Free Public Library of Berkeley Heights
Board of Trustees April 14, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes

BHPL Board President Linda Nessenson called the meeting to order at 7:01pm. Nessenson read the following statement: “In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, this meeting was advertised by legal notices in the Star Ledger and Courier News. Notice was also posted at Town Hall, BHPL Website and sent to TAPinto BH at least 48 hours in advance. This meeting was included in a list of meetings approved December 9, 2024.”

1. ROLL CALL

Roll Call:
Board members present in person: Mary Jean Barnes, Donna Boyd, Linda Nessenson, Diane O’Halloran, Duane Wilcox, BH Mayor Alternate Chris Riley

Board members not present: BH Superintendent of Schools Alternate Mary Niedenfuhr

Also present in person: BHPL Director Amy Steinbauer and BHPL Assistant Director Maureen Langley

2. SECRETARY’S REPORT

Board President Nessenson solicited comments on the March 10, 2025 Draft Meeting Minutes. Board members suggested minor changes including the addition of “exception of Assistant Director hired in January 2025” concerning the approved salary increase in the “New Business” portion of the minutes.

Board member Barnes motioned to approve the proposed March 10, 2025 Draft Meeting Minutes as amended, which was seconded by Boyd. All voted in favor, except Riley who abstained, and the motion passed.

Board President Nessenson solicited comments on the March 10, 2025 Draft Executive Session Minutes.

Board President Nessenson motioned to approve the proposed March 10, 2025 Draft Executive Session Minutes, which was seconded by Barnes. All voted in favor, except Riley who abstained, and the motion passed.

3. TREASURER'S REPORT

Board reviewed the February 2025 Financial Statement and it was noted that the library has not yet received the quarterly financial contribution from the Township. It should have been

received by March 20/21, 2025. BHPL Director Steinbauer will look into it.
Board President Nessenson motioned to approve the March 2025 Financial Statement, which was seconded by Wilcox. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

Board reviewed the March 2025 Treasurer's Report.

Board member Boyd motioned to approve the March 2025 Treasurer's Report, which was seconded by Riley. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

Board reviewed the March 2025 Bill List. Board members asked for clarification of the Amazon credit, which was for a faulty printer returned by the library and the cost of the Newark Museum pass. Board members also questioned the check for Joann LLC, which goes towards the Creative Bug database. As Joann LLC has declared bankruptcy, it was decided to pull the check and BHPL Director Steinbauer will look into best practices for cases like this.

Board member Boyd motioned to approve the March 2025 Bill List subject to the removal of the Joann LLC check and the updated total amount of $50,375.21, which was seconded by Riley. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

Board members noted the misprint of check no. 190. Board members recommended the check be voided for record purposes. Board member Boyd motioned to approve the voiding of the check, seconded by Nessenson. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

Brief discussion of scheduling the yearly Audit earlier this year. And the Library Audit Trail from the Township will not reflect the Library's annual 1/3 mill until the Township Budget is approved.

4. CORRESPONDENCE AND GIFTS

None to report.

5. NEW BUSINESS - FEBRUARY 26 PATRON INCIDENT

Board President Nessenson recommended we move to the New Business portion of the agenda.

Board President Nessenson discussed an incident which occurred on February 26, 2025 when a patron reported to staff at the circulation desk that a man allegedly exposed himself in the library.

There was a discussion regarding reactions to a press release issued by the BH Police Department as well as a discussion concerning the library's current Rules of Conduct and Policies on Library Use.

6. CITIZEN HEARING (NAME AND ADDRESS)
Board President Nessenson recommended we move to the Citizen Hearing portion of the agenda.

One citizen, Kristina Doney, was present. Ms. Doney expressed her concern over how the incident which took place on February 26, 2025 was handled by the library.

7. BOARD REPORTS

Marketing - Website project is still in the beginning stages including color palette. BHPL Director Steinbauer will be meeting with the company in early May to discuss next steps.

Technology

- Still waiting for the date for the TBS computer reservation software installation ● BHPL Director Steinbauer and Assistant Director Langley continue to review the library's database holdings with the help of the Reference Department. The potential changes to the NJ State Library budget and offerings due to the cutting of IMLS funding will be considered when making purchase and renewal decisions.

Facilities - met on April 8, 2025 to discuss current facilities projects
including: ● The shifting on fiction and nonfiction collections

- Creating an indoor book drop by circulation
- Increase the play space in the children's room
- A recent mold inspection showed that no mold was present in the Library. BHPL Director Steinbauer is working with the Township Administrator concerning the next steps for the roof repair

There was also a brief discussion by the board concerning the library's insurance coverage under township's policy and a desire to set up a meeting with the police department to discuss the safety of the building.

Friends -

- Upcoming events were discussed

Personnel – see New Business below

Finance – see Treasurer's Report above

8. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

BHPL Director Steinbauer highlighted the 2025 Makers Day event as well as the library's

attendance at the BH B & C meeting. The Marketing Report for April 2025 was reviewed. Welcome email open rate continues to be strong. The statistics from April 2025 were reviewed. Two databases, Freegal and Novelist Select, have not been reviewed.

9. LIAISON'S REPORT

Nothing to report.

10. OLD BUSINESS

Two Pay to Play resolutions we introduced, read in full by President Nessenson. Nessenson moved to pass the GJLT Management LLC dba Vanguard Cleaning Systems of Northern New Jersey Pay to Play resolution, O'Halloran seconded, all voted in favor and the motion passed. Boyd moved to pass the MAIN Consortium Pay to Play resolution, Reilly seconded, all voted in favor and the motion passed.

Brief discussion was held regarding the possibility of investing library

funds. **11. NEW BUSINESS - BOARD PROJECTS**

BHPL Director Steinbauer shared a document of all ongoing library projects which involve board members or board committees.

12. EXECUTIVE SESSION (AS NECESSARY)

At 8:23pm, Board President Nessenson read the resolution to enter into the Executive Session. Board member Wilcox motioned to enter into Executive Session under the Personnel exception. Reilly seconded, all voted in favor and the motion passed.

At 9:14pm, Board President Nessenson motioned to end the Executive session, noting no action was taken, Boyd seconded, all voted in favor and the motion passed.

12. NEW BUSINESS - HR CONSULTING AND RULES OF CONDUCT

The board discussed hiring Thrive Wise Solutions LLC for human resource services for up to 5 months not to exceed $10,000. The cost would be assigned to the professional services budget line.

Board member Boyd motioned to approve the hiring of Thrive Wise Solutions LLC for human resource services for up to 5 months not to exceed $10,000. Nessenson seconded, all voted in favor and the motion passed.

Board member Reilly motioned to permit the Board President to sign any agreements necessary in connection with hiring of Thrive Wise Solutions LLC. Boyd seconded, all voted in favor and the motion passed.

The board discussed the February 26, 2025 incident. The agreed upon actions are as follows: the Board will review staff procedures and policies, meet to discuss overall building safety with the Mayor and Chief of Police, and review Rules of Conduct Policy and Procedures.

14. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Nessenson moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:56pm, seconded by Wilcox, all voted in favor, and the motion was approved.

Minutes approved: May 2025