Minutes of the Bernardsville Library Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
November, 16 2021 by ZOOM

Attendance: Board members John Bertoni, Rich Diegnan, 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, Friends of the Bernardsville Public Library, Leslie Brown-Witt, Bernardsville Library Foundation and Library staff members Laura Cole, and Jill Hackett were also present.

Not Present: Gretchen Dempsey and Mark Krook.

President John Bertoni called the Board of Trustees (“Board”) meeting to order at 5:32 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, November 15, and Tuesday, November 16, 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.

Approval of Minutes: Ms. DeMilt asked for any comments or edits on the minutes for the October Board of Trustees meeting minutes. Ms. Thompson identified two amendments. Ms. DeMilt moved to submit the October 19, 2021 meeting minutes as amended for approval, the motion was seconded by Ms. Thompson, 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:
  - Personnel situation continues to evolve:
    - Luci Parrish was hired recently to start as a part-time Youth Services assistant on November 29. She will be concentrating on services to tweens and teens as well as assisting with all other aspects of Youth Services. Luci comes to the Library with experience delivering programs and services to the tween/teen age group in a variety of library and non-profit settings;
    - 2 open part-time positions the Library has received 2 resumes;
    - Tech Services position has received 4 resumes and interviewing will begin soon.
Building and grounds repaired the gas leak – gas heat still not working, however the electric heat is available. R&D design has begun to adjust the pitch of the brick in the parsons garden with completion projected by 11/17.

Material circulation is trending upwards; other downloadable material has no clear trend: overall circulation trending upwards. Attendance trending up from 2020, but down by 2019 standards. Demand management equalization 500-600 from other libraries – other libraries dropping to 1000 in part because MAIN needs to rebalance requests so it does not unduly affect new library.

Meaghan Darling reported the two most popular Youth Services programs topped 70 which is rather remarkable.

Survey update: 157 responses have been received to date; the low response number may be attributable to community survey fatigue. Mr. Bertoni inquired about any responses received by the Borough, Ms. Zamarra indicated she would check into these and revert. 750 survey responses are needed for validation.

Treasurer’s Report: Mr. Krook was not present, the Treasurer’s report was attached and Mr. Krook wanted to highlight the following:

The Library has not received a recent bill from JCP&L, Ms. Hackett has followed up with JCP&L.

Gas bill has arrived and been paid. The book cart bin, survey advertising fee and MeeScan cost will be paid from restricted funds. A Finance Committee meeting will be scheduled next week.

Ms. Thompson inquired as to Zoom accounts billing since the State pays for Zoom. We have 2 accounts per Ms. Arnold (one for internal and one for external), using both at this time. Ms. Arnold will reassess the need for a second account (each $15 per month). Mr. Bertoni suggested it may be good practice to have 2 accounts.

Mr. Bertoni moved to approve the Treasurer’s Report, to pay the new bills received from 10/19/2021 to 11/19/2021 and to ratify the payment of bills received and paid from 9/21/2021 to 10/18/2021. Ms. Thompson seconded the motion, which was then passed by unanimous roll call vote.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Finance: no report

Personnel: Ms. Thompson reported a meeting was held on 11/11/2021 to discuss the recent resignations of Alix McKinstry and Rocio Campbell. In light of these resignations, there is an identified and somewhat urgent need to retain qualified persons with project management experience. Ms. Thompson made a motion to accept the personnel committee’s recommendation that the Board assist in sourcing, vetting and recommending qualified people to manage identified Library projects (e.g. – bathroom remodel). Mr. Deignan seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. Ms. Thompson will assemble a list of potential candidates.
Policy: Ms. Orfan indicated there was a Policy meeting 11/10/2021 in which the committee reviewed proposed revisions, edits, and removal of certain policies that Ms. Arnold has been updating as part of the Library Policy Manual review project.

3 policies were recommended to be rescinded:
(i) Computer Lab Policy (obsolete);
(ii) Doors Use Policy (procedure not a policy);
(iii) Laptops in the Library [Apple vs Windows laptops](obsolete).

3 policies to be revised:
(i) Confidential Library Records Request Policy – in addition to the recommended update it was suggested that the Board President be added as an additional notification;
(ii) Donations Policy was updated and renamed to Tangible Goods Donation Policy;
(iii) Computer Use and Internet Access Policy was updated with respect to printer costs; removal of internet training and monitoring; further revised to include own devices and computer devices in second paragraph. Ms. Thompson inquired about the right to suspend any access she suggested that this right should be placed back in; will revert and add back in.

With amendments and revisions Ms. Orfan moved to have the 3 identified policies be rescinded and the revised policies be accepted as amended. Mr. Bertoni seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Planning: Ms. Thompson reported that the Strategic Planning survey is now on-line, and will meet with Ms. Arnold prior to the next Board meeting to identify proposed next steps. Mr. Orza suggested that we need to start moving forward on strategic planning and perhaps should consider interim survey results while moving forward.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Friends of the Bernardsville Public Library: Nancy Verduin, for the Friends, reported that a Jazz concert is planned for 12/5 and Mini-Golf is on for March 2022. Mailed solicitation hit a snag on the reply card but will be going out forthwith. A prospective Friends member has been identified.

Bernardsville Library Foundation: Leslie Brown-Witt for the Foundation reported that the Non-Event was successful with the following estimate on raw numbers: Silent Auction - $8787; Wine Pull and Mystery Grab Bags - $1700; 50:50 - $5429; Tickets $9500; Donations $1950; Gross - $27-28k which would exceed $19k target.

The Appeal letter response was disappointing $40,200 under the targeted $45.5k. The Foundation will forward a check in the amount of $25k to the Library at the December Board meeting. Ms. Brown-Witt also indicated she will be rolling off the Foundation Board due to the Foundation’s by-laws term limits.
Communications: none

Unfinished Business: None

New Business:
  • An ad hoc by-law committee meeting will be scheduled before the next Board meeting.

At 6:28 p.m. the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy DeMilt, Secretary