

Berkeley Heights Public Library (BHPL)
Board of Trustees Meeting
In-Person, Zoom
November 18, 2024

1. Roll Call:

BHPL Board President Ann Bunyaner called the meeting to order at 7:09 pm. Bunyaner read the following statement: "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."

Board members present, in person: Mary Jean Barnes, Ann Bunyaner, Linda Nessenson, Diane O'Halloran, BH Superintendent of Schools rep Mary Niedenuhr, BH Mayor's Alternate Chris Reilly

Board members present, via Zoom: Donna Boyd

Also present, in person: BHPL Director Amy Steinbauer, BHPL Youth Services Department Head Juliana Schicho

2. Secretary's Report

In Boyd's absence from the physical meeting room, it was agreed that Barnes would take the Minutes of the meeting.

MOTION: The October 14, 2024 Executive Session draft Minutes were moved for approval by Bunyaner, seconded by Nessenson and approved. Boyd abstained.

Nessenson pointed out that the Technology Report in the draft October 14, 2024 Minutes should be amended as follows: "An upgrade to the BHPL technology system will ~~take place~~ begin in November 2024".

MOTION: The October 14, 2024 draft Minutes as amended were moved for approval by Bunyaner, seconded by Nessenson and approved. Boyd abstained.

3. Treasurer's Report

Nessenson explained that, after looking at the actual numbers on the financial statements, it would be prudent to move some of the funds from budget lines that had excess cash to others where those funds could be better used.

MOTION: Nessenson moved to reallocate the following amounts, seconded by Bunyaner and approved:

- \$20,000 from Downloads to Professional
- \$10,000 from Marketing to Periodicals.

Per Nessonson, the Library did not receive its 4th quarter stipend from the Township. It is usually received in October. She further reported that she sent an email to the Township's CFO about it and about the Library's contribution, e.g. payroll taxes, retirement contributions, etc., that has not been taken yet.

Action item: Nessonson will follow up with the CFO about both the stipend and contribution.

At 7:20 p.m., Reilly stepped out of the meeting room.

MOTION: The November 2024 Financial Worksheet was moved for approval by Bunyaner, seconded by Nessonson and approved. Reilly was absent for that vote.

At 7:22 p.m., Reilly returned to the meeting room.

MOTION: The November 2024 Bills list, in the amount of \$32,721.60 was moved for approval by Nessonson, seconded by Bunyaner and approved.

4. Correspondence and Gifts

Steinbauer reported that the Library received a \$25 donation in honor of Dolores Croneberger.

5. Board Reports

Personnel: Bunyaner reported that candidates were being interviewed for the Assistant Director position. The goal is to have everything settled by the end of December so that the new hire can start at the beginning of the new year. Steinbauer reported that Schicho was officially hired and has been getting involved in all of the Youth Services activities.

Technology Committee: Nessonson reported that the ILS received a successful upgrade on November 3, which eliminated a lot of the past problems that staff was experiencing with the system. The Committee is trying to arrange for a meeting with MAIN to confirm that the Library will be OK if the contract with Vertilocity is terminated at the end of its current term, i.e. December 31, 2024. The Library received the annual bill (covering Feb. 2025 – Jan. 2026) from ILS. Steinbauer sent an email to ILS requesting a discount on the annual payment, so we are not double paying.

Finance: Nessonson reported that the audit is a couple of months late but should be distributed in the next few weeks.

Action item: Nessonson will follow-up with the accountant to confirm the amount spent by the Library for 2023 so that the number can be used in the "return of funds" calculation that the Finance Committee will review.

Marketing: Per Steinbauer, she will be meeting with the website designer after Thanksgiving.

Foundation / Friends: O'Halloran reported the group continues to move forward with the new slate of volunteers, organizing its governance documents and planning membership and fundraising campaigns.

6. Citizen Hearing

No citizens were present.

7. Director's Report

Steinbauer reported that the Library hired 3 new Circulation Assistants.

Reilly reported that she spoke to the Mayor about the potential mold. The Mayor agreed that the Township should address the issue and pay for its removal / remediation. Steinbauer reported that she connected with the Township Administrator, who confirmed that she will deal with the vendor.

Reilly recommended that Steinbauer deal directly with the vendor hired to address the mold.

Steinbauer reported that she has been working with the Township attorney to review / update the Personnel manual.

Action item: Steinbauer will touch base with the Personnel Committee regarding any recommended changes to the manual.

Steinbauer further reported that one of her goals is to have staff-created material on how to use the databases that the Library offers.

8. Liaison's Report

Bunyaner mentioned that she saw in a Township Committee report that the Township hired someone to come in and make changes in the building.

Action item: Reilly to find out what is happening with the Township.

Per Niedenfuhr, a new Superintendent (who previously worked in Hillsborough) was hired.

9. Old Business

None.

10. New Business

Steinbauer reported that the Township has gone out to bid for their cleaning contract. They are going to a new company, Triple A. The charge would be \$1,709.25; the Library currently pays \$2,134.

Action item: Amy will get more info and will follow-up with our current cleaning company.

Nessenson reported that she will be raising the following issue for discussion at next month's Board meeting: how to address the build-up in the Library's checking account, which is due to unspent funds that had been budgeted for personnel costs. Those expenses were not incurred because some staff positions did not stay filled for the full year. Nessenson will work on an Excess Funds calculation, which determines how much we haven't spent. She also pointed out that the Library's percentage of the mill will also increase in 2025. We are looking at the opportunity to use those funds to: 1) address capital

needs, which would require an updated Capital Plan before a lump sum is transferred into the Capital Expenditure Account, and 2) an additional full-time staff person.

There is currently \$150,000 in the reserve account. Some expenses that we can consider: technology and furniture, community access such as mobile service, basement storage upgrades, accessibility button on main doors, replacement of keys with badge readers, and upgraded staff workspaces. We will have the flexibility to move funds out of the capital account back into the annual operating budget after 2025.

Boyd asked if there is any underutilized space in the building that we could use.

Action item: Reilly to talk to the Mayor about additional space in the building for the Library's use.

11. Executive Session

No session needed.

12. Adjournment

MOTION: There being no further business, Bunyaner moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Nessenson, and approved.