



BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

April 20, 2022

In Attendance

Trustees: Robert Ginsberg, Carol Kelley (6:19 p.m.), Eve Niedergang, Stephanie Oster, Yamile Slebi, Chris Van Buren, Pam Wakefield

Library Staff: Lisa Belshaw, Erica Bess, Becky Bowers, Susan Chernik, Susan Conlon, Kristin Friberg, JiHae Ju, Sundari Kishore, Jennifer Podolsky, Karen Rackley, Bonnie Sprouls, Sonja Vloeberghs

Teen Reps: Mitalee Pasricha, Eleni Staikos, Gavin Yang

Others: Andrea Bradley (Friends and Foundation), 2 members of the public

At 6:03 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 April 11, 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: Ms. Niedergang moved approval of the Consent Agenda; Ms. Wakefield seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

- March 16, 2022 Meeting Minutes
- Final March Bills
- Preliminary April Bills

Board Materials - There was no discussion on the included materials: Monthly Director's Report, Monthly Statistics, Quotes for Products and Services – 1st Qtr, 2022 and Budget vs Actual - 1Q 2022.

Public Comment – There was no public comment.

Staff Spotlight – Ms. Podolsky introduced Madeleine Rosenberg, the library's Public Humanities Specialist who took the position after Hannah Schmidl left. Ms. Rosenberg noted she grew up in Hopewell and attended PDS, and spent many hours in Princeton and the library. At the library, Ms. Rosenberg researches potential speakers and/or topics, manages logistical planning for events, updates

resource guides for the library's focus dates (heritage and history in commemorative-related months), meets with community partners and colleagues, and runs and attends programs.

President's Report – Mr. Ginsberg noted:

- the passing of past Trustee Richard Levine who served on the Board from November 2009 to December of 2012 and helped the library with decisions related to technology. Mr. Ginsberg sent a card to Mr. Levine's wife, Neil Ann, and family on behalf of the library and the Board.
- the Board's letter to the editor, published in local papers, mentioning the library and thanking the staff for Library Workers Day/National Library Week. The Trustees also thanked the staff by providing snacks.
- A board retreat that will be scheduled after the strategic planning half-day sessions; Ms. Podolsky will be in touch to schedule a retreat for May or June.
- The deadline for submitting financial disclosures is April 30.
- His acknowledgement of the Impact Report which he thought was really well done; he saluted Tim Quinn and the staff for putting it together. Mr. Ginsberg thought the stories were great.

Friends and Foundation Report - Ms. Bradley noted:

- Ms. Muir was unable to attend tonight's board meeting.
- The Friends and Foundation board met last night; the Friends and Foundation merger was official on Feb. 17, 2022; Tim Quinn is designing a new logo for the organization.
- Bookstore revenue for March was over \$13,000.
- Volunteers are curating boxes of books for the annual book sale; the Friends and Foundation held a coffee yesterday for the Friends volunteers.
- The Book Lovers Luncheon will be on May 12 at Jasna Polana; Beyond Words with Dr. David Wondrich will be on Oct. 15 at Brick Farm Tavern, Hopewell.

Ms. Kelley joined the meeting

Teen Representatives' Report – Mr. Yang noted that TAB is planning camps and crafts for the summer; TAB applications are open for next year and for summer volunteering. Ms. Pasricha thanked the Board members that were able to attend "I Read This Book" and provided links to the [event](#) and to [books discussed](#). TAB will feature poetry on their Instagram account for national poetry month, and share information about TAB's programs; their Tik Tok account now has more than 100 followers. Ms. Staikos noted the [Keeping Tabs](#) podcast with Kate Williams was posted on April 3, Jessica Rubinkowski will be in May, and Kate Alice Marshall in June.

Bylaws and Policies Committee Report – Ms. Oster reported that at their committee meeting they reviewed and finalized the ethics statement which is included in the board packet for discussion. She asked that Trustees provide comments and questions; the committee will present the ethics statement for the Trustees' approval at the May Board meeting.

Strategic Planning Committee Report – Ms. Wakefield noted that Ms. Podolsky will speak about the Strategic Plan later in the meeting.

Finance Committee Report - Mr. Van Buren noted the committee met on Monday and reviewed documents prepared by Ms. Chernik (i.e., 1Q22 budget vs actual-and the 2022 operating budget). The committee also discussed the Restroom Renovations award of contract.

Ms. Chernik noted the 2022 operating budget was presented to the Board in September 2021 for approval to send to the municipality. On April 11, 2022, Princeton approved its budget, which includes the library's budget. The budget, which is revised with current information until final Board approval, is approximately \$20K higher than in September – a net increase mostly due to a \$14K increase in health benefit costs and the pension liability which was \$38K higher than had been projected.

Ms. Chernik noted the Budget vs Actual shows a positive net result of \$1.2M after the first quarter, due to the receipt of the second quarter municipal funding received in March, which helped fund the pension liability payment. Barring those receipt of funds and payment, the library ended the first quarter \$280K net positive.

Ms. Chernik noted there were two bidders for the restroom renovation capital project; the award of contract names Aero Plumbing and Heating as the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. She also noted after the initial request for proposals for the mechanical shades project, the library received no compliant proposals so the library will go out for proposals a second time.

Ms. Niedergang asked about the cooling tower replacement schedule. Ms. Chernik noted that the library needs to wait until the Council approves the capital budget, which includes the cooling tower project. Once approved, the library can begin to build an RFP, and Janet Simon, project manager, can engage an engineer and if necessary, an architect.

Fundraising Committee Report – Ms. Belshaw noted the spring appeal is underway; this year rather than sending out letters, a return envelope for the spring appeal was included in the Impact Report that was mailed. Library Giving Day was April 6; the Friends and Foundation received \$5,000+ more than last year.

Director's Report – Ms. Podolsky thanked the Board, on behalf of the staff, for the snacks provided by the Trustees for National Library Worker's Day. She mentioned recent events: I read This Book and PEFF, and upcoming events: Local Author Day, the Pride Picnic and Summer Reading.

Ms. Podolsky noted the strategic plan survey results to date are: 817 started the survey, 636 completed the survey; 75.6% completed are Princeton residents and nearly 94% of those that completed the survey are cardholders. She asked that the Trustees share the survey with their contacts. She noted there will be two half-day sessions for Trustees, staff and key stakeholders, and listening sessions for the public; the development of the plan is expected over the next few months with a presentation to the Board and anticipated adoption of the plan in September. Ms. Oster asked if there was a deadline. Ms. Podolsky said there was no closing date; however, the consultant suggested no more than four weeks. There was discussion about distribution of the survey.

Ms. Podolsky thanked those that attended the budget hearing presented by Ms. Podolsky, Ms. Chernik and Mr. Ginsberg at the town council meeting. Ms. Podolsky noted that she met with the Friends and Foundation, Mr. Ginsberg and Mr. Van Buren, to discuss talking points about the endowment and its use, after the obvious misunderstanding of its use when mentioned at the Council meeting as a possible source of funding for the library's capital projects.

Resolution 2022-14: Approval of 2022 Operating Budget – Ms. Niedergang moved approval of Resolution 2022-14; Mr. Van Buren seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2022-15: Award of Contract for Restroom Renovations – Ms. Wakefield moved approval of the Resolution 2022-15; Ms. Niedergang seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Board Meeting Locations for 2022 – Mr. Ginsberg proposed the decision to hold in-person Board meetings be made on a month by month basis. Ms. Niedergang moved approval to have Mr. Ginsberg and Ms. Podolsky decide each month, in consultation with the health officer, Jeff Grosser, whether to have an in-person Board meetings; Ms. Wakefield seconded the motion.

The Board discussed when they might resume in-person meetings and whether hybrid meetings were possible. Ms. Niedergang suggested establishing criteria based on COVID statistics in Princeton that could be used to determine whether or not to hold in-person meetings. Mr. Ginsberg recommended the motion be revised to include a set criterion as suggested by Ms. Niedergang; The revised motion passed unanimously.

Draft Ethics Statement for Trustees – Mr. Ginsberg referred the Board to the Draft Ethics Statement in their board packet. He asked the Trustees to review and provide questions and/or concerns to Ms. Podolsky and Ms. Hawes by the end of April, with a final copy to be presented for approval to the Board in May.

2022 Holiday Schedule and Employee Handbook – Ms. Podolsky noted the 2022 Holiday Schedule has been revised to include Juneteenth and this change will require revision of the Employee Handbook. The Board agreed to defer a vote on revising the holiday schedule and the handbook until after the closed session portion of the meeting.

There were no Board comments or proposed agenda items.

Executive Session – Ms. Wakefield moved to enter into closed session at 7:09 p.m. to discuss employee holidays. Ms. Oster seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Members present: Mr. Ginsberg, Ms. Niedergang, Ms. Oster, Mr. Van Buren, Ms. Wakefield and Ms. Podolsky.

A closed session meeting was held to discuss employee holidays. No action was taken as a result of the closed session. Ms. Wakefield moved to reconvene in open session at 7:37 p.m.; Mr. Van Buren seconded the motion. The issue discussed during closed session will be added to the next public agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment - Ms. Niedergang motioned to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Van Buren seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for May 18, 2022.