Minutes of the Bernardsville Library Board of Trustees Regular Meeting  
January 18, 2022 By ZOOM

Attendance: Board members John Bertoni, Rich Diegman, Gretchen Dempsey, Skip Orza, Terry Thompson, Jena McCredie, Nancy Verduin and Amy DeMilt were present at the meeting. Alexandria Arnold, Executive Director, Bernardsville Public Library, Leslie Brown-Witt, Bernardsville Library Foundation and Library staff members Laura Cole, Meaghan Darling and Jill Hackett were also present.

Not Present:  Mark Krook

President John Bertoni called the Board of Trustees (“Board”) meeting to order at 5:31 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, January 17, and Tuesday, January 18, 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.

Nominating Committee and Committee Appointment: Skip Orza proposed the slate of officers for the 2022 calendar year: President, John Bertoni; Vice-President, Skip Orza; Treasurer, Mark Krook; Secretary, Amy DeMilt. There were no further nominations. The slate of officers was submitted for vote by Mr. Bertoni, and the vote passed unanimously. Nancy Verduin was presented as the newest member of the Board of Trustees. Mr. Bertoni will send out Committee appointments for 2022.

Approval of Minutes: Ms. DeMilt asked for any comments or edits on the minutes for the December Board of Trustees meeting minutes. Ms. DeMilt moved to submit the December 21, 2021 meeting minutes as amended for approval, Ms. Thompson seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved.

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

- Status of Pandemic Changes:  
The Updates/Additions to the Library Policy, which were in place from June 2020, were sunsetsed without comment by the Board on December 31, 2021. Many of these changes had already been rolled back, but the most significant one still in place had been the requirement that youths under 15 be accompanied by an adult over 21.

The Community Room is open for patrons to use when not otherwise in session; only the Story Time room is still not in use (still contains items from basement storage).

Computers: Library has not returned all computers to the public area; by not returning all computers facilitates social distancing, which is not a requirement but promotes a healthy environment. The teen gaming computers have also not been returned to the teen area yet, the Library is waiting on the new series of teen programs to launch this month, as well as a desk for the new teen coordinator so that she may properly supervise.
Starting in January, volunteer service for middle and high school staff has been re-established, and volunteer opportunities have been advertised.

Among other policies to be reviewed this year will be the Workplace an-19 Infection Prevention Policy. While the framework of the policy should probably be retained for the duration of the pandemic, there are a few provisions, such as the masking requirement, which needs to be updated.

- **Library Door Project**
The Library door project is out to bid. Bids are due February 24, 2022 at 1:00 PM.

Five contractors have contacted Dan Lincoln. Two have subsequently dropped out, Mr. Lincoln believes a third (from NYC) is not likely to bid. He does believe the other two will bid. From the perspective of being able to legally move forward Doug Walker has confirmed the Library can select a bidder from the remaining two (assuming they bid).

- **Libby**
The MAIN Consortium switched from using Biblioteque’s Cloud Library to Overdrive’s Libby as their source for downloadable eBooks and audiobooks as of January 3. It has not been a smooth transition: Libby went live with only magazines and four independent services – Qello music concerts, IndieFlix movies, Craftsy personal development videos, and The Great Courses lectures – available for our patrons.

Books purchased as part of Cloud Library (“CL”) are currently in the process of transition. The contract in CL had to end before the items each library has purchased could move to Libby, and that data needed to be extracted and reviewed before moving. Presently reviewing the data, with completion of the migration of owned items expected by the end of this month. Of note is that this includes many current bestsellers the Library already owns. Because of the expense of each item – they range from roughly, $50 - $100 apiece – the Library does not want to rebuy what is already owned.

Libby also has a pay per use option, similar to what was used in Cloud Library. The primary difference is that, over a certain number of potential items, the pay per use items have to be loaded 200 at a time – a tedious and time-consuming procedure. Laura Cole was able to complete the load 1/17/2022.

In summary, the Libby app introduction was a soft rollout. The Library will begin promoting the service a little more vigorously through the end of January, and implement more robust promotion when the Library owned materials transition over.

- **Donations**
Noted are two generous and long-standing donations from the following donors: Meredith Coers-Ehn and Nancy Sharko both contributed to memorial donations they established several years ago: Meredith for her late husband Bernie, and Nancy for her late mother, Anne.

**Treasurer’s Report:** In addition to the items in the Treasurer’s report, Mr. Krook wanted to highlight the following final Treasurer’s Report and the budget summary for 2021:

We ended the year underspending our budget (primarily in Materials, Plant Operations and Salaries, Wages and Benefits). We offset this on the Income side by a reduction in our Operating Reserve allocation and the Foundation contribution. The major line-item contributor to the underspend was Gross Wages ($40,667 below budget), resulting from staff turnover.

Mr. Bortni moved to approve the Treasurer’s Report, to pay the new bills received from 12/21/2021 to 1/18/22 and to ratify the payment of bills received and paid from 11/17/2021 to 12/20/2021. Ms. Thompson seconded the motion, which was then passed by unanimous roll call vote.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**
Finance: The Finance Committee met in January, per Mr. Krook’s email memo following are summary and action items:

2022 Draft budget
• The Finance Committee endorsed a draft budget for 2022.
• This is essentially a flat budget from 2021, although it does include a 2% salary and wages increase, additional Library operating hours being added back and a part-time, limited duration headcount to manage Library projects and help the staff as needed.
• The ask from the Foundation goes back up to $60K.
• In planning for some level of staff turnover in 2022, the Finance Committee is proposing a 5% at-risk reduction in the Salaries, Wages and Benefits line. If the Library was fully staffed throughout all of 2022, the spend would be $599,078. However, a 5% reduction ($30K) has been taken out (reduced to $569,078) and a corresponding $30K has been removed from the Operating Reserves allocation on the Income side.
• If it turns out that we don’t see the expected staff turnover and the 5% savings that we are planning for, the Finance Committee agrees we will cover staffing costs up to the original $599,078.
• As a benchmark, our ten-year average underspend in Wages and Salaries is 5.56% (not including 2020, with significant Library closing due to Covid-19).
• The ask from the Borough is the same as in 2021 - $852,082. However, we would like to entertain a discussion with the Borough about the possibility of their covering the inflationary 2% increase in wages and salaries (~$11,746).

Board Discussion: agreement that the budget and approach was well thought out; further discussion on the statutory amounts required from the Borough. Motion to approve the draft budget, was made by Mr. Bertoni, Mr. Orza seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Consortium Member Reserve
• As the transition to MAIN is now complete, the Finance Committee agreed to close out the Consortium Member Reserve-OP line on our statement of accounts ($23,500).
• This line will be deleted, and the dollar amount added to the Operating Balance line above.
• Earlier in 2021, we did indicate to the Library that it could upgrade the phone system and the money can come out of the Consortium Reserve. Now, when that upgrade is expensed, it should come out of our operating balance.

PayPal Fee
PayPal is the method the Library uses to accept credit card payments.
• The Library does not intend to cover the transaction fees associated with using PayPal and agrees these fees should be passed on to the payor.
• The follow fee structure was proposed:

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<th>Fee</th>
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<tr>
<td>$10.01 - $50</td>
<td>$3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;$50</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
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</tbody>
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Request for the Board to accept the proposed fee structure.
Board discussion: Square was used last year, moving to PayPal this year. Discussion ensued about volume, fee structure, and the proposal. The PayPal fee structure will be shared with the group to review further at a later date.

Personnel:
Met by Zoom in January regarding the annual performance review of the Executive Director. Ms. Arnold will submit her self-evaluation within the next couple of weeks. Also waiting on further review by certain Board members. The performance review was tabled until next month.
Policy:
No meeting

Planning:
Ms. Thompson indicated that the Planning committee met once in January. Marching order of the Planning Committee is to move on survey action items. Ms. Arnold and Ms. Thompson have started this process as well as completing the 3-year strategic plan as quickly as possible.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Friends of the Bernardsville Public Library: Nancy Verduin reported that the FBPL met during January. Mini-golf will be pushed off pending constant re-assessment. Moving forward to try a virtual concert with Michaela McCain. Three new board members – quite interested in youth programming – looking into this to support initiative.

Board Discussion: Mr. Orza has been the Board liaison to FBL; Ms. Verduin offered to assume a dual role as liaison and Board member.

Bernardsville Library Foundation: Leslie Brown-Witt for the Foundation reported that the new board was approved at the January meeting. End of year financials put off to February pending outside accountant review. The Finance committee will submit a proposed budget for the February meeting.

Communications: Two items to note: (i) a thank you card from the staff to the Board for the staff breakfast; (ii) a note from a patron regarding a dog book and torn page, the patron graciously offered to pay for entire book – conversation was had with the patron, and matter was resolved amicably.

Unfinished Business:
Project resource revisions have been made by Ms. Arnold, these need to be reviewed by Mr. Kroot on the proposed description and then will move forward.

An ad hoc committee meeting (Ms. Thompson, Mr. Orza, Mr. Bertoni and Ms. Demilt) will be organized to review and possibly update the Library by-laws.

New Business:
Reauthorizing Ms. Arnold as the Library Purchasing Agent and approve bank. Motion made and passed.

Motion made to approve Dublin Maintenance as the maintenance contractor for 2022-2023; there was a significant increase of $1000 necessitated by increased minimum wages, and inflation. Motion made and passed.

Board Discussion re: Windrush project (see package): Despite representations, the Library has not approved the installation. Ms. Arnold has submitted numerous follow-up questions to Mr. Ambeleng and the student, which remain outstanding. Dr. Dempsey has offered to follow up with the student with respect to the outstanding questions. The project will remain as unfinished business until resolved.

At 6:43 p.m. the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy DeMilt, Secretary