

## **Minutes of the Bernardsville Library Board of Trustees Regular Meeting July 20, 2021**

**Attendance:** Board members John Bertoni, Gretchen Dempsey, Rich Diegnan, Mark Krook, Lucy Orfan, Skip Orza, Terry Thompson, Christine Zamarra, and Amy DeMilt were present at the meeting. Alexandria Arnold, Executive Director, Bernardsville Public Library, Nancy Verduin, Leslie Brown-Witt, and Library staff members Meaghan Darling and Jill Hackett were also present.

President John Bertoni called the Board of Trustees (“Board”) meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. and read the Open Meeting Notice as follows:

- In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-8 *et seq.*), 1975, written notice of this regular meetings has been sent to the following newspapers: *The Bernardsville News*, the *Courier News*, and the *Star Ledger*. Written notice has also been sent to the Borough Clerk, posted on the Library web page, and posted on the principal entrance to the door of the Library. The meeting will be conducted by in person, at the Library Community Room and the public has been invited to participate, and told how to participate, in the notices in the Library web site and the principal entrance door.
- The agenda and documents to be discussed at this meeting are available for review on the Library’s web site, <https://bernardsvilleLibrary.org/home/board>.
- They are also at the Library’s circulation desk on Monday, July 19, and Tuesday, July 20, during regular Library hours.
- Members of the public are invited to comment either during the public comment period of the meetings or by submitting written or emailed comments in advance of the meeting. All commenters should identify themselves by name and address.

The notice was followed by roll call.

Pledge of Allegiance

**Approval of Minutes:** Ms. DeMilt indicated an edit to the proposed minutes; further discussion as to any amendments. Ms. DeMilt moved to submit the June meeting minutes as amended for approval, the motion was seconded by Mr. Bertoni, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

**Director’s Report:** In addition to the items mentioned in her report, Ms. Arnold presented highlights from and additions to her report, as follows:

[Administrative note: no Dublin Maintenance contracts to discuss, these were resolved and discussed in April 2021.]

As with many work places, the Library has had difficulty in staffing, and hoping they have filled two open circulation positions.

The Community and small meeting rooms are being scheduled: Meaghan Darling will be establishing summer reading and programs scheduling accordingly, she will be working to set date for adult and youth programs in the fall. Once the core programs have been established and

scheduled remaining requests, both external and internal, will be scheduled with the Friends having next scheduled openings, then opening up externally to the community to fill open slots. Probably looking at August or September for community scheduling.

The Spanish language group will be moved to another section in the library.

The Library received a lovely note from a new mother in town describing the impact of one of the Library programs which allowed new mothers to meet and foster new relationships, a testament to the impact of the Library's community reach.

Ms. Arnold introduced the newest library staff member Meaghan Darling, the Youth Services and Adult Program Manager. Ms. Arnold had previously worked with Ms. Darling at the Long Hill Library. Ms. Darling provided an overview of the summer reading program which is available for all to participate regardless of age. The program essentially tracks reading, providing incentives and awards, tracking is conducted by B Squared digital tracking. On July 12 the program kicked off and only 9 days later the database indicated it was only 10 less participants than last summer. So it is off to a very promising start.

**Treasurer's Report:** Mr. Krook reviewed the Treasurer's report. Mr. Krook indicated that halfway through the year we are tracking well. Tech is at 85% so it is approaching close to the full year spend; discussion was had, the Tech and Computer spend will not go over budget. Likewise Programs are running at 75% of full year, but that does not indicate an overrun. The building supply should be closer to 50%. Noted that Consortium membership will be discussed in Finance Report. Mr. Bertoni questioned the collection agency spend. Mr. Krook indicated that this represents the full year spend but will not go over. One other item to note: the Library has not received an electric bill since 5/27/21, not sure why.

Mr. Orza remarked that the book spend seems down. Ms. Arnold indicated that this represents a supply chain issue of not receiving books on time: the spend is encumbered meaning that we spend and track but will not see it on the Treasurer's Report unless actually spent and books received.

Mr. Krook moved to approve the Treasurer's Report, to pay the new bills received from 7/1/2021 to 7/20/2021 and to ratify the payment of bills received and paid from 6/15/2021 to 6/30/21. Ms. Thompson seconded the motion, which was then passed by unanimous roll call vote.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Finance:** Mr. Krook indicated the Finance Committee met 6/17 – to discuss 3 items: restricted funds; develop a planning strategy for the Maria Reid estate gift, and the Consortium restricted line item.

1. Restricted funds – donations which have been designated for specific use (“restricted funds”) and donations not designated (“open funds”). There is a significant balance on the balance sheets, the recommendation was made to reduce by using the open funds first then the restricted funds.
2. The Maria Reid estate gift – the Finance Committee recommended that the Maria Reid Estate bequeath of approximately \$340,000 be used for non-recurring, indoor equipment or improvement projects that are aligned with the Library's strategic mission and serves

the needs of its patron community. As this gift is directed towards enduring Library enhancements, it will not be used for annual operating expenses.

Board Discussion - Ms. Thompson indicated the gift designated as such would be akin to capital funds but not limited to capital expenses. Mr. Krook agreed indicating the gift could be used for yearlong projects or infrastructure such as rugs, furniture and programs for example. Further discussion by Mr. Krook, the gift would be a special purpose for specific projects or programs.

Motion by Mr. Krook on the Reid bequest recommendation, seconded by Mr. Diegnan, and approved by unanimous vote.

3. Consortium reserve – this line item was set aside to fund consortium fees; since we have funded MAIN we are now able to spend down on the Consortium line item and consider other improvements such as a phone upgrade which Ms. Arnold indicated is a need.

**Personnel:** No meeting.

**Policy:** No meeting. Scheduled to meet in early September

**Planning:** Met twice to discuss: (i) how to go about drafting a strategic plan; and (ii) a method to circulate a survey to Bernardsville citizens, and attendant community leagues/clubs/schools, etc. Internal working drafts for the survey have been circulated internally and are pending further review.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

**Friends of the Bernardsville Public Library:** Nancy Verduin, for the Friends, reported that they are moving forward with adding some social events – movies, concerts, etc. dependent on scheduling of the Library Community room and small meeting rooms. Discussion to have a Friends celebration concert. In September the Friends will start reaching out softly to prior sponsors with respect to the mini-golf event (TBD 3/2022).

**Bernardsville Library Foundation:** Leslie Brown-Witt for the Foundation reported the Appeal letter went out at the end of June; \$45,500 budgeted for the Appeal. A review of last year's shortfall indicated it was primarily in the \$500+ donor level.

The Non-Event planning is moving forward with an expansion of the silent auction. There was confirmation the Foundation will be looking to the Board for a donation.

The Endowment committee met last week with an update on Boomerang which presented 735 new donors (2017-2021 donors) in present database, anticipating the data base will grow.

Several items to note: The Foundation has given the endowment \$128k unrestricted funds since 2002. The Foundation confirmed that the policy planning documents and procedures in place are in compliance. The 2022 Major Donor campaign will be kicked off in early year 2022.

**Communications:** Ms. Arnold shared a “Who Would Win Card” with the Board, which also had a heart felt thank you from one of the Library’s young patrons. Also noted, Lindsey Meyer, temporary librarian sent along a thank you note to the Library for her interim time at the Library.

**Unfinished Business:** None

**New Business:** None.

Mr. Bertoni confirmed there will not be an August meeting.

At 6:20 p.m. the public meeting was adjourned to enter an Executive Session of the Board. At 6:22 p.m. the public meeting was formally adjourned after returning from Executive Session.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy DeMilt, Secretary

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