



BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES March 16, 2022

In Attendance

Trustees: Edward Felten, Robert Ginsberg, Carol Kelley, Stephanie Oster, Yamile Slebi, Chris Van Buren, Pam Wakefield

Library Staff: Erica Bess, Becky Bowers, Susan Chernik, Susan Conlon, Tiffany Fang, Addie Gordon, Janie Hermann, JiHae Ju, Andre Levie, Jennifer Podolsky, Tim Quinn, Karen Rackley, Bonnie Sprouls, Dana Treichler, Sonja Vloeberghs

Teen Reps: Mitalee Pasricha, Emily Saunders, Eleni Staikos

Others: Rosalind Muir (Friends and Foundation)

At 6:02 p.m. Mr. Ginsberg called the meeting to order and announced that in accordance with the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act and State regulations governing remote public meetings, adequate and electronic notice of this meeting were provided on March 9, to the Municipal Clerk, Princeton Packet, Town Topics and Trenton Times, posted in the library, on the library's and municipality's websites, on the door of the library's main public entrance, and distributed to the standard distribution list. Mr. Ginsberg stated that because of the state of emergency in NJ regarding COVID-19, the meeting was being held via Zoom and indicated where on the library's website the public could find the meeting agenda, the instructions for accessing the meeting and for making public comment prior to and during the meeting. Mr. Ginsberg included standards of conduct to be followed by members of the public making comments. Mr. Ginsberg explained the audio muting function for those providing public comment via computer, mobile device and telephone.

Approval of Consent Agenda – Mr. Van Buren moved approval of the Consent Agenda; Ms. Slebi seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

- Feb. 16 Meeting Minutes
- Final February Bills
- Preliminary March Bills
- Resolution 2021-25, Revised: Acceptance of Designated Gifts and Grants Q4 2021
- Resolution 2021-26: Acceptance of Friends Gift Q4 2021
- Resolution 2022-12: 2022 Emergency Temporary Appropriations

Board Materials – There was no discussion on the included Board materials: Monthly Report, Monthly Statistics.

Public Comment – There was no public comment.

Staff Spotlight – Mr. Ginsberg introduced Tiffany Fang. Ms. Fang noted she started as a part-time employee in October 2020 in Lending Services and become a full-time employee this year. She noted that she oversees returns and missing parts. Mr. Ginsberg asked Ms. Fang to explain missing parts. Ms. Fang explained that when materials are returned without all of their items (such as an audiobook without a CD or an item missing from a Library of Things kit), she contacts the patron and/or determines how to replace the missing items; she also checks for damaged CDs, resolving them via a machine repair or replacing them.

President’s Report – Mr. Ginsberg noted that he and Ms. Podolsky met with Councilmember Niedergang and Councilmember Pirone-Lambros to discuss the library budget. Mr. Ginsberg noted that he met with Ms. Wakefield; they sent Ms. Podolsky their proposal for National Library Week which is April 3-9.

Friends and Foundation Report –Ms. Muir noted that the Friends and Foundation have been reviewing language in their policies, working on their new webpage with Mr. Millett from the library’s IT department, and committees met and will report at the Friends and Foundation April 19 board meeting. They are preparing for: the Book Lovers Luncheon scheduled for May 12 with Julia Glass author of “Three Junes” and has a new book coming out; the annual book sale from Sept. 16-18; and Beyond Words which will take place on Sept. 24 or Oct. 15.

Teen Representatives’ Report – Ms. Pasricha noted that the Teen Advisory Board will be hosting “I Read This Book” in person and virtually on March 29; they will be sending out invitations to all Board members. Ms. Saunders noted that TAB’s has been posting on their TikTok handle: PPL.teens. Ms. Staikos noted that TAB’s first TikTok was an intro to TAB with each member showcasing their favorite books. She noted for Women’s History Month, TAB will feature books with strong female leads on their TikTok account, and at their last meeting they made blackout poetry to decorate the Teen Center

Bylaws and Policies Committee Report – Ms. Hawes noted the committee (Ms. Hawes, Mr. Felten, Ms Oster and Mr. Ginsberg) met last week and reviewed and discussed: the library’s mask policy - possibly moving toward a mask-optional policy; language for an ethics statement; the current Bylaws – agreeing to include descriptions and missions of each committees; and a Board secretary position.

Strategic Planning Committee Report – Ms. Wakefield noted the SP consultant is designing a community survey and is collecting feedback from stakeholders.

Finance Committee Report – Mr. Van Buren noted that the committee did not meet since the last Board meeting. Ms. Chernik provided an update on the budget - she noted, that the Princeton Town Council expects to approve their budget on April 1; a final 2022 operating budget would then be presented to the Trustees for approval at their April 20 board meeting.

Fundraising Report – There was no fundraising report.

Director’s Report – Ms. Podolsky mentioned several upcoming programs:

- Princeton Environmental Film Festival, led by Susan Conlon and Kim Dorman, runs from April 1-10 and contains 16 films (all are available on the Eventive platform); 8 films will be held in-person with a question and answer period. The April 20 event at the Garden Theatre ties into Earth day. Ms. Podolsky recommends registering for movies ahead of time.
- Local Author Day, coordinated by Nora Walsh, will be held on May 7; all applications are due on March 21. Authors from Central Jersey and Bucks County to will be able to network, and sell, sign and display their book(s).

- April 1- May 30, the Reading Room will feature exhibition in Spanish and English from Smithsonian Gardens, "Pollination Investigation." Coordinated by Janie Hermann, the library will present several programs during the Spring that support this exhibit.

Ms. Podolsky noted that a draft of the community survey for the strategic plan has been sent to Senior Staff and to the Strategic Planning committee for comments. Ms. Kelley noted that the public schools recently sent their strategic planning survey with a deadline of March 24. Ms. Oster asked when the library's SP final plan will be completed; Ms. Podolsky will ask Ms. Trimarco, SP consultant.

Ms. Podolsky noted she and Ms. Chernik, will present a brief library budget update to the town Council at the March 28 town Council meeting; Mr. Ginsberg will provide an introduction. Ms. Slebi asked if meeting details could be provided prior to the Council meeting so Board members could easily join the meeting. Ms. Podolsky noted Ms. Rackley will send meeting details.

Unfinished Business – There was no unfinished business.

Delayed Openings for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Training for Staff – Ms. Podolsky noted that library staff will be attending additional DEI training on March 23 and May 10 which are two follow-up sessions to the initial training for all staff. Ms. Podolsky asked the Trustees to approve a one-hour delayed opening on each of the training to allow the opportunity for all staff members to attend the trainings. Mr. Van Buren moved approval of a one-hour delayed opening of the library on March 23 and on May 10; Ms. Wakefield seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2022-13: Employee Compensation 2022: Cost of Living Adjustment – Ms. Chernik noted that the library had a 1.75% COLA in its original budget; however, as the library usually follows the municipality when requesting COLA for staff, and the municipality approved a 2.4% COLA for its staff, the library requests a 2.4% COLA for library staff. Mr. Felten moved approval of a 2.4% cost of living adjustment for library staff; Ms. Wakefield seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Temporary Code of Conduct – Mr. Ginsberg noted the Temporary Code of Conduct, implemented nearly two years ago as a result of COVID, currently states that library visitors, age two and older, must wear a face covering that covers both the nose and mouth at all times while in the library; visitors who are sick or have a fever should not visit the building, even if wearing a face covering; and no food or drink allowed in the building, with the exception of items purchased from and consumed within the library café.

Ms. Wakefield moved approval to cancel the Temporary Code of Conduct; Mr. Van Buren seconded the motion. There was discussion about: reinstating the policy if necessary, the public schools' decision on mask wearing, plexiglass on service desks, reevaluating staff rules, third floor visitors and masks at library events. Mr. Ginsberg, on behalf of Ms. Podolsky, asked that the cancellation be effective on Friday, March 18 to allow staff to organize removal of this policy. The motion passed unanimously.

Financial Disclosure Reminder – Mr. Ginsberg reminded the Board to complete their Financial Disclosure Statement pursuant to the Local Government Ethics Law. There was discussion about the FDS; Ms. Rackley will contact the town clerk to determine when and how the board is to file, and convey that information to the Trustees.

Board comments or proposed agenda items – Ms. Podolsky and the Trustees discussed how to celebrate Juneteenth. She noted the municipality is not closing for Juneteenth; the library can choose

how to celebrate – with programming or closing the library. Ms. Podolsky noted she will discuss with the library’s human resources director and the assistant director. She noted the Bylaws and Policies Committee may need to discuss the library’s recommendation and make a proposal at the April Board meeting.

Mr. Ginsberg asked to add “returning to in-person meetings” to the April Board meeting agenda. He asked the Trustees to think about it prior to the discussion in April.

Ms. Slebi recommended small groups of Trustees for inspired discussion relating to PPL in the future. Ms. Podolsky suggested creating an adhoc committee. Ms. Wakefield recommended and asked about the legality of a Board retreat. Ms. Podolsky noted the Board could hold a retreat that was publicly noticed; this will be on April’s board meeting agenda.

Adjournment – Ms. Oster motioned to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Van Buren seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for April 20, 2022.