BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
July 20, 2022

In Attendance
Trustees: Edward Felten, Robert Ginsberg, Edwina Hawes (6:21 p.m.), Eve Niedergang, Stephanie Oster, Pam Wakefield

Library Staff: Erica Bess, Becky Bowers, Susan Chernik, Janie Hermann, JiHae Ju, Sundari Kishore, Andre Levie, Jennifer Podolsky, Tim Quinn, Karen Rackley, Cindy Sottung, Bonnie Sprouls, Sonja Vloeberghs

Others: Matt Dittmann (WithumSmith+Brown), Mayor Mark Freda, Rosalind Muir (Friends and Foundation), Arthniel Scott (WithumSmith+Brown)

At 6:04 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 July 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, 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 and explained the audio muting function for those providing public comment via computer, mobile device and telephone.

Approval of Consent Agenda – Ms. Wakefield moved approval of the Consent Agenda. Ms. Oster seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

- May 18, 2022 Closed Session Meeting Minutes
- June 15, 2022 Meeting Minutes
- June 30, 2022 Special Meeting Minutes
- Final June Bills
- Preliminary July Bills
- Resolution 2022-18: Acceptance of Designated Gifts and Grants 2Q 2022
- Resolution 2022-19: Mechanical Shades Upgrade Change Order #1

Audit Presentation – Ms. Chernik introduced Mr. Arthniel Scott and Mr. Matt Dittmann from WithumSmith+Brown. Ms. Chernik noted the audit went well with thanks to those at the library that provide information and to the audit team.
Mr. Scott thanked Ms. Chernik and the team at the library for their cooperation in the audit process and referred the Board to the Results of the Dec. 31, 2021 Audit & Required Communications included with board packet. He noted the financial statements are in accordance with the State of NJ Department of Community Affairs basis of accounting.

Mr. Scott read the required communications for the audit. He also provided cybersecurity recommendations made as part of the audit after a high-level review of the library’s cybersecurity infrastructure was completed. Ms. Chernik noted that the recommendations are best practices – some of which are already in place at the library, some require additional information and some are not relevant to a library of our size. The library is looking into which of these practices would benefit the organization. Mr. Felten offered to provide advice.

Mr. Scott noted the management representation letter will be provided for signature upon approval of the audit report.

Mr. Dittmann provided a brief high-level overview of the financial statements and noted there were no instances of non-compliance or other matters, and there were no material weaknesses related to internal control over financial reporting based on the audit.

Ms. Chernik noted that providing information for the audit is a team effort, giving a special shout out to Susan Orsini, Senior Accountant, for her help, organization and thoroughness.

Ms. Wakefield moved approval of the 2021 Audit as presented; Mr. Felten seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Board Materials** – There was no discussion on the included board materials: Monthly Director’s Report; Monthly Statistics; Quotes for Products and Services – 2nd Qtr, 2022; Budget vs Actual - 2Q 2022

**Staff Spotlight** – Ms. Kishore introduced herself as a senior cataloging and metadata librarian working in the Access Services department. She noted that she has worked for the library since 2005, starting as an MLIS intern and has worked in all departments. She explained that in her job she catalogs everything from a book to a pair of binoculars, and works with data as it pertains to cataloging and acquisitions – striving to provide a catalog experience for the customer that is efficient and accurate. She is helping to prepare in-house data to be sent to an outside vendor that will automatically provide authority records – records containing all the variations of data (e.g., spelling of Tchaikovsky) that Access Services used to add in manually. Ms. Kishore noted the best part of her job is working with the travel collection and selecting the travel books. Mr. Felten asked for advice on how to select a travel book. Ms. Kishore recommended having a top 10 book as well as a book with more detail when traveling.

Ms. Bess remarked on Ms. Kishore’s value to the library by noting that her attention to detail, sophisticated thinking and hard work allows customers to have positive experiences with the catalog and allows the library to embark on innovative projects such as the creation of neighborhoods for the entire nonfiction collection on the second floor.

**President’s Report** – Mr. Ginsberg thanked the Trustees for their participation in the June 30 strategic planning meeting. He also thanked Tom Ridge, Facilities; Becky Bowers, IT; Karen Rackley, Admin for helping to set up and organize the meeting, and thanked Allison Trimarco, Creative Capacity, for facilitating the meeting and her colleague, Dylan Erdelyi, for taking notes.
Mr. Ginsberg recognized library staff for their participation in the Princeton Pride Parade and its associated activities, and for making it a signature event. He acknowledged the Youth Services staff for the many programs for teens, and for their success with summer reading signups; and acknowledged Pam Wakefield and Yamile Slebi for their participation in the executive director’s evaluation, as well as, library staff and leaders of the Friends and Foundation that provided input.

**Friends and Foundation** – Ms. Muir noted that invitations for the Beyond Words benefit on Oct. 15 have been sent and tickets are available. She noted there is a 200-person limit; 60 tickets have been sold so far. The BW committee is busy obtaining corporate sponsorships for the event. Sales from the bookstore in June were over $11,000; and volunteers have logged 190 hours for the bookstore and in preparation for the annual book sale on Sept. 16-18. The Friends and Foundation, along with the Development Office will be hosting a breakfast for longtime library supporters. Ms. Muir noted more information will be provided if help is needed for the book sale, and invitations will be sent to Trustees for the Sept. 19 breakfast.

**Bylaws and Policies Committee** – Ms. Oster noted the committee met several times over the past few months; the executive director brought the room rental policy, with focus on public programs and publicity, to the committee for discussion. Ms. Oster noted that exceptions to public programs and publicity were made in the past, and that the library has not been equitable in the application of the policy. Ms. Oster noted that the committee does not recommend any changes to the existing policy, but does recommend enforcing the policy as written. In the fall, the committee will focus their discussions on updating the bylaws and the library’s code of conduct.

**Strategic Planning** – Ms. Wakefield noted that a productive Trustees’ strategic planning meeting was held on June 30, and noted there will be additional opportunities for community partners, stakeholders, Trustees and staff to provide input before the final version is expected in early October.

**Finance Committee** – Ms. Chernik noted the committee met and reviewed the audit. She noted the second quarter budget vs. actual is on target, and that there were no significant changes in bank balances and fund balances from last year at this time. Ms. Chernik and library staff are working on the 2023 budget which will be presented to the Trustees for approval at the September board meeting with subsequent submission to the municipality.

**Fundraising** – There was no report.

**Director’s Report** – Ms. Podolsky noted the capital request for the cooling tower, not voted on at the June 26 Council Meeting, is expected to be on the agenda for Monday’s Council meeting. She thanked the staff for providing supporting documentation, as requested by the municipality, on short notice. The library also provided the municipality with an update on the four capital budget request projects initially submitted.

Ms. Podolsky noted the library has been identified as one of three municipal cooling centers.

From the Director’s Report included in the packet, Ms. Podolsky highlighted a few past events, several upcoming events and noted that Nature Explorer Backpacks are now part of the Library of Things.

**Public Comment** - Mayor Freda noted that he was in attendance to support, Ms. Niedergang, the liaison between the library and the municipality. Mayor Freda noted that Ms. Niedergang was unable to attend the meeting on June 26 at which the library’s cooling tower did not make it to a vote. The Mayor noted the Council will vote on the cooling tower at the July 25 Council meeting.
There was no additional public comment.

Cancellation of August Meeting – Ms. Oster moved to cancel the August 17 Board of Trustees meeting; Ms. Wakefield seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Closed Session – Ms. Niedergang moved to enter into closed session, at 7:02 p.m., for personnel reasons. Ms. Oster seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

A closed session meeting was held to discuss the executive director’s evaluation as presented by the evaluation committee (Mr. Ginsberg, Ms. Slebi, Ms. Wakefield).

Ms. Oster left the meeting at 8:02 p.m.; Ms. Slebi left the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

Open Session – Mr. Felten moved to reconvene in open session at 8:03 p.m. Ms. Hawes seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. No action was taken as a result of the closed session meeting.

Adjournment – Mr. Felten motioned to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Hawes seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:04 p.m.