

**MINUTES OF THE BERNARDSVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY
MEETING OF THE LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
February 20, 2024**

ATTENDANCE: Jay Ambelang, John Bertoni, Joan Contess, Amy DeMilt, Rich Diegnan, Mark Krook, Robert Re, and Nancy Verduin were present. Mary Fran Daley, Executive Director of the Library and Patrice Cummings, Chair of the Foundation, were in attendance.

Vice President Re called the Board of Trustees (“Board”) meeting to order at 5:33 p.m. and read the Open Meeting Notice as follows:

Notice of Meeting:

- In accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act (c.231, P.L. 1975), written notice of this regular meeting has been sent to the following newspapers: The Bernardsville News and The Daily Record. Written notice has also been sent to the Borough Clerk and posted on the Library’s website.
- 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](#), and 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 and limit their comments to three minutes.

Roll Call

Disposition of Minutes of Previous Meeting – Ms. Verduin moved for the Board to accept the January minutes with the corrections as discussed in the meeting. Ms. Contess seconded the motion, and the minutes with corrections, were accepted by unanimous vote.

Director’s Report

In addition to the Director’s report submitted, Ms. Daley noted:

- Outreach to the school for getting students library cards and supporting the battle of the books.
- Participated in the Café Summit whose mission is to reach out to the underserved community.
- Demolition of the bathrooms is expected to start next week. For public safety, it would be beneficial for the library to be closed during demolition. We could consider opening for a partial day in coordination with the contractor if the timing makes sense and have advance notice of the expected hours of the demolition. The staff will continue to work during the library closure.

Treasurer’s Report

Mr. Krook moved to approve the Treasurer's Report, to approve the new bills to be paid as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. DeMilt. *Resolution to Act Upon Bills 2024-4* was passed by unanimous roll call vote.

An updated 2023 Treasurers report was presented reflecting final payroll and benefits information from the Borough. There was a bigger than expected underspend.

- The last pay period payroll figures roll into the next year. This will occur each year but balance out year over year.
- Since 2023 resulted in a budget underspent, we did not take funds from reserves. With the net underspend, additionally there was a \$50,000 increase in reserves. This will result in a change in our draft 2024 budget as the library reserves must remain less than 20% of the budgeted amount.
- Some of the areas underspent: Materials \$10,000, Plant \$8,000- largely utilities, Furniture & Equipment \$4,000 and payroll/benefits related expenses.
- Payroll/benefit was the most significant underspend.
 - o Changes in the business manager's position resulted in higher savings than anticipated. The benefits expenses at the end of the year were lower than anticipated.
 - o The Borough charged us less than expected for their services.

Mr. Krook moved for the 2023 Treasurer's report to be approved, Ms. Contess seconded and was approved by roll call vote.

Committee Assignments were provided and finalized. Mr. Krook moved to accept the committee assignments, which as seconded by Ms. Contess, and passed by unanimous vote.

Committee Reports

- **Finance** –A revised draft for the 2024 budget was provided for discussion.
 - o Adjusted overall ask from Borough to 3% which is in line with the other departments in the Borough.
 - o The Foundation ask was reduced to \$24,500.
 - o \$100,000 allocated from reserves.
 - o This results in no expected reduction in library services or staffing year on year.
 - o Our reserves are expected to end the year at \$100,000, which is needed to cover beginning of year expenses incurred prior to the receipt of the first borough payment.

The Board has been requested to review the draft for discussion and approval prior to submitting it to the Borough. An ad hoc zoom meeting (2/29 @ 5) will be established to review the final draft budget. Any changes or questions should be submitted in advance of the call.

- **Personnel** – No meeting held.
- **Policy** – No meeting was held but Ms. DeMilt and Ms. Daley met to discuss the personnel manual and identified action steps to update the manual.
- **Planning** – Capital planning committee met, updating the plan which will be discussed later in the meeting.

Public Presentations or Comments

- **Friends of the Library** – Ms. Verduin submitted the following report:
 - A Hole Lot of Fun was a success from a community and financial standpoint. While final numbers are not in, we appear to have attained our goal of a net income increase of \$4,000. We had a record 100 sponsors for this year's event.
 - Thanks to all library personnel, the Foundation and the Board of Trustees for their engagement and support.
 - We will be participating in Makers Week and will start planning ideas for National Friends of the Library week in October.
- **Bernardsville Library Foundation** – Ms. Cummings, Chair of the Foundation:
 - With the reduction in funding requested by the library, the Foundation can focus on building the endowment.
 - The first major fundraising event is April 3rd, National Library Giving day. The Foundation is looking to increase the matching grant from \$9,000 to \$10,000.
 - Major donation program updates will be forthcoming once the committee is further established.

Communications - None.

Unfinished Business –

- Resolution to Adopt 2024-5
 - Adoption of the Holiday Schedule-A motion was made by Ms. Verduin and seconded by Mr. Re, to approve the holiday schedule with 14 days and no floating holidays. This is an increase from 12 to 14 days.
 - Resolution to *Adopt the holiday schedule 2024-5* was approved by unanimous vote.
- Resolution to Adopt: 2024-6
 - Discussion was held on the adoption of the *Bernardsville Public Library Capital Plan 2024-2026*
 - Since the plan was first presented to the Board, the identification of the capital plan initiatives 2024 and additional estimations were added to the plan.
 - Because the library has funding set aside for capital expenditures, a capital plan is required to be on file for the state library, should they request a copy.
 - Minor modifications to the plan were discussed including clarifying that the intent is to address interior wear and tear and to include the Borough as an area where funding may be requested.
- Ms. Verduin made a motion to adopt the capital plan with the changes as to intent to address wear and tear and where funding will include the borough. It was seconded by Ms. Contess and Resolution to Adopt the Capital Plan: *2024-6* was approved by unanimous vote.

New Business

- Resolution to Join Cooperative 2024-7
 - Educational Data Services. To use Eastern Janitorial, we must join the cooperative (\$2,100 annual fee)

Mark moved to approve the library joining the cooperative, Ms. Contess seconded, Resolution to Join Cooperative 2024-7 *was* approved unanimously by roll call vote.

- Resolution to Appoint 2024-8
 - Eastern Janitorial for a cleaning contract March 2024- February 2025
 - Existing service in not in the cooperative but they are higher than the bid level.

Ms. Verduin made a motion to appoint a cleaning contract to Eastern Janitorial effective 3/1/2024, seconded by Mr. Krook and Resolution to Appoint 2024-8 was approved via unanimous roll call vote.

At 7:02 p.m. the Public Session was adjourned.

Executive Session (no action will be taken)

- President Bertoni made a motion to move into executive session to discuss personnel matter Ms. Contess seconded and all approved.
- New Business- Personnel Discussion on annual performance feedback.

The Executive session ended at 7:55 and Mr. Re made a motion was made to return to public session, seconded by Ms. Contess and approved by all.

The public session concluded at 7:56.

Nancy Verduin
Secretary
Bernardsville Public Library Trustees