

**MINUTES OF THE BERNARDSVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY
MEETING OF THE LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
December 17, 2024**

ATTENDANCE: Brian Brotschul, John Bertoni, Joan Contess, Amy Demilt, Anita Gandhi, Mark Krook, Robert Re, and Nancy Verduin were present. Mary Fran Daley, Executive Director of the Library, and Patrice Cummings, Chair of the Bernardsville Library Foundation, were also in attendance.

Prior to the start of the meeting- Mr. Bertoni administered the oath of office for new board member, Anita Gandhi.

President Bertoni called the Board of Trustees ("Board") meeting to order at 5:32 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.

Disposition of the Minutes of the Previous Regular Meeting

Mr. Bertoni moved for the Board to accept the October minutes with the correction as noted. Mr. Krook seconded the motion. The November meeting minutes were approved as revised, with two abstentions.

Director's Report

Ms. Daley highlighted the following items from the director's report:

- In the process of hiring a children's librarian. Interviews will start after the new year.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Krook moved to approve the treasurers' report and the new bills to be paid as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Re, which was then passed by unanimous roll call vote. Resolution to Act Upon Bills 2024- 34 *passed*.

Committee Reports

- **Finance-** The committee prepared a proposed 2025 budget, which has been shared with the Borough for review. The budget includes a return to pre-COVID operating hours, with a 9 PM closure Monday through Thursday. The funding request from the Borough remains consistent with prior levels.

- **Personnel-** Proposed timeline for the Director's 2025 review were discussed and agreed upon.
- **Policy-** No meeting. Personnel manual is still pending review. Provisions from the Freedom to Read Act need to be included in the manual.
- **Planning-** No meeting.
- **Nominating committee-** A plan for the 2025 officers will be developed and executed prior to the next meeting.

Public Presentations or Comments

- **Friends of the Library** – Ms. Verduin, President of the Friends of the Library submitted the following report:
 - Our annual campaign letter was sent on time in November. As of early December, we have received over \$16,500 in contributions from eighty individuals, 10% of which are new. We are on track for \$30,000.
 - Mini Golf planning is underway. Mainstreet Bernardsville will be the Keystone Sponsor (and hole sponsor) for 2025. This is the first year we have a Keystone sponsor for the event (\$1,500) We will be working with Mr. Oswald later this on publicity.
 - Will the Board of Trustees sponsor a hole again this year- pend for a month.
- **Bernardsville Library Foundation** – The Board received the Foundation check. We appreciate the Foundation contributions to closing the gap in funding for the Library.
 - Trustees approved the 2025 budget.
 - The endowment is over \$822,000.
 - Two grants were secured, including a \$10,000 matching grant designed to encourage donations from previous donors who have not yet contributed this year.
 - Two trustees resigned, Ms. Chieko McClester(Website) and Ms. Amiee Watts (Public Relations)
 - Cycle bar fundraiser on 1/25. Forty spots at \$50 donation to raise money for the foundation.
 - Foundation would like to have a Trustee attend the Foundation meetings representing the Board of Trustees

Communications- No new communications

Unfinished Business – Already addressed in the personnel committee meeting update.

New Business

- **Library Reimagined** –
 - Ms. Daley spoke with QPA as to how we need to work with various components of the plan.
 - The Friends have requested that they be able to fund the Children's section (and more as required) to provide an opportunity to use it for public relations.
 - The CLC proposal, including painting and carpeting, totals \$794,300, along with coverage for any potential change orders. The full amount must be available in the

Library's account to proceed. Contracts need to be signed in January to meet the scheduled April start date.

- Could the CLC proposal be staged and paid over time? Painting and carpeting would need to be completed all at once. If the entire project is completed simultaneously, the library could close for 2–3 weeks, with some services provided in the community room. Ideally, work would begin the week after Easter.
- The Board of Trustees will formally request by January 21st that the necessary funds from the Friends' capital account be transferred to the Library's restricted account. The plan includes fully utilizing the Reid estate, bathroom account, and undesignated funds first, with the remaining balance requested from the Friends.
- The Finance Committee will meet on January 17th to determine the amount to be requested from Friends prior to the January 21st BOT meeting.
- Mr. Krook made a motion for the capital reserve accounts (\$101,889.46) to be moved into the capital fund account. Mr. Bertoni seconded, and the motion passed via unanimous roll call vote.

The Public Session adjourned at 6:36 p.m.

Nancy Verduin
Secretary
Bernardsville Library Trustees