

# **Minutes of the Bernardsville Library Board of Trustees Regular Meeting**

March 21, 2023

**Attendance:** Board members John Bertoni, Rich Diegnan, Mark Krook, Nancy Verduin, Jay Ambelang, Colleen Butler, Amy Demilt, Terry Thompson, and Skip Orza, were present at the meeting. Mary Fran Daley, Executive Director, Jill Hackett, Business Manager and Laura Cole, Circulation Manager, Bernardsville Public Library, and Patrice Cummings and Robert Re for the Foundation.

President Bertoni called the Board of Trustees ("Board") meeting to order at 5:30 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 meeting 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 door of the Library.
- The agenda and documents to be discussed at this meeting are available for review in advance of today's meeting on the Library's website, <https://bernardsvillelibrary.org/home/board> and also at the Library's circulation desk during regular library hours.
- Members of the public are invited to comment either during the public comment period of the meeting or by submitting written or emailed comments in advance of the meeting. All commenters should identify themselves by name and street address.

## **Pledge of Allegiance**

## **Roll Call**

**Disposition of Minutes of Previous Meeting:** A motion was made by Ms. Verduin to accept the minutes of the February 21, 2023, Board meeting with minor modifications; Mr. Bertoni seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved with one abstention.

**Director's Report:** In addition to the items mentioned in her report, Ms. Daley presented the following with respect to the Library:

- The Board viewed the director's 2022 report that was presented to the Borough Council, the Friends and the Foundation and Library staff. The purpose was one of advocacy and providing information to the stakeholders as to what the library has to offer. The presentation highlighted what the library offers beyond books and magazines such as digital books, museum passes, and programs and events. An average of 164 patrons come to the library each day. MAIN membership fees and the value provided was reviewed including the expansion of our available resources.
- Basic Strategic Plan feedback was discussed. Further details related to Strategic planning will be discussed in the Planning Committee meeting report.

- A Heat map created to show the usage of the respective areas.
- The Preliminary budget request submitted was shown with further discussion in the finance committee meeting review.
- Library values- serving the community making Bernardsville Stand out

**Treasurer's Report:** In addition to the items in the Treasurer's report, Mr. Krook submitted the following:

- Second month of the year. Of note, the donations are high year to date, which we hope continues. The Electric bill is in the bills to be paid (incorrect billing fixed).
- Question: Comcast as internet and phone back up system.
- **Action on Bills** Mr. Krook moved to approve the Treasurer's Report, to pay the new bills received from 3/1/23 to 3/18/23 and to ratify the payment of bills received and paid from 2/22/23 to 2/28/23. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bertoni, which was then passed by unanimous roll call vote.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Finance:** Mr. Krook indicated that the Finance Committee met to discuss the result of the council meeting and the support from the community, board, and Fran. Their support helped raise the amount allocated to the Library. The Finance committee met to address the options to address the change to the budget to reduce our spending this year and potentially next year. The budget allocation was \$68,938 less than requested. Options discussed:

- More out of reserves- Earlier in the year, the budget was adjusted to take \$25,000 more than previously budgeted. Reserves must be maintained at a level to be able to pay bills in early 2024.
- Foundation – request an additional \$20,000. The Foundation finance committee agreed and will present to the full board next month. \$60,000 to \$80,000.
- The employee accountable for the capital projects, move her wages to the Reid restricted funds -\$15,000.
- There is a residual of \$16,000 to \$30,000 that will be addressed by salaries, wages, and benefits.
- The intention is to implement the changes in early April.
- The expectation is that in 2024, there would be no reserves to be allocated to the budget short fall and the Foundation may not have funds available for the additional dollars to the board.

Questions-

1. Is there talk of reducing hours? This is a consideration under discussion.
2. How much over the minimum are we getting? Mandate is \$792,754 versus \$ 891,904

**Personnel:** Met to discuss options for addressing the 2023 budget shortfall. Further discussion will occur in Executive Session.

**Policy:** No meeting.

**Planning:** Planning met on 3/20 (and will reconvene on 3/27) to finalize draft mission, vision, feedback and draft strategic goals. The initial draft strategic goals were presented and reviewed. The planning committee will further hone the mission, vision, and goals to be presented in April.

#### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OR COMMENTS:**

**Friends of the Bernardsville Public Library:** Ms. Verduin reported on behalf of FBPL. The Friends will be participating in the 'Eggstravagna' sponsored by Downtown Bernardsville. It is April 1<sup>st</sup>, 11 to 3 at the Polo Grounds. The Friends will sponsor a craft booth. This well attended event is an 'eggsultant' opportunity for exposure to the community as well as provide an opportunity to showcase the library programs, as well as our Friends of the Library mission.

**Bernardsville Library Foundation:** Patrice Cummings reported on behalf of the Foundation. Patrice is getting all the Foundation officers to attend the Board of Trustees meetings. Robert Re is the secretary and co- chair of the foundation major event on October 7<sup>th</sup>.

Four opportunities to raise funds:

- Library Giving Day- Tuesday April 4<sup>th</sup>. Online/social media fundraising campaign including Downtown Bernardsville website, the Bubble, the Bernardsville Newspaper, and the foundation website to name a few.
  - Eight donors have provided a \$500 matching gift totaling \$5,500 as of today.
  - If each household provides just \$40 we will meet our \$80,000 goal.
  - A donation jar will be placed at the circ desk during library giving day.
- Annual Appeal letter- May
- 50/50 from June to October
- Best of Bernardsville event in the library- 10/14/23 food and wine event, silent auction, The Board of Trustees approval obtained in the meeting. The Friends can provide some details as to what we did for approval. This was approved by the Board of Trustees.

Patrice noted that if we are considering closing on Sundays a result of the budget shortfall, it would have a big impact to the community.

**COMMUNICATIONS:** None

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

- Bathrooms- progress has been made on the specification but they still under development – We have been interviewing a number of architects, and expect in the next week or two will be finalizing the selection.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- A motion was made to decommission a laptop and laminator was made by Mr. Krook and Seconded by Mr. Diegnan, and the motion passed.
- Contracts- Baker and Taylor- choice for book supplier and Dublin Maintenance for cleaning. Motion to approve these contracts was made by Mr. Bertoni and seconded by Mr. Diegnan.

At 6:27 pm, the public session of the meeting was adjourned.

At 6:28 a motion was raised by Mr. Bertoni to go into Executive Session to discuss Personnel issues which was seconded by Mr. Diegnan and was approved by unanimous vote.

At 7:35 the Executive session ended, and the regular meeting resumed. A motion was made by Mr. Bertoni and seconded by Mr. Krook to approve the revised 2023 budget. A second motion was made by Mr. Bertoni and seconded by Mr. Krook to approve the MOU with the Borough. A role call was taken and passes by unanimous support.

Note: At this point, Skip Orza and Terry Thompson were not present for the motion and voting.

The meeting ended at 7:38.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Verduin, Secretary  
Board of Trustees