are now available. New activities include Picture Book March Madness, and Tinker Tuesdays Makers programs. Staff Picks book displays, a Haiku Contest, and Mental Health Month themes for May are being planned. The Mayor has been contacted about starting a wellness book club. A Taylor Swift Karaoke program is being planned and Pins and Needles Crafting Crew will be returning. Artwork from GL High School is on display and the Jig Saw Puzzle table has been very popular. A celebration of the Library's opening in 1953 will take place on September 21 with a time capsule included. Following a suggestion by Steinbauer that laptops could be made available for in-house circulation, the board discussed the possibilities and Steinbauer said that she would check on the borrowing rules and procedures for the Library of Things.

Summer Reading programs are being planned. A new calendar of events is available at the main desk and monthly contributions will be submitted for the Township newsletter.

Steinbauer said that she asked for an extension for reporting the per capita state report presented an updated version of the yearly statistics with new categories added and updated counting procedures applied. Upcoming programs will include Maker's Day and Tinker Tuesdays with rotating schedule for all age groups from mid-March through mid-June. Plans are being made to continue with Lobby displays and activities. Staff members have participated in a layout re-design project that has resulted in a more attractive and engaging entry space. The Fiction and Non-fiction collections will probably also be shifted.

Monthly Department meetings have been scheduled ahead of monthly board meetings. A staff tee-shirt design contest has been launched. Staff trainings have been set and department goals are being worked on. In Children's guidelines for story times are being reset. A third wooden chair was been damaged and removed from the Children's Room. In the Teen Dept. the Library Council, Teen book reviews, Crafts and Book Club are all active. Returning to the layout re-design project, Steinbauer said she would like to convert the J Activity Room to a staff workspace that would accommodate two desks and a work table. She would also like to get the workspace glass frosted, as well as the panel next to her office door. Steinbauer reported that she has received many complaints from the staff and public about the need for a cleaner space. The shared cleaning agreement and the need for improvement was discussed. Nessenson suggest that Barbara Russo be informed.

LIAISONS REPORTS: Azalone reiterated that Gail Bradford is the President of the Board of Education. A meeting to appoint a new Superintendent has not yet been rescheduled. A Columbia School student was seriously injured yesterday when he was hit by a car on the sidewalk. A Mindful Parenting workshop has been scheduled to be held in New Providence on March 18th.

OLD BUSINESS: Steinbauer reported that some of the parking signs have finally been installed in the lot.

NEW BUSINESS: Steinbauer reported that she is wants to schedule a two-part staff training day with De-escalation Training by the Defend Yourself organization and 1st amendment training by Kristen Hayes. These sessions will be held on a Wednesday, either May 8 or May 15 and would take about 4 hours, during which time the Library would be closed. Steinbauer also proposed that the Library close all day for staff training on Columbus Day that would include an all staff meeting and additional training. Steinbauer also proposed that the Library close for Mother's Day, May 12. Steinbauer noted that every library in the area is closed for Juneteenth

except for Berkeley Heights and Chatham. Steinbauer noted that the Town is closed for Juneteenth, Columbus Day, Veteran's Day, the day after Thanksgiving, and a half day on Christmas Eve. Steinbauer noted that staff has reported less than usual attendance on open holidays.

Bunyaner proposed that that the Library close on Mother's Day and to make Columbus Day an in-service day for staff training. Barnes seconded the motion and all approved.

Bunyaner made a motion that Steinbauer close the Library for two sessions of in-service training for four hours each on dates to be determined. Barnes seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Budget- Steinbauer said she is waiting for information from the Town needed to complete the Budget. She said that she would like to decrease the money spent on physical books based on what was spent last year, and noted that about there is not enough space to add \$125,000 worth of books to the collection. Current book purchases are at about \$5,000 per month and this will probably be the target amount. The e- collection budget could be kept at \$125,000 or be lowered to \$100,000 with about \$77,000 spent last year. There will probably be a small decrease in periodicals. Money for professional education will probably be increased. Programming funds should be increased with departments in charge of their individual programming budgets. Communication costs and the Library of Things budgets should also increase. Salary adjustments will take place as needed.

Nessenson noted that the 1/3mil funding is almost \$100,000 for this year, almost \$30,000 above last year.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Bunyaner read A Resolution Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 Moving The Public Meeting Into Executive Session to discuss the personnel evaluation process for the Director. All agreed and .Executive Session was entered at 8:52pm. The board came out of Executive Session at 9:15pm. No action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, Barnes made a motion to adjourn. Nessenson seconded the motion and all agreed. The meeting was adjourned at 9:16 pm. No action was taken.